



# **AT FREEDOM'S DOOR**

## **CHALLENGING SLAVERY IN MARYLAND**

**Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American  
History and Culture and the Maryland Historical Society  
In collaboration with Maryland Institute College of Art**

**February 3, 2007–October 28, 2008**





LEFT: Romare Bearden, *Roots Odyssey*, 1976, The Romare Bearden Foundation  
RIGHT: Portrait of Elisha Tyson, 1800–1810, Formerly attributed to Robert Street



## PROJECT OVERVIEW



Romare Bearden, *Roots  
Odyssey*, 1976, The Romare  
Bearden Foundation

*At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* is a collaboration between the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture (RFLM), the Maryland Historical Society (MdHS), and Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). This collaborative endeavor was essential to achieve the exhibition's vision of depicting meaningful connections between art and real life experiences. *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* has been developed and produced by students from Maryland Institute College of Art and Morgan State University (MSU) enrolled in MICA's Exhibition Development Seminar, in collaboration and with support and oversight from the professional staff of both museums and MICA.

The exhibition's primary objective is to challenge the public's perception of slavery and freedom by teaching visitors about resistance to slavery, whether it occurred through formal organization or individual efforts. *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* attempts to answer a question crucial to the understanding of our state's past, present and future: How did Marylanders—both enslaved and free—respond to, challenge, and ultimately defeat slavery as a legal institution? Historical art and artifacts as well as contemporary art are used throughout the exhibition to investigate Maryland's complex and often contradictory relationship to slavery. The exhibition asks us to consider what it meant to be “free” in the early United States and what it means to be “free” in the world today.

The production of *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* was conceived as an educational experience that provides a new model for museums developing an exhibition. The creative talent and efforts of 36 MICA and MSU undergraduate, graduate and continuing studies students from my Exhibition Development Seminar formed the basis of this collaboration. Drawing on a decade of research conducted by MdHS, students used T. Stephen Whitman's forthcoming book *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in the Chesapeake* as the foundation for their subsequent primary and secondary research. For the past two years they examined the curatorial process while working in nine teams on every phase of the exhibition's conceptualization, organization and implementation under the mentorship of professionals from the community. Intensive weekly seminars were combined with practical experiences at RFLM, MdHS, MICA, community sites, and the two resident and seven commissioned artists. They began with weekly readings, contemporary artist and art research, and writing assignments to develop the object list, exhibition script, interpretive texts, publications, graphic and exhibit designs, educational activities, Web site, exhibition programs and a state-wide community outreach initiative to schools and non-profits. Proposals

received rigorous feedback and criticism from peers, mentors, and personnel from the three institutions. The students always repeatedly confronted the question: How did their ideas contribute to connecting the exhibition's goals to the larger community?

*At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* gave the involved institutions an opportunity to enhance their public service goals while enabling MICA to expand its two-fold mission of educating professional artists and serving as a community cultural resource. Everyone contributed enormous time and energy into this multi-faceted project. I express my sincere thanks to MICA's administration for its invaluable assistance and encouragement and to the two museum collaborators whose staffs worked with students to utilize our combined resources. Finally, I am indebted to the extraordinary students from MICA and MSU for the invaluable part they played by working together as a unified team to formulate and produce *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland*. This project created new approaches, concepts, presentations, and methods of teaching art, which helped the students build their careers as artists, educators and museum professionals in the future.

George Ciscle  
*Curator-in-Residence, Maryland Institute College of Art*

## HOW TO EXPERIENCE

*At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* is presented at two museums. While chronologically the story begins at one museum and continues at the other, there is a constant dialogue. One exhibit can be seen without the other, but visiting both museums can give the viewer deeper insight to the questions the exhibition raises: where have we been, where are we now, and where are we going?

The Maryland Historical Society (MdHS) presents the history of slavery's beginnings in Maryland, from the Middle Passage to the relationships between the enslaved and the slaveholder. MdHS also tells the stories of Marylanders' resistance to slavery.

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture (RFLM) offers perspective on African American life in early 19th century Baltimore. With their efforts toward freedom in their own day—through work, faith, and organization—antebellum black Baltimoreans created traditions for subsequent generations. The difficult decades following slavery's end would test the strength of those traditions.



## EXHIBITION DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

*At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* investigates identity as a composite of past and present through historical artifacts and contemporary artworks representative of both periods. We hope these interactions of past and present will initiate a dialogue to shape our future. Maryland is chosen for its geographical location as the southernmost northern state and northernmost southern state, enabling us to examine our shared experience today highlighting moral corruption and correctness in our history. This project aims to bring together the state's communities and to reflect and initiate a conversation about the history of slavery and what 'freedom' means today.

To help facilitate the journey, the exhibition concentrates on four underlying themes, two at each institution. The primary themes explored at the MdHS are Slavery in Maryland and Resistance to Slavery. The primary themes addressed at the RFLM are *Creating Avenues to Freedom: African Americans in Early 19th Century Baltimore* and *Beyond the Door: Remembering Slavery in Maryland*. We hope that conversations within each institution can carry on beyond the doors and out into the community at large. We intend visitors to be inspired by witnessing the story unfold at both institutions. The themes addressed by both institutions are distinct and detailed. However, we stress the importance of the conversation between the themes to understand the entirety of the exhibition.

*Album Quilt (Detail),*  
1842-43, MdHS



*At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* considers how history has physically and metaphorically branded contemporary understandings of slavery. Unique and varying viewpoints of resident artists, commissioned artists and existing artworks inspired by identity and freedom acknowledge the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of the legacy of slavery. Contemporary artworks respond to the exhibition's historical artifacts in an effort to portray the present response the restrictions that slavery demanded. They also address the ever-changing meaning of slavery and freedom as handed down to us from previous generations. The juxtaposition of historic artifact with contemporary art serves to examine, challenge, analyze, contrast, and, most important, to question where we come from, where we are today, and where we are headed.

**"We are united by our cumulative history. Through understanding our past and its consequences we will be able to develop a unified, compassionate and holistic community."**

**-A note from the class**

By examining our past, we shed new light on the present. The underlying objective of the exhibition's programmatic effort is to encourage the viewer to examine the context from a multitude of perspectives. *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* represents a true meeting of the minds: a complex collaboration that initiates a conversation that we hope acknowledges the struggles and victories of many groups and individuals, both past and present. Through these conversations wounds can heal and empowerment may begin.

TOP RIGHT: Benny Andrews, *I Dream a World*, 2006, ACA Gallery  
RIGHT: Benny Andrews, *Still Here*, 2006, ACA Gallery





# SLAVERY IN MARYLAND

Charles Ball's first memory was of his mother, holding him in her arms. Walking along a road in southern Maryland, she begged her master not to sell her only remaining child. As she sobbed, the two were separated and his mother was beaten back with a rawhide whip. He never saw her again. Many years later, Ball recalled how "the horrors of that day sank deeply into my heart...the terrors of that scene return with painful vividness upon my memory." Sold many times, Charles Ball regularly drank "the cup of sorry to the very dregs." He encountered awful working and living conditions, endured repeated beatings by his owners, and faced permanent separations from his own wife and children.

Ball's story poignantly reminds us of just how fragile a situation the enslaved African Americans occupied in Maryland. Among the first English colonies to make African slavery hereditary and legal in 1664, Maryland remained firmly committed to slavery through law, economics, and social custom for another 200 years.

Before 1710 nearly all Maryland slaves were African-born. Men, women, and children who survived the terrible "Middle Passage" arrived in the colony either directly or via the Caribbean. Because men outnumbered women at first, a native-born population did not appear for several generations. Until later in the 1700s, Maryland Africans lived mostly in small groups, which made life more difficult at first but may have helped ensure the persistence of some African cultural traditions.

Francis Guy, *Perry Hall Slave Quarter (Detail)*, 1805, MdHS

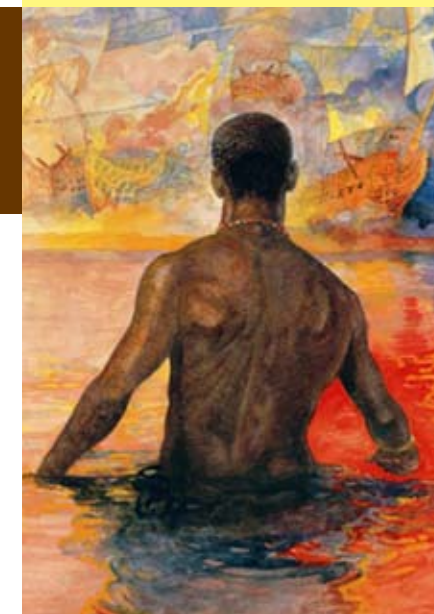


Whether living on a large plantation or a small farm, life for enslaved Marylanders remained physically demanding as well as tedious. As Dennis Simms, a former Prince George's County slave remembered, "It was a pretty hard and cruel life." Even so, enslaved men and women managed to carry out personal relationships, establish families, create community and worship their god, but these activities often occurred in the slave quarter out of sight of their white owners. From sunrise to sunset, they raised cash crops like tobacco and later, wheat, tended livestock, and vegetable gardens; fished, worked as boatmen, maintained and repaired property and performed menial tasks such as cooking, cleaning, sewing, and washing. Through ingenious methods like refusing to work or running away many resisted their bondage. Bondmen learned trades like blacksmithing and became highly skilled artisans, sometimes so competent that their owners leased them to work for other whites, allowing them to live off the premises and keep a small portion of their wages. Just as ex-slave Frederick Douglass discovered, early 19th-century Baltimore's growing commercial industry offered economic opportunities to enslaved Marylanders that included contact with free blacks, while also according them some precious measures of autonomy provided by urban life.

**"Life for enslaved Marylanders remained physically demanding as well as tedious."**

By the outbreak of the Civil War, Maryland occupied, in the words of historian Barbara Fields, a precarious "middle ground" between slavery and freedom. It remained loyal to the Union and in 1864 by narrow margin adopted a constitution that abolished slavery yet supplied thousands of troops to the Confederacy. Baltimore's free black community openly raised money to benefit black Federal soldiers, many of them former Maryland slaves, and welcomed contraband slaves as refugees. Escaping from Maryland to serve in the Union Army, John Boston wrote his wife Elizabeth, who remained enslaved there, "I can Adress you thank god as a free man." He continued, no doubt speaking for countless others, "But as the lord led the Children of Isrel to the lands of Canon so he led me to a land Whare freedom Will rain in spite Of earth and hell. Dear you must make your Self content. I am free from all the Slavers Lash."

Kym S. Rice  
Assistant Director, Museum Studies Program  
The George Washington University  
Guest Curator, Maryland Historical Society



TOP: Unknown, *Spiked Slave Collar*, 1820, Collection of Derrick Beard  
ABOVE: Jerry Pinkney, *The Old African*, 2004-2005, Courtesy of the Artist



## RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY



Whites organized the first formal opposition to slavery in Maryland. Soon after the American Revolution, ordinary citizens throughout the Atlantic World began to register their opposition to the slave trade. Among the first to contest slavery on moral grounds, Quakers urged their members to give up slaveholding. The constitution of Baltimore's Abolition Society, established in 1789, pledged that "the human race, however varied in colour or Intellects, are all justly entitled to liberty."

Perhaps influenced by America's new independence or "bound by conscience," Upper South slaveholders began to manumit (free) their slaves in large numbers. A Maryland slaveholder noted plainly in a court document, "Black people are as much entitled to natural liberty as whites." Although individuals continued to free slaves outright or allow self-purchase, slaveholders, with increasing regularity, created timetables for freedom that allowed them to benefit from an enslaved person's labor for years to come.

**"Many free and enslaved individuals strove to practice freedom in their daily lives by devoting their meager resources to liberating family members and friends..."**

Not surprisingly, antislavery arguments did little to prevent slavery's entrenchment in Maryland. As the free black population grew, some whites championed the colonization movement (founded 1817), which advocated the removal and resettlement of free African Americans in Africa, as a moral and economic solution to the problem. In fact, Maryland eventually furnished the largest number of American emigrants to Liberia. Many African Americans saw colonization as deportation and vehemently opposed it. A Baltimore group protested that this is "the land in which we were born [and] our only true and appropriate home." Some like the educator Daniel Coker who left for Liberia in 1820 grew pessimistic about life in a profoundly racist society.

Formal antislavery sentiment in Maryland coalesced in the early 1830s. Working with black churches, Elisha Tyson founded the Protection Society to thwart the growing practice of kidnapping free African Americans and selling them into slavery. John Needles reportedly hid antislavery literature in the furniture his factory shipped south. In 1825 Benjamin Lundy briefly located his antislavery newsletter, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation* in Baltimore, publishing William Watkins as the "Colored



Baltimorean." Watkins influenced young William Lloyd Garrison, then working for Lundy, against colonization. Garrison left Baltimore in 1830 after his jailing for libeling a slave trader.

E. Poulson, *Slave Brig with Royal Navy Brig in Pursuit (Detail)*, c.1850, Penobscot Maritime Museum

Throughout the period, enslaved Marylanders, in the words of historian Stephen Whitman, "sustained a constant movement towards freedom." They opposed their bondage by purchasing their liberty, by suing for freedom in court, and by rebelling against those who called themselves their masters. Free people of color held on to their hard-won status, resisting kidnapers who sought to re-enslave them, assisting fugitive slaves, and coping with growing legal restrictions. Many free and enslaved individuals strove to practice freedom in their daily lives by devoting their meager resources to liberating family members and friends, by founding churches and schools, and by working to acquire businesses and property.

Traveling on foot, along water routes or in disguise, enslaved men and, in smaller numbers, women sought their freedom across the Mason Dixon line. Maryland stood literally "at freedom's door" and, by one estimate, supplied the largest number of successful runaways. African Americans, together with whites, operated the antebellum "Underground Railroad," an informal nationwide movement that aided runaways. Although romanticized today, these undertakings involved great risks and required courage and ingenuity for success. When a slaveholder refused to sell her free father his wife, despite a prior agreement, Caroline Hammond's family escaped from Anne Arundel County. The family traveled under a forged pass to Baltimore where a white family "who were ardent supporters of the Underground Railroad" sheltered them. "Fearful of being apprehended," with a bounty on their heads, the family made their escape to freedom in Pennsylvania concealed in a wagon transporting goods.

Kym S. Rice  
*Assistant Director, Museum Studies Program*  
*The George Washington University*  
*Guest Curator, Maryland Historical Society*

TOP: Josiah Wedgwood, *Am I Not a Man and a Brother?*, c.late 1700s, The Walters Art Museum; ABOVE: Jacob Lawrence; *Douglass*; 1999, DC Moore Gallery

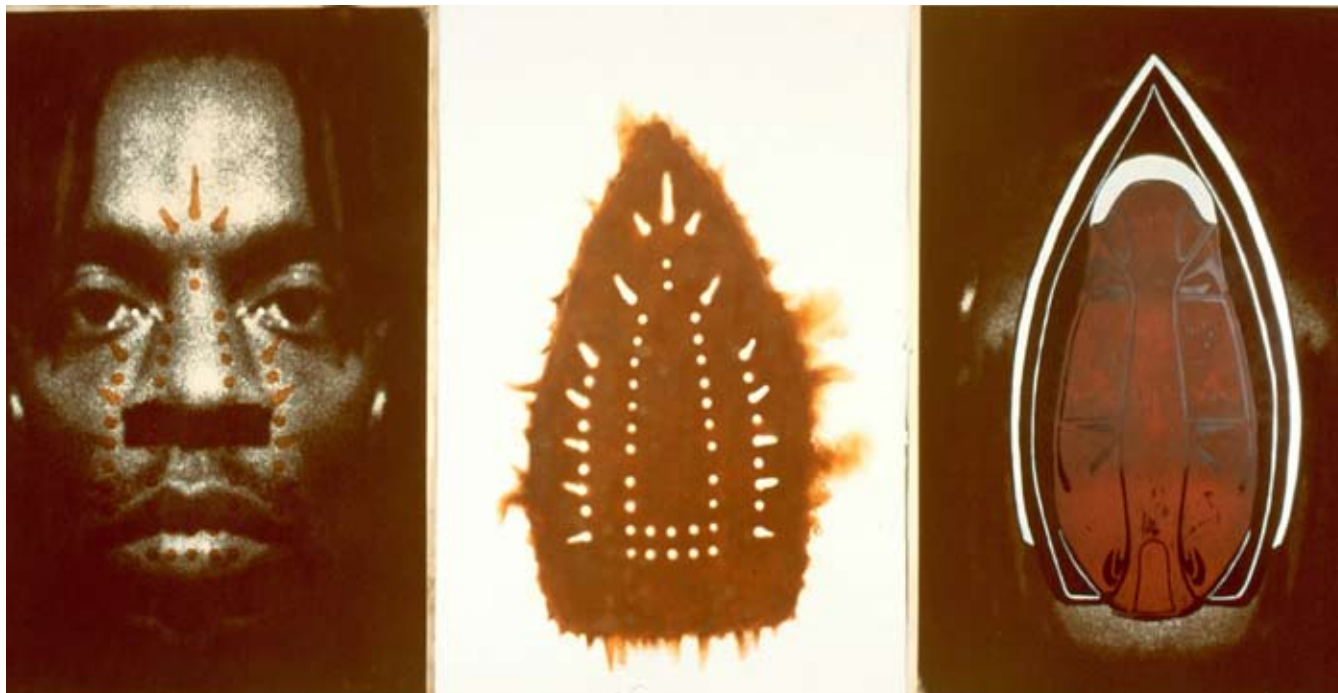
# BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR FREEDOM: AFRICAN AMERICAN SURVIVAL LEGACIES FROM THE ANTEBELLUM ERA

“I HAD THE STRONGEST DESIRE to see Baltimore,” Frederick Douglass (1817–1895) confessed in his first autobiography, published in 1845. Even as a young child on the remote Eastern Shore, like most other Maryland blacks, Douglass (né Bailey) knew of the haven on the Patapsco. When faced with opportunities to go there, not even the thought of separation from the only home and community he had known seemed to discourage the young boy. He left the Eastern Shore, at his slave owner’s behest, though “without a regret,” eagerly bound for Baltimore, “with the highest hopes of future happiness.”

The size of the African American population set Baltimore apart from any place else in the nation, North or South. The determination of the city’s blacks to strive for economic, cultural, and educational opportunities beyond what the larger society intended for them also proved key. And, citizens’ willingness to be participants in varied and multi-faceted efforts toward resisting slavery was a hallmark of the city’s antebellum life. Thus in spite of its slaveholding status, its function as a stronghold for some of the most brutal and virulent practitioners of slavery and racism in the nation, and the frequent heart-wrenching scenes of the domestic slave trade, African Americans constructed in Baltimore an environment of freedom unavailable anywhere else.

This environment of freedom owed much to the extensive family and community networks among black people. The impact of this environment could sometimes be spectacular, frequently providing the genesis of

Willie Cole, *Man, Spirit and Mask*, 1999, Published by the by the Brodsky Center (formerly the Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper)



genius. On his family’s farm, just beyond the western limits of Baltimore, the scientist Benjamin Banneker (1731–1806) not only produced scholarly studies, but also intellectually engaged the holders of racist notions, capably defending his people’s dignity. Less spectacular, but more important perhaps than the personal accomplishments of those such as Banneker, was the impact freedom for *some* could have on the possibilities of freedom for *others*. Indeed, runaways relied upon kin and friends. The fugitives tell us this themselves through the filters of 19th-century narratives, some of which even predate the Underground Railroad. Furthermore, when the abolitionists and their movement did connect with points south of the Mason-Dixon Line, Baltimoreans were prominently involved.

**“This environment of freedom owed much to the extensive family and community networks among black people.”**

Legal freedom came to all African Americans in Maryland as it did to the rest of the slave-holding South—as a result of the U. S. Civil War. Yet, the challenge slavery had posed to black people did not disappear with its death following the victory of the ratification of a new state constitution in 1864. Rather, the rights of legitimacy, equality, and self-definition remained as battles still to be won or lost in future days; battles some argue rage on to *this* day. What black Baltimoreans must have known, however, was that the cultural survivals they carried forward with them out of the age of slavery represented an effective foundation upon which they could mount opposition to any challenges freedom might bring.

David Taft Terry, Ph.D.  
*Executive Director*  
*Reginald F. Lewis Museum of*  
*Maryland African American History and Culture*



Daniel Payne, *The Presentation of a Gold Snuffbox to the Reverend R.J. Reckinridge, D.D (Detail)*, 1845, MdHS



## BEYOND THE DOOR:

### THE CHALLENGE OF FREEDOM AFTER SLAVERY



David Levinthal,  
*Mammy*, 1995–1998,  
Conner Contemporary Art

“I AM OPPOSED TO THE NIGGERS VOTING,” Mississippi politician James K. Vardaman quipped during the early–1900s, at the dawn of the age of racial circumscription. In his mind, all blacks were unacceptable as full citizens—from the educated and cultured, to the, “coconut-headed, chocolate-colored typical little coon... who blacks my shoes every morning.” This section of *At Freedom’s Door* signals a move beyond the chronological framework of slavery and seeks to reflect the history of America’s memory of slavery, and the uses to which that memory has been applied. The memory is cast here as both personal recollection and publicly debated characterization of the past.

The two centuries of racism, which underpinned legal slavery, did not disappear in the aftermath of the Civil War. Rather, a struggle emerged to identify and then harvest slavery’s legacy and historical import in America. In the end, by the time of Vardaman’s remarks, a new second-class status—yet another caste—had been affixed upon African Americans as a group. Seeking neither truth nor reconciliation across the color line, in the wake of the Civil War, white America agreed that whatever direction their society would take, it would be of, by, and for white people. Defeating this effort was the challenge slavery’s death left unmet.

**“This environment of freedom owed much to the extensive family and community networks among black people.”**

Perhaps more than any other agent in these developments, art and visual imagery warped the nation’s memory of African American history. In cahoots with politics, custom, and economic practice, all manner of artistic expression generated for and by “mainstream” audiences served to push African Americans back again toward slavery. These interpretations of black America suggested that freedom had been a mistake and that granting equality to the freed people would only compound the error. So, as tools of white power, a deluge of fictitious “typical little coon” images (to borrow Vardaman’s phrase) depicted black citizens as less-than-human, undeserving of equality.

In art and advertisement, blacks were reduced to what they had been—servants, helpers, and comforters of whites in every way. Iconic in this way were the multitude of “mammies,” which proliferated throughout the period. A more disturbing psychology, however, is suggested by bootjacks cast around 1880 in the form of a lasciviously postured black woman, upon whose bellies white men were literally invited to clean the crud from their shoes.

David Levinthal,  
*Mammy*, 1995–1998,  
Conner Contemporary Art



Representing a continuation of the antebellum degradation of free blacks, the unfortunate visual aesthetic of the late-19th century worked to establish the perception that an innate racial inferiority, *not race discrimination*, lay at the root of black wretchedness. Yet, as the promulgation of racism through artistic depiction mounted, it served only to feed the inner resolve and communal resilience of African Americans.

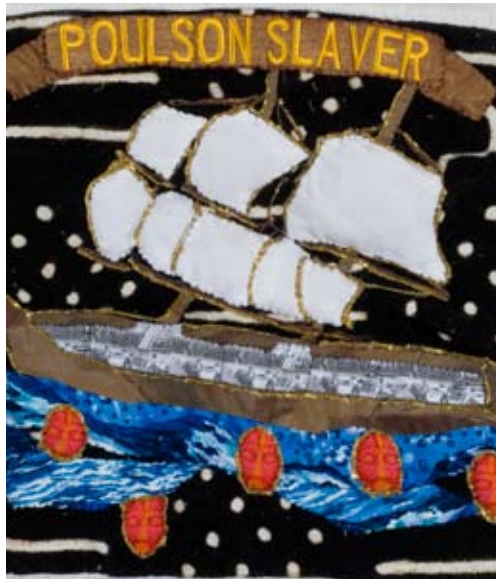
Blacks rose to their own self-defense, demanding respect and claiming for themselves a just role within the national life. Hand-in-hand with other forms of intellectual production (like historiography, which sought to reclaim a more factual African American past), African American art responded to the aesthetic assault almost as it began. The traditional responses often brought frank confrontations from artists, and have continued through modern day. Others have taken a different tack, seeking to appropriate and re-contextualize the most troubling images and icons, in hopes that turning them against their original intent might offer important statements on the persisting inequities in modern life. Everyday folk too had something to say, albeit more subtly, more personally. In this important way, the preservation of family histories in Bibles, oral traditions, and the like, did much to countermand the deleterious impact of the racism around them.

David Taft Terry, Ph.D.  
*Executive Director*  
*Reginald F. Lewis Museum of*  
*Maryland African American History and Culture*

David Claypool Johnston, *Early Development of Southern Chivalry (Detail)*, c. 1861–65, MdHS



ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE:  
JOAN GAITHER



Joan M.E. Gaither is a native of Baltimore and currently the undergraduate coordinator for art education at MICA. She was involved in helping to integrate local schools and businesses during the Civil Rights Movement. Gaither received a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University and both a master's degree in education and a doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has exhibited at MICA, most recently in Fall 2006, as well as the Maryland Art Educators Association Annual Exhibition (1990–1997) and Milwaukee Art Educators Annual Exhibition (1993–1995). Gaither has received many honors and awards including the National Art Education Association's Maryland Art Educator of the Year award (2005), Howie Award–Outstanding Educator (1992), the Boston Museum School's Excellence in Teaching Award (1991), and the Rhode Island School of Design Excellence in Teaching Award (1984). She was Maryland's runner-up for the Thanks to Teachers Excellence Award (1990).

According to Gaither, "I juxtapose issues of slavery and racism against the warmth and comfort that quilts provide. I highlight the consequences of laws, codes, beliefs, and values for those who continue to be marginalized. These quilts are layered, embedded and embellished with images, text, objects, and symbolic cloth to make emotional connections with issues of identity and freedom of body, mind, and spirit. The Baltimore Album style quilt focuses on particular people, places, objects, and events that challenge the complexities of the institution of slavery. The *How Much Longer* quilt represents the lingering pain of racism and the vestiges of slavery."

ABOVE: Joan Gaither, *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist; BELOW: Joan Gaither, *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist



ARVIE SMITH

Arvie Smith was born in 1938 and spent his childhood in rural Texas and Watts and South Central, Los Angeles. As an artist and educator, his work examines various aspects of the African-American experience, including slavery, racism, commerce, and entertainment. Smith has participated in more than 30 solo and group exhibitions and has served as an instructor/lecturer at MICA; Pacific Northwest College of Art; University of Oregon; Creative Arts Council of Manucha, Oregon; Oregon College of Arts and Crafts; and Studio Art Center International. He received a bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.) degree from Pacific Northwest College of Art and a master of fine arts (M.F.A.) degree from the Hoffberger School of Painting at MICA. During a sojourn in Italy, Smith studied at Il Bisonte and SACI in Florence. He has traveled extensively through West Africa and researched the slave castles of the Gold Coast.

According to Smith, "I transform the history of African Americans into lyrical two-dimensional paintings. My paintings commonly depict psychological images revealing deep sympathy for the dispossessed and marginalized members of society in an unrelenting search for beauty, meaning, and equality. This work reflects powerful injustices and the will to resist and survive. Memories of growing up in the South add to my awareness of the legacy that slavery has left with all Americans today. The intention is to critique the memory of atrocities and oppression so this will never be forgotten nor duplicated. I create this work because I must."



ABOVE: Arvie Smith, *Baltimore My Baltimore*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist; BELOW: Arvie Smith, *Baltimore my Baltimore (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist





## COMMISSIONED ARTISTS



William Christenberry, *Klan Room (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist



Linda Day Clark, *Plantation Diary #1*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist



Maren Hassinger, *Legacy, Detail*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist

### WILLIAM CHRISTENBERRY

William Christenberry is an acclaimed multimedia artist living in Washington, D.C., best known for his works depicting his hometown of Hale County, Alabama. In *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery*, Christenberry exhibits *The Klan Room* (1962), an installation of his Ku Klux Klan-related paintings, drawings, photographs, and found objects. Commenting on the disconcerting nature of this work, he said, "I hold the position that there are times when an artist must examine and reveal such strange and secret brutality."

### LINDA DAY CLARK

Linda Day Clark is a Baltimore native and community advocate working for change as an artist, educator, and scholar. She uses the camera to relate, touch, and inform. In her work, she reaches for the uniqueness in ordinary people to illuminate and preserve the power of the whispers of her ancestors. Her work in *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland* honors the slave ancestors in a more direct manner. Ms. Day Clark's piece has allowed her finally to put the African slave first.

### MAREN HASSINGER

Maren Hassinger comments on the natural and manufactured world through sculpture in more than 100 exhibitions. Using wire rope as sculpture and fiber has become her signature. For work produced for *At Freedom's Door: Challenging Slavery in Maryland*, she relies on the definition of SLAVE to speak as her statement: SLAVE, n.1 (and a.) a. One who is the property of, and entirely subject to, another person, whether by capture, purchase, or birth; a servant completely divested of freedom and personal rights. b. Used as a term of contempt. (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989)



Sam Holmes, *At Freedom's Door (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist



Whitfield Lovell, *Guide My Heart (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist



Michael Platt, *Tattoos in the Walls (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist



Joyce Scott, *Him*, 2006, Courtesy of the artist

### SAM CHRISTIAN HOLMES

Sam Christian Holmes was born on the east end of Long Island, New York, and currently resides in Baltimore. He received both bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.) and master of fine arts (M.F.A.) degrees from MICA. In working with metal, Holmes attempts to access his cultural and personal history on several levels. He said, "It's more the issues of recycling of materials (tin used in earlier works) or the utilitarian nature of the gate form (in later works) that suggest boundaries of symbolic communities and storytellers of folklore and personal memory."

### WHITFIELD LOVELL

Whitfield Lovell is a native of the Bronx and a graduate of the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. His primary aim is to pay tribute to the unsung heroes of American heritage. Working from studio portraits of African Americans, Lovell uses found objects collected at flea markets and antique shops to enhance and to evoke the legacies of those people who have helped build American history. His passion for this work began when he was child, fascinated by the stories told to him by his grandparents.

### MICHAEL PLATT

Michael Platt is a Washington D.C. artist known for printmaking, charcoal drawings, installations, and computer-generated images. His subjects are survivors and the marginalized, for whom he feels that respect and passion are paramount. For this project Platt based images on his combined experiences at slave dungeons in Ghana and at the Historical Hampton Plantation's slave quarters. The work represents a survivor of the Middle Passage, who carries the marks of the past and bears memories and marks of a new life in Maryland.

### JOYCE SCOTT

Joyce J. Scott is a sculptor, jeweler, printmaker, installation artist, performance artist, and educator. She draws from a wide-range of influences, from African and Native American experiences to comic books, television, American pop culture, and the contemporary urban scene on the streets of her Baltimore neighborhood. For more than three decades Scott has created objects that offer distinctive commentary on social issues such as racism, sexism, violence, stereotypes, and other forms of social injustice.



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*Resources:* Erin Kimes (MdHS), Nicole Shivers (RFLM)

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*Resources:* Cheryl Knauer (MICA), Heather Marchese (MICA)

### ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE:

Joan Gaither (MdHS), Arvie Smith (RFLM)

### COMMISSIONED ARTISTS:

William Christenberry  
Linda Day Clark  
Maren Hassinger  
Sam Christian Holmes  
Whitfield Lovell  
Michael Platt  
Joyce Scott

### EXISTING WORKS BY:

Benny Andrews  
Romare Bearden  
Elizabeth Catlett  
Willie Cole  
Leo and Diane Dillon  
Edmund Duffy  
Shirley Hunt  
Jacob Lawrence  
David Levinthal  
Valerie Maynard  
Jerry Pinkney  
Danny Simmons  
Hank Willis Thomas

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More information on *AFD*, including detailed project credits, images, bios of team members, lesson plans and a discussion forum, can be found online at: <http://www.mica.edu/atfreedomdoor>.

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### LENDERS:

ACA Gallery  
Albin O. Kuhn Library, UMBC  
Baltimore Museum of Art  
Derrick Beard  
Romare Bearden Foundation  
Belair Mansion  
Carroll Park Foundation  
Conner Contemporary Art  
Chipstone Foundation  
DC Moore Gallery  
David C. Driskell

Historic Annapolis  
Hampton National Historic Site  
Howard University  
James E. Lewis Museum, Morgan State University  
Johns Hopkins University  
Eisenhower Library  
Nancy Lane  
Library of Congress  
Madison County Historical Society  
Maryland Archives  
Maryland Historical Society

National Archives  
National Maritime Museum, London  
New Bedford Whaling Museum  
Penobscot Maritime Museum  
Sandy Spring Museum  
Swarthmore College Friends  
Historical Library  
The Walters Art Museum  
West Chester Historical Society  
Deborah Willis  
Winterthur Museum



## PROGRAMS AND EVENTS FEBRUARY–MAY 2007

For more information and descriptions of programs and events, please visit: <http://www.mica.edu/afreedomdoor>

Unless otherwise noted, all events are free with museum admission; Museum admission is free to RFLM and MdHS members and MICA and Morgan State University students with ID

**OPENING RECEPTION**  
Saturday, February 3, 2007,  
7:30–10 p.m.

Reginald F. Lewis Museum of  
Maryland African American  
History & Culture (RFLM)

**FILM: BOYS OF BARAKA (2005)**  
Saturday, February 10, 2007  
2 p.m.  
Morgan State University (MSU)

**FAMILY DAY**  
Sunday, February 11, 2007,  
Noon–4 p.m.

Maryland Historical Society  
(MdHS)

**ART IN AN HOUR**  
Wednesday, February 14, 2007  
Noon: RFLM

**TEACHER WORKSHOP**  
Saturday, February 17, 2007  
9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.:MdHS

**FREE SATURDAY FAMILY  
WORKSHOP**  
Saturday, February 17, 2007  
1–2 p.m. or 2:30–3:30 p.m.: RFLM

**CURATORS TALK**  
Saturday, February 24, 2007,  
1p.m.: RFLM

**MIXED MEDIA**  
Thursday, March 1, 2007,  
5–8 p.m.: MdHS

**FILM: FREDERICK DOUGLASS:  
WHEN THE LION WROTE  
HISTORY (1994)**

Saturday, March 17, 2007  
2 p.m.: MICA

**ART IN AN HOUR**  
Wednesday, March 14, 2007,  
Noon: RFLM

**FREE SATURDAY FAMILY  
WORKSHOP**  
Saturday March 17, 2007  
1–3:30 p.m.: MdHS

**CONVERSATIONS AT  
FREEDOM'S DOOR, PART II**  
Saturday, March 24, 2007  
1–4 p.m.: MdHS

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S STUDIO:  
QUILTING WITH JOAN GAITHER**  
Saturday, April 7,  
10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.: MICA

**MIXED MEDIA**  
Thursday, April 5, 2007,  
5–8 p.m.:RFLM

**FILM: 500 YEARS LATER (2005)**  
Saturday, April 14, 2007,  
2 p.m.: MICA

**ART IN AN HOUR**  
Wednesday, April 18, 2007,  
Noon: MdHS

**QUILTING FOR THE SOUL**  
Saturday April 21, 2007, 10.30 a.m.  
St. Mark United Methodist  
Church, 1440 Dorsey Road,  
Hanover, MD

**CONVERSATIONS AT  
FREEDOM'S DOOR, PART II**  
Saturday, April 28, 2007,  
1–4 p.m.: RFLM

**MIXED MEDIA**  
Thursday, May 3, 2007,  
5–8 p.m.: MdHS

**ART IN AN HOUR**  
Wednesday, May 9, 2007,  
Noon: MdHS

**FILM: BAMBOOZLED (2000)**  
Saturday, May 12, 2007,  
2 p.m.: MSU

LEFT: Arvie Smith, *Baltimore My Baltimore (Detail)*, 2006, Courtesy of the Artist;  
RIGHT: *The Peculiar Institution (Detail)*, 1860s, Albin O' Kuhn Library, UMBC



