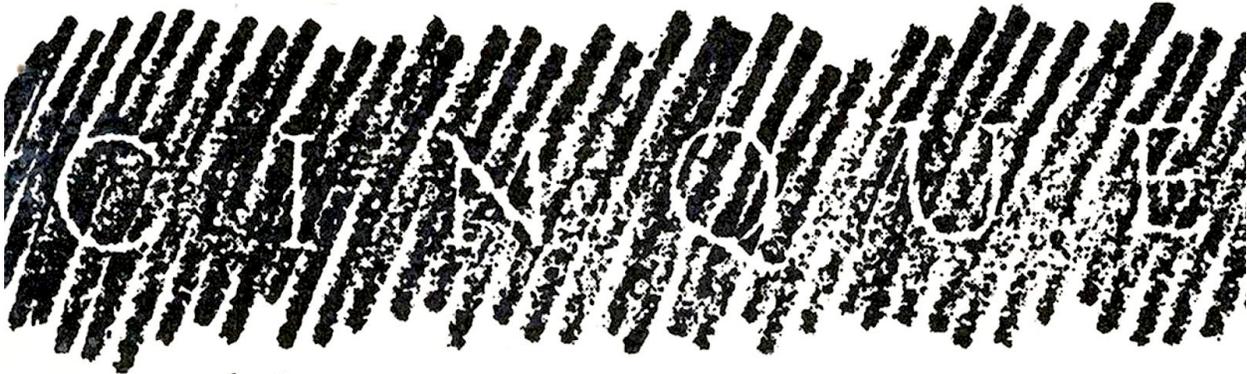


Press Release

The Art Students League of New York to Present the First-Ever Introductory Survey Exhibition of Cinque Gallery: “Creating Community. Cinque Gallery Artists”



Press Preview: May 1, 2021

VIP Opening: May 2, 2021

Public Exhibition: May 3–July 4, 2021

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(New York, NY): Today, The Art Students League of New York (ASL) announces their new exhibition “Creating Community. Cinque Gallery Artists” (May 3–July 4, 2021.) The League is the first institution to present an introductory survey of Cinque Gallery, one of the United States’ most innovative and enduring non-profit artists’ spaces. This ground-breaking exhibition will celebrate a diverse selection of late twentieth century and contemporary artists who participated from 1969 – 2004 in this pioneering artist collaborative enterprise. The Romare Bearden Foundation is an institutional partner of The Art Students League in this unprecedented tribute.

Founded by three master League artists, Romare Bearden (1911–1988), Ernest Crichlow (1914–2005), and Norman Lewis (1909–1979), who were determined to “provide a place where the works of unknown, and neglected artists of talent...primarily minority artists” would “not only be shown but nurtured and developed.” (*Excerpts. 1969 Cinque Gallery by-laws*), Cinque Gallery successfully fostered a mutually supportive community of artists, young and mature, for nearly four decades - and yet, it is virtually undetectable in modern scholarship and criticism.

Relying on circles of volunteers, for 35 years the Gallery hosted solo, group, and touring exhibitions presenting artwork by hundreds of artists. Initially located in a space offered by Joseph Papp’s New York Public Theatre, the Gallery later moved to other venues then finally re-located in 1988 to 560 Broadway in Soho, until its closing in 2004. Cinque Gallery is fondly remembered for its lively receptions and social events attracting writers, musicians, actors, and other artists.

The League has invited arts administrator and curator Susan Stedman and artist Nanette Carter to direct this ambitious curatorial, programmatic and scholarly endeavor. This exhibition of paintings, works on paper, sculptures and archival documents are part of Stedman’s oral history project illuminating the achievements of several generations of artists such as Emma Amos, Betty Blayton-Taylor, Tom Feelings, Cynthia Hawkins, Norma Morgan, Howard McCaleb, Otto Neals and Ben Wigfall. Spanning two floors, the exhibition also features other artists, in addition to the Gallery’s founders, who have become widely celebrated: Charles Alston, Robert Blackburn, Elizabeth Catlett, Melvin Edwards, Sam Gilliam, Faith Ringgold, Stanley Whitney, Hale Woodruff.

"We are honored to present this groundbreaking exhibition," said Genevieve Martin, director of external affairs, who invited the project. "The League seeks to create a space that encourages the public to have challenging conversations around social justice issues and intersectional approaches to arts education and exhibition-making. The founders initiated Cinque Gallery because of the denial of opportunities for serious artists, particularly artists of color and that problem is far from solved. The League seeks to create public recognition of these overlooked contributors of American art while investing in the next generation of artists and cultural producers through our affordable classes and free programs."

"Creating Community. Cinque Gallery Artists" exhibition will be supplemented by a series of public programs and artist talks organized by Nanette Carter. There will be an accompanying catalog featuring never before exhibited archival images and documents. Guest Exhibition Curator Susan Stedman and Guest Public Program Curator Nanette Carter will be supported by The League's inaugural curatorial fellow, Jewel Ham. The objective of The League's Curatorial Fellowship Program is to provide quality experiences and mentorship for graduate students from backgrounds generally underrepresented in the arts to fast-track their transition from academic to professional careers.



SUSAN STEDMAN, Guest Exhibition Curator, is an arts administrator, grantmaker, and advisor to museums, arts, and social justice organizations. She also is an independent curator and manager for artists' estates and collections. She recently contributed to the catalog and exhibition "Procession. The Art of Norman Lewis" at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.



NANETTE CARTER, Guest Program Curator, is an artist who presently teaches art at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Her paintings and drawings can be found in the collections of the Studio Museum in Harlem; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba; The Newark Museum; The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; and many others. Carter had a solo exhibition at Cinque Gallery and served on its artistic advisory committee, 1988-1994, and on the board of the Harlem School of the Arts, 2002 – 2006.



JEWEL HAM, Inaugural League Curatorial Fellow, is a 2020 summa cum laude Howard University graduate, with a Bachelor in Fine Arts. She intends to utilize her fellowship and professional experience to increase art access in black and brown communities.

ROMARE BEARDEN FOUNDATION

THE ROMARE BEARDEN FOUNDATION, institutional partner of "Creating Community, was established in 1990 as a non-profit organization by the estate of Romare Bearden (1911-1988) to preserve and perpetuate the legacy of the preeminent American artist. After Cinque Gallery closed, the Foundation created the Cinque Artists Program to perpetuate Bearden's legacy of support by providing a platform for artists and curators to present their work. This contemporary program celebrates the vision of the founders and artists who were a part of its history.

The Art Students League of New York: The League was founded in 1875 by students breaking away from the National Academy of Design. That independent spirit remains at The League today, where students pursue their work unconstrained by dogma, politics or burdensome tuition. We educate students in the language and process of making art in an environment where anyone who wishes to pursue arts education can realize his or her full potential. The League fulfills this mission by offering affordable, high-quality education and instruction in painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and assemblage. Artists who have studied at the League include Georgia O'Keeffe, Romare Bearden, Jackson Pollock, Carmen Herrera, Robert Rauschenberg, Adrian Piper, Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, James Rosenquist and Ai-Weiwei, among others. www.theartstudentsleague.org