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Rising Market for Post-War Abstraction Seen in Swann Galleries' April African-American Fine Art Auction

NEW YORK, New York [April 19, 2016](#)

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Norman Lewis, *Untitled (Processional Figure Composition)*, oil, pen and ink on paper, 1956. Sold April 7, 2016 for \$87,500, an auction record for a work on paper by the artist. (Pre-sale estimate: \$40,000 to \$60,000) (Swann)

[Tweet](#) [Like](#) [Share](#) (ArtfixDaily.com) Swann Galleries' **April 7** auction of **African-American Fine Art** brought over \$1.8 million and set records for multiple artists at auction.

[Pin it](#) Nigel Freeman, Swann Galleries' Director of African-American Fine Art, said, "This sale continued to build on many of our department's strengths.

Burgeoning interest in post-war abstraction continues to rise, with record prices for Frank Bowling and Felrath Hines, as well as high prices for works by Norman Lewis and Sam Gilliam."



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The top lot of the sale was Faith Ringgold's masterful story quilt, *Double Dutch on the Golden Gate Bridge*, acrylic on canvas with painted, dyed and pieced fabric, 1988, which sold for \$209,000. *Double Dutch*, from Ringgold's well-known *Woman on a Bridge* series, is only the second of her signature story quilts to come to auction; the first, *Maya's Quilt of Life*, sold at Swann last September for \$461,000 as part of the Art Collection of Maya Angelou.

Following on the heels of the artist record set by a large painting in Swann's December auction, works by Norman Lewis also fared well in this April sale. Lewis's *Untitled*, oil on board, 1947 (the cover lot of the catalogue), brought \$149,000; while *Untitled (Processional Figure Composition)*, oil, pen and ink on paper, 1956, realized \$87,500, setting an auction record for a work on paper by the artist. Overall, buyers were found for 100% of the works by Norman Lewis offered in the auction.

Auction records were set for several artists in addition to Bowling, Hines and Lewis. Allan Freelon's *Baiting Trawls*, 1930-35, oil on canvas, sold for \$37,500; while Palmer Hayden's evocative 1964 watercolor and gouache painting *The Blue Nile* brought \$42,500. Wadsworth Jarrell's bright and dynamic acrylic on canvas *The Messengers*, 1979, achieved \$27,500, setting a record for the artist at auction. Robert Neal's *Untitled (Fisherman's House at River's Edge)*, oil on canvas, circa 1939, was the first work by the artist to appear at auction, and also sold for \$27,500.

Works by American women were particularly well represented among the top lots. Beyond Ringgold's quilt, contemporary multi-genre artist Carrie Mae Weems's triptych, *Blue Black Boy*, three toned gelatin silver prints with Prestype and frame, 1987-88, brought \$50,000. Lois Mailou Jones's emotional *Homage to Martin Luther King*, watercolor on board, 1968, realized \$40,000; while Elizabeth Catlett's *Untitled (Head of a Woman)*, oil and oil monotype, 1958, brought \$37,500, and her two-part cast bronze sculpture *Mother and Child*, 1985, sold for \$15,600.

Paintings spanning multiple periods of Hughie Lee-Smith's career sold well in the auction. The artist's *Portrait of a Boy*, oil on canvas, 1938, one of Lee-Smith's earliest works to come to auction, sold for \$42,500. *Untitled (Young Man in a Slum)*, oil on canvas, circa 1960, a large mid-career canvas by Lee-Smith, brought \$106,250, while *Encore*, oil on canvas, 1991, a late series work by the artist, realized \$20,000.

Abstract works by Sam Gilliam were popular with collectors in this sale. Gilliam's *Rondo IX*, acrylic and canvas collage on canvas, 1983, part of the artist's *Rondo* series hung at the Corcoran Gallery in 1983, brought \$93,750. Two smaller Gilliam multi-media pieces, *Untitled*, 1991, and *Untitled*, 1989, sold for \$18,750 and \$20,000, respectively.

The African-American Fine Art department's next auction will occur in October 2016. For further information, or to consign items to upcoming African-American Fine Art auctions, please contact Director Nigel Freeman:

nfreeman@swannalleries.com, or via phone at 212-254-4710, ex.33.

Complete results are available online via www.swannalleries.com.

*Prices include buyer's premium.



Frank Bowling, *Irv Sandler's Visit*, acrylic on canvas, 1977. Sold April 7, 2016 for \$81,250, an auction record for the artist. (Pre-sale estimate: \$35,000 to \$50,000) Swann



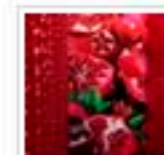
Faith Ringgold, *Double Dutch on the Golden Gate Bridge*, story quilt from the *Woman on a Bridge* series, acrylic on canvas with painted, dyed and pieced fabric, 1988. Sold April 7, 2016 for \$209,000. (Pre-sale estimate: \$150,000 to \$250,000) Swann



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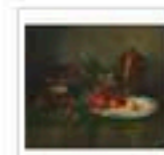
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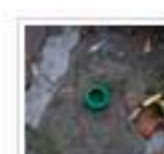
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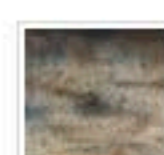
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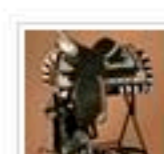
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