

PRESS RELEASE

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VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART SPRING EXHIBITION SUITE TO INCLUDE *KARA WALKER: CUT TO THE QUICK, FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF JORDAN D. SCHNITZER AND HIS FAMILY FOUNDATION* IN CONJUNCTION WITH *LATOYA M. HOBBS: FLOURISH* AND CONTINUING ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM



VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (Feb. 9, 2023) – The Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (Virginia MOCA) announces *Kara Walker: Cut to the Quick, From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation*, a career-spanning exhibition that draws critical attention to the painful legacies of slavery, imperialism, and sexism. Presented in conjunction with *LaToya M. Hobbs: Flourish* and an artist residency program and exhibition featuring Amber Pierce, Poetry Jackson, and Nadd Harvin, *Kara Walker: Cut to the Quick* will be on view in Virginia MOCA's main galleries from March 9 through June 11, 2023.

A leading artist of her generation and MacArthur genius grant recipient, Kara Walker (b. 1969) mines history to deliver stirring commentary on contemporary power structures. Rendered in sharply contrasting shades of black, white, and gray, her complex and unapologetic images span a diverse range of media, including drawings, prints, sculpture, film, and the large-scale cut-paper silhouettes for which the artist is most widely recognized.

Kara Walker: Cut to the Quick originated at the Frist Art Museum in Nashville, Tennessee, where then executive director and CEO Dr. Susan H. Edwards collaborated with poet Ciona Rouse to curate an exhibition that asks viewers to look deeper, and not look away, from the U.S. history of slavery. After its debut at the Frist, the exhibition traveled to the Cincinnati Art Museum and MOCA Jacksonville and will conclude its tour at the University of Southern California Fisher Museum of Art in Los Angeles, California, after the Virginia MOCA presentation.

At Virginia MOCA, the exhibition is again guest curated by Rouse, along with Virginia MOCA site curator Heather Hakimzadeh, in a presentation that pairs Walker's work with selections of poetry written by Rouse for the show's initial presentation at the Frist.

"Walker's work rarely shows to this extent in the South," said Rouse, "so I respect the significance of this exhibition making its way here to Virginia—in this region where we recognize the systemic origins of chattel slavery in 1619 on the stolen land Tsenacommacah, and where we also recognize Emancipation Oak as the first place Black Americans learned about their freedom. In this land, the exhibition truly becomes part memorial, part mirror, and, hopefully, large part motivator to create another way forward."

"With the presentation of the art of Kara Walker, Virginia MOCA strives to give our community space to make connections—past and present, abstract and concrete connections that can serve to expand our view of both human suffering and human capability," said Hakimzadeh. "Hampton Roads and the greater Commonwealth

played a pivotal role in the nation's history and relationship with slavery. The Museum will serve as a site for dialogue about this history and relationship, as well as their continued impact."

Uniting over 80 works created between 1994 and 2019, *Kara Walker: Cut to the Quick* is drawn entirely from the collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation—premier collectors of works on paper with extensive holdings of prints and multiples by postwar and contemporary Black, Indigenous, and artists of color.

"Kara Walker is one of the most important artists of our time—from the simple cutouts, like frontier homes had on each side of their fireplaces, to the intricate figurines and videos, Kara Walker's art forces us to deal with issues of racism, stereotypes, and gender inequality," said Schnitzer. "I first saw her art in 1994 and instantly was drawn to the power of her artistic voice. We have exhibited her work in solo exhibitions at 14 museums nationwide. We have also included her art in over 30 other group exhibitions. I hope all of you are impacted as I was that moment when I first saw her work, as I still am today!"

A timely exhibition coming on the heels of Black History Month and opening at the start of Women's History Month, *Cut to the Quick* will be complemented by the concurrent exhibition *LaToya M. Hobbs: Flourish*, a solo presentation of the Baltimore-based artist's monumental mixed media relief carvings. Shot through with themes related to womanhood, motherhood, and legacy, Hobbs's textured woodcut panels celebrate the women of her community, etching their faces and figures in a manner reminiscent of traditional historical portraiture.

Also opening on March 9, *Atrium Artists in Residence: Amber Pierce, Poetry Jackson, and Nadd Harvin* showcases the work of three talented artists who have been invited to participate in the Museum's 2023 Atrium Artist in Residence Program. Aiming to support and amplify the work of artists living and working in the region, the residency offers a window into their creative process and another entry point for Museum visitors to engage with contemporary art and ideas in connection with *Cut to the Quick* and *Flourish*.

Virginia MOCA asks that visitors please note this exhibition contains mature content, including depictions of sexual and physical violence. The Hold Space Place, an area dedicated to respite and mindfulness, designed by the Norfolk-based self-care sanctuary [Get Well Soon](#), will offer guests space to rest and reflect on the works on display, which are notably complex, challenging, and potentially triggering.

Free admission is made possible through underwriting from the Goode Family Foundation. Tickets can be reserved on the Virginia MOCA website. For more information or to support the Virginia MOCA, please visit virginiamoca.org. Follow Virginia MOCA at @VirginiaMOCA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#) to receive the latest updates.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Exhibition support generously provided by Susan and Andrew Cohen, The Goode Family Foundation, Vivian Montano and Steve Lawson, the Rutter Family Art Foundation, and Virginia Humanities.

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

An AAM-accredited non-collecting museum, Virginia MOCA presents exceptional, locally relevant, and nationally resonant exhibitions that invite neighbors, strangers, students, families, communities, and cultures to explore our shared humanity through contemporary art, in all of its timeliness, restlessness, and beauty. More information about Virginia MOCA can be found at virginiamoca.org.

Image credit: Kara Walker (American, b. 1969). *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Exodus of Confederates from Atlanta*, edition 21/35, 2005. Offset lithography and silkscreen, 39 x 53 in. (99.1 x 134.6 cm). Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer. © Kara Walker

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