

# UNC-Chapel Hill in Chapel Hill, NC, Offers Exhibit Focused on Portraiture

UNC-Chapel Hill in Chapel Hill, NC, is presenting *The Outwin: American Portraiture Today*, on view at the Ackland Art Museum, through Aug. 26, 2018.

We live in a culture that is shaped by social media. We play with identity through technology, which both connects us and isolates us. It is no wonder the genre of portraiture is experiencing renewed significance and thriving in the contemporary art world. As a genre, portraiture is akin to the raw, direct nature of a journal entry, often revealing aspects of the sitter's identity that are messy or complicated or even artfully concealing the truth. It is the most personal - and certainly the most psychological - of art forms. As a viewer, we step into the relationship between the artist and the subject. Whether an artist is creating a visual autobiography, delving deeper into a relationship, or getting to know someone, the resulting portrait shows us a private world.

Every three years, the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery invites artists to participate in the most prestigious portrait contest in the country: the juried *Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition*. In 2016, its fourth iteration, jurors selected 43 winning works from more than 2,500 entries. The resulting exhibition has become a pivotal marker because, for the first time ever, the Portrait Gallery has sent it on tour. The Ackland Art Museum is honored to host *The Outwin: American Portraiture Today* and will be the exhibition's final venue.

The first-prize winner of the 2016 *Out-*



Amy Sherald, American, born 1973: "Miss Everything (Unsuppressed Deliverance)"; oil on canvas, 54 x 43-1/8 in., 2013. Frances and Burton Reifler © Amy Sherald.

*win Boochever Portrait Competition*, Amy Sherald has gained significant prominence recently as the commissioned artist for the official portrait of former First Lady Michelle Obama. The *Outwin* marks Sherald's return to UNC-Chapel Hill; she had her first solo exhibition in 2011 at UNC's Sonya Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History.

For further info check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 919/966-5736 or visit ([www.ackland.org](http://www.ackland.org)).

# NC Museum of History in Raleigh, NC, Offers Works by Ernie Barnes

The NC Museum of History in Raleigh, NC, is presenting *The North Carolina Roots of Artist Ernie Barnes*, a new exhibit showcasing original paintings by and artifacts from the life Ernie Barnes, a native North Carolinian and NFL football player who became one of the nation's foremost African-American artists, on view through Mar. 3, 2019.

Widely-known as the real painter behind the character J.J. Evans' artwork in the groundbreaking African-American sitcom *Good Times*, Barnes' unique style of painting made him one of the premier figurative artists of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. His style, which has been widely imitated, is best exemplified by his celebrated Sugar Shack dance scene that appeared on Marvin Gaye's *I Want You* album cover and in the closing credits of *Good Times*.

"Although I never got a chance to meet Ernie in person, I was so honored to be able to work on this exhibit- because now I feel like I do know him," said exhibit curator Katie Edwards. "He was a remarkable human being who defied odds and became a renowned artist. This exhibit is an amazing opportunity for the state of North Carolina. It's a chance for visitors to see a number of Barnes' works that he painted throughout his life and see the impact that the state had on him and his career."

The unique *The North Carolina Roots of Artist Ernie Barnes* exhibit will showcase unpublished Ernie Barnes original paintings, as well as artifacts from his life.

Barnes was born and raised in Durham, NC, and is best known for his unique style of elongation, energy, and movement. Affectionately nicknamed "Big Rembrandt" by his teammates, he is the first professional American athlete to become a noted painter. In his prolific body of work, Barnes chronicled his personal experiences with football, music, dance, love, sports, education, church, and the South.

Born July 15, 1938, Barnes grew up in Durham (Durham County). Shy, sensitive, and bullied throughout childhood, he sought refuge in his sketchbooks and eventually transformed his body and attitude through exercise and discipline. By high school, Barnes excelled as an athlete, and in his senior year at Durham's Hillside High School, he became the captain of the football team and state champion in the shot put.

Barnes graduated high school in 1956 with 26 athletic scholarship offers. Seg-



The Drum Major (2003). Images courtesy of Ernie Barnes Family Trust©

regation, however, prevented him from considering nearby Duke University or the University of North Carolina. He attended the all-African American North Carolina College at Durham (formerly North Carolina College for Negroes; now North Carolina Central University), where he majored in art on a full athletic scholarship.

Barnes was selected in the 1960 National Football League draft by the Baltimore Colts. After five seasons as an offensive lineman, he retired in 1966 at age 28 to devote himself to art, eventually settling in Los Angeles. He died of cancer at age 70 on April 27, 2009.

"The estate is proud to kick-off Ernie Barnes' 80th birthday with his first public exhibition in 11 years," said Luz Rodriguez, Barnes' longtime personal assistant and friend. "I hope his fans - and those new to Ernie Barnes - discover more about his extraordinary career. Because of his unique path, his work is inspirational and important to American culture."

The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North Carolina by

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stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 919/807-7900 or visit ([www.ncmuseumofhistory.org](http://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org)).

# Hillsborough Gallery of Arts in Hillsborough, NC, Offers a New Exhibit

The Hillsborough Gallery of Arts in Hillsborough, NC, will present *Common Ground*, featuring works by Linda Carmel, Michele Yellin, Nell Chandler, and Evelyn Ward, on view from July 23 through Aug. 26, 2018. A reception will be held on July 27, from 6-9pm.

The paintings of Linda Carmel celebrate women and what they do every day to stabilize and support family and community. Her work points us toward a world in which women can take the lead in finding common ground, moving us away from this time of polarization, peril and uncertainty.

Carmel writes, "We can see things happening that might point the way for our country. Record numbers of women are running for office in this year's elections. The most effective challenge to the NRA is being led by adolescents who are furious at the adult world's valuing assault rifles over their lives."

Carmel's paintings in this show reflect her thoughts on the current predicament American society is facing. "My work illuminates how women can help heal a torn community. This series points toward a time of compassion for all of humanity and a respect for the Earth. With a positive attitude and with humor, I offer my perspective to the viewer."

Carmel adds, "My paintings have sculpted surfaces. You can actually feel the peaks and valleys that add nuance to the imagery. I encourage people to touch these canvasses so that they can connect with the themes on a deeper level."



Work by Michele Yellin

Jewelry artist Nell Chandler writes, "When we first decided to call our show *Common Ground*, I associated the title with us: four women. As artists we definitely share a common sensibility. We are kindred spirits."

"I then turned to the work that I would create for our show and I felt inspired by my friends to dig deeper into new techniques that I'd learned in recent years such as etched metal impressions on polymer clay, prisma colored pencils on copper,



Work by Linda Carmel

and torch enameling," adds Chandler. "I realized that I wanted to push myself to try to combine these techniques to make jewelry that reflected the common ground of these seemingly different styles."

Painter Michele Yellin writes, "In life, what interests me most is finding a space where I can have a meeting of the minds and hearts with others. Sometimes I think that it is not unusual to feel isolated and alienated. With a little effort, it is easy to connect with others and share what we have in common - our dreams, our hopes, our lives and our values."

"The same is true for my artwork. I create work as an expression of my own inner and outer life. Once I put it out in the world, I am interested in other people connecting with, and finding that what I paint, is part of their lives as well," adds Yellin.

"My paintings evolve organically. I start by laying down texture and color to create a loose abstract field. The textures and colors suggest shapes and spaces, much like clouds creating shapes in the sky. Everything and anything is on that canvas, waiting to be found. I draw what I see, and begin painting. Some things stay, others are painted over, developing paintings that have many layers. Through this process, the painting begins to tell a story. It is how I discover and reveal my inner life."

For *Common Ground* Evelyn Ward is showing a selection of her twice-fired stoneware pottery; the decoration integrates representations of local native plants. Ward writes: "I enjoy making good, useful pots that someone will enjoy using every day." Her process for creating

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