



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hardship to Hope: African American Art from the Karamu Workshop **New exhibition opening September 13 at Maltz Museum** **In Collaboration with Cleveland State University**

(August 30, 2011 – Cleveland, OH) 1930s Cleveland, Ohio...labor strikes and riots...the “Mad Butcher” torso slayings...the city in the throes of the Great Depression. Hard times, but with them glimmers of hope. The Terminal Tower opened, Jesse Owens set records, Superman was created. Budding artists and performers were finding hope at a settlement that would become Karamu House, a center of community and gathering place for free expression.

The Maltz Museum is proud to present *Hardship to Hope: African American Art from the Karamu Workshop* (September 13, 2011 – January 1, 2012). Working with Cleveland State University, Karamu House, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Artists Foundation, Western Reserve Historical Society and a private collection, the Museum has gathered more than sixty-five pieces, art and artifacts that open a window to a turbulent and creative time in Cleveland.

In the tumultuous years between World Wars, as African Americans migrated north and the Harlem Renaissance captured the attention of the nation, Cleveland had its own renaissance ushering in the promise of a better tomorrow. Charles Sallée Jr., following in his father’s artistic footsteps, became the first African American admitted to what would become the Cleveland Institute of Art. Elmer W. Brown began to move beyond the horrors of the chain gang to focus on drawing, printmaking and other visual arts. Hughie Smith, who would later adopt the more artistic-sounding surname Lee-Smith, was taking in the Cleveland people and neighborhoods that would inspire his work and life.

They were among many talented artists and performers who would find their callings, learn and teach their skills, and develop confidence, contacts and friendships at the Playhouse Settlement of the Neighborhood Association. Founded by Russell and Rowena Jelliffe, the Settlement would later be renamed Karamu House. The Jelliffes were a visionary and empathetic couple of European descent who saw the arts as a natural catalyst for interracial and cross-cultural understanding. More than just a place to make art, they built a haven where the secret ingredients were the enthusiasm, encouragement and love the Jelliffes gave so freely.

“The works we’ve brought together reflect the times and experiences of some very talented artists during a tumultuous time in American history,” remarks Judi Feniger, Executive Director of the Museum. “There was so much change happening. By 1920, Cleveland was the nation’s fifth largest city. In addition to the Great Migration from the south, immigrants were coming here from every corner of the world. The Jelliffes were very definitely ahead of their time in their commitment to bringing people together, and doing so through creative and performing arts. They embody everything the Museum represents”.



A season-long offering of informative programs, performances and lectures will illuminate the themes of the exhibition, highlighted with a panel discussion moderated by Dee Perry of Ideastream about the art of this period (October 5), a bus trip and tour of several of Cleveland's WPA-era murals (October 25), a printmaking demo with Zygote Press (November 15), and a live musical performance by poet/playwright Mary Weems and actor Rodney Freeman - backed-up by J. T. Lynch of Horns and Things on jazz sax (November 30). A full program calendar is on the website.

Docent-led tours can be reserved daily for adult and student groups of ten or more, with discounts for groups of 15+ (reservations required). Packs of 35 or more tickets are available at a discounted price. The Museum Store, open whenever the Museum is, will carry exhibition catalogs and related merchandise, and offers free gift wrapping. Parking adjacent to the Museum is free, includes close-in handicapped spaces, and wheelchairs can be reserved in advance. The Museum is a stunning venue for a range of private events with exclusive viewing of the exhibition; details and pricing on request.

Learn more at www.maltzmuseum.org, 216-593-0575, become a friend on Facebook, or tweet with us on Twitter.

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About the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage: An American Story

Opened in 2005, the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage introduces visitors to the beauty and diversity of that heritage in the context of the American experience, promotes an understanding of Jewish history, religion and culture and builds bridges of tolerance and understanding with people of all religions, races, cultures and ethnic backgrounds. It includes An American Story, tracing Ohio's immigrant history and heritage, and The Temple-Tifereth Israel Gallery, an internationally-recognized collection of Judaica. One admission fee includes unlimited access, and all levels of membership include unlimited admission.

Hardship to Hope began as conversations with Cleveland State University and representatives of their Art Gallery, Campus Art Committee, Black Studies Program and Michael Schwartz Library's Special Collections Unit and the loan of their excellent *Russell and Rowena Jelliffe Collection: Prints and Drawings from the Karamu Workshop 1929 – 1941*. The Maltz Museum is deeply grateful to Tania Anochin, Bill Barrow, President and Mrs. Ronald Berkman, Robert Thurmer and Dr. Michael Williams. Special thanks to many others without whom this exhibition would not be possible, including the Advisory Committee, June Sallée Antoine, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Artists Foundation, ICA, and Greg Ashe and Vivian Wilson at Karamu House.

The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.



HARDSHIP TO HOPE
African American Art from the Karamu Workshop
September 13, 2011 – January 1, 2012

Admission & Tours

ADMISSION

Includes access to entire museum, including special exhibitions

- Maltz Museum members and children under 5 years: FREE
- Adults: \$12
- Seniors 60+ and Students ages 12+: \$10
- Children ages 5-11: \$5
- Ticket Packs of 35 or more: \$7 per ticket

TOURS

Group Tours are available by advance reservation daily, including Mondays. Admission includes a guided tour of the permanent or special exhibition led by knowledgeable docents, seamless, no-wait access to the exhibitions and a 10% discount to the Museum Store.

- Advance reservation required for groups of 10 or more.
- Special discounted rates for groups of 15 or more...Adults: \$8; Seniors/Students: \$6 (Groups of 14 or less charged individual admission)
- Additional discounts available for groups 35 and above. Call for details.
- School groups are \$3/student (1 teacher/chaperone per ten students admitted free).

Contact groupsales@mmjh.org or call 216.593.0575 to schedule a tour or for more information.

Drop-In Tours

Drop-In Tours will be available for *Hardship to Hope* **every Sunday at 2pm.**; Tours of *An American Story* are available Wednesdays at 2pm. Groups of 10 or more should secure an advance reservation.

Museum Hours

Open for reserved group tours and private events beginning at 9:30am; Store open all regular Museum hours.

Open to the public Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 11am – 5pm

Wednesday: 11am – 9pm

Saturday: Noon – 5pm

Monday: Closed (open by reservation for tours and events)

HOLIDAY HOURS: Erev Rosh Hashanah- Wednesday, September 28 (OPEN 11AM – 3PM)

Rosh Hashanah – Thursday, September 29 (CLOSED)

Erev Yom Kippur – Friday, October 7 (OPEN 11AM – 3PM)

Yom Kippur – Saturday, October 8 (CLOSED)

Columbus Day – Monday, October 10 (CLOSED)

Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 24 (CLOSED)

Christmas Day – Sunday, December 25 (OPEN 11AM – 5PM)



HARDSHIP TO HOPE
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Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage

Programs

Accompanying *Hardship to Hope*, the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage will present a series of lectures, films and conversations about art and Cleveland history.

All events are at the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage unless otherwise indicated. Unless noted otherwise, all tickets \$12/\$10 for Museum Members (save \$2 by ordering your tickets in advance). Reservations are suggested. For more information or to purchase tickets call 216.593.0575.

Wednesday, October 5...7pm

Fertile Ground: Cleveland Art 1929-1943

Moderated by Dee Perry, host of WCPN/90.3's *Around Noon* and WVIZ/PBS's *Applause*

In the midst of the depression, the 1930s and early '40s was an especially fruitful period in the history of Cleveland art. Join artist and historian **Alfred L. Bright**, gallery owner, **William Busta** and art historian **Sabine Kretzschmar** for a lively discussion of how the supportive atmosphere of the Karamu House' artist workshop coupled with WPA art projects involving black, white and female artists, provided fertile ground for a burgeoning art scene.

Wednesday, October 19...7pm

Against the Odds: The Artists of the Harlem Renaissance

Harlem in the 1920s and 1930s was the scene of a passionate outburst of creativity by African-American visual artists. This fascinating documentary tells how black artists triumphed over the prejudice and segregation that kept their work out of mainstream galleries and exhibitions and recalls the vibrancy of Harlem in the roaring twenties. **Dr. Michael R. Williams**, Director, Black Studies Program at Cleveland State University leads a post-viewing discussion. Guests can come early to enjoy the special exhibition *Hardship to Hope: African American Art from the Karamu Workshop*.

Tuesday, October 25...1:30pm—5pm

Cleveland's WPA Murals Bus Trip and Tour

\$35/\$25 members - advance reservations required

Don't miss your chance to visit some of Cleveland's most outstanding public art! Art historian **Sabine Kretzschmar** leads your tour of the Elmer W. Brown mural at **The City Club of Cleveland**, the refurbished murals recently installed in **Cleveland State University's** new student center, and the exceptional work to be found in the **Cleveland Public Library**. Meet in the Maltz Museum parking lot; bus leaves promptly at 1:30pm

Tuesday, November 15...2pm
Lecture/Demonstration: Demystifying Prints
Free with admission

Liz Maugans co-founder and Managing Director of **Zygote Press**, Northeast Ohio's only non-profit cooperative fine-arts printmaking facility, offers a fascinating insight into how artists create their work. You'll handle tools of the trade, see various matrices used for making prints and experience a print being made on Zygote's unique mobile press.

Wednesday, November 30...7pm
Jazzin' with the Jelliffes
\$14/\$12 Museum Members

Enjoy cool words and rhyme with a mellow jazz chaser in this evening reminiscent of a Harlem hot spot. Poet/playwright **Mary Weems** and actor **Rodney Freeman**, directed by Karamu Artistic Director **Terrence Spivey**, will thrill with performances, some inspired by the special exhibition *Hardship to Hope: African American Art* from the Karamu Workshop. **J. T. Lynch** of *Horns and Things* backs up our performers on jazz sax.

ALSO THIS FALL AT THE MALTZ MUSEUM

Wednesday, September 21...7pm
The Jewish Legacy of Spain

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month! The short documentary *The Sephardic Legacy of Segovia: Pentimento of the Past* vividly illustrates the often-hidden Jewish history of Spain by exploring the restoration efforts in Segovia's Jewish quarter. The film will be followed by a performance of Spanish dance and music by Cleveland School of Dance.

Tuesday, October 11...4-5pm
Community Sukkah Raising & Fall Harvest Celebration
Free (on lawn adjacent to Museum)

Just when everybody is bringing in their picnic tables, Jewish people gather in the brisk fall air to celebrate the harvest festival of Sukkot. Join us to raise and decorate our sukkah (festive harvest booth) and learn what makes a sukkah "kosher." Enjoy cider, donuts and fall fruits as you create sukkah decorations to take home. An enjoyable afternoon for young and old of all faiths.



Wednesday, November 9...7pm

Concert for Kristallnacht and Veterans Day

\$14/\$12 Museum Members

Don't miss this moving concert as **Cantor Rebecca Carmi** honors the 73rd anniversary of "the night of broken glass" with songs of a world gone by in Hebrew, Yiddish and English. She will also pay special tribute to Jewish war veterans with selections from the American Songbook by Jewish composers. Cantor Carmi has been a featured soloist with the Cantors Assembly and has performed in concert throughout the world, including with the Jerusalem Symphony and at Carnegie Hall.

Sunday, November 20...1-4pm

Interfaith Thanksgiving

Free with admission

Thanksgiving is a time for all Americans, regardless of religious or ethnic background, to come together and give thanks for the blessings they have received. Join us for an interfaith celebration of our shared American heritage featuring fine arts performances and cultural sharing from religious and community organizations in Northeast Ohio. Arts and crafts activities, scavenger hunts, guided tours and snacks will be available throughout the afternoon.

Wednesday, December 14...7pm

Yiddle With His Fiddle

A band of roving musicians, a young woman disguised as a boy, a runaway bride—tears, laughter, romance and a happy ending! Don't miss your chance to see the most commercially successful musical in the history of Yiddish cinema—made in 1936 on location in Warsaw and the surrounding countryside and starring the darling of the Yiddish theatre, Molly Picon. (In Yiddish w/English subtitles)

Sunday, December 25...1-4pm

Annual Chinese Food and a Movie Family Day

Free with admission

Enjoy our annual December 25th Family Fun Day! Enjoy Oscar and Caldecott award-winning family-friendly films, create some art and be a contestant in "Jewpary" on our big screen. Follow clues on a scavenger hunt and enjoy a guided tour through our galleries. When you're done, snack on those traditional Jewish delicacies—egg rolls and fortune cookies!

PARTNERSHIPS

The Maltz Museum is proud to co-sponsor the following events around town this Fall

Wednesday, September 7

2011 Inamori Ethnics Prize: Beatrice Mtetwa

Human rights lawyer dedicated to defending journalists and advocating for a free press in her home country of Zimbabwe

12:30pm—Academic Symposium

Inamori Center for Ethics and Excellence
Crawford Hall, Ground Level - 10900 Euclid Avenue
Free and open to the public (seating is limited)

5:30pm—Prize Ceremony and Recipient Lecture

Upholding Human Rights and Defending the Ideals of Democracy
Severance Hall - 11001 Euclid Avenue
Tickets are free and event is open to the public
To reserve your ticket, please call the Severance Hall box office 216-231-1111

Thursday, November 3...7pm

Abrahamic Center Distinguished Lecture: Dr. Reza Aslan
Notre Dame College, Regina Hall Auditorium - 1857 S. Green Road, South Euclid
Free and open to the public

The internationally acclaimed writer and scholar of religions speaks on Ten Years Later: Fighting Islamophobia and Understanding Muslims. Notre Dame's Abrahamic Center develops innovative educational programs fostering mutual respect among faith communities and cultures.

For information or reservations contact mbloom@ndc.edu or 216-373-6383

December 28, 2011—February 24, 2012

In a Nutshell: The Worlds of Maurice Sendak

Lakewood Public Library – 15425 Detroit Ave., Lakewood

This special exhibition focuses on the well-known illustrator of more than 100 books, including *Where the Wild Things Are* and *In the Night Kitchen*. The library will present a series of related programs—for a complete schedule visit www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org. For information call 216-226-8275



MALTZ MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE

HARDSHIP TO HOPE **African American Art from the Karamu Workshop** *September 13, 2011 – January 1, 2012* Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Elmer W. Brown (1909 – 1971)

Born in Pittsburgh, Elmer Brown arrived in Cleveland in 1929 after a difficult youth, part of which was served on a prison chain gang. He found support and inspiration at Karamu, first as a student and later as an instructor. During his tenure, he created theater sets and book illustrations for his close friend, Langston Hughes, also a Karamu alumnus. He excelled in printmaking, painting, and ceramics, skills he would later use as an artist for the Works Progress Administration on murals such as *Free Speech*, which can still be seen at the City Club of Cleveland. He was a founding member of Karamu Artists, Inc. and participated in the exhibition at Associated American Artists in New York in 1942. In his later years, he worked as an artist at American Greetings.

Fred Carlo (1914 – 1964)

Fred Carlo came to Karamu through his mother, Fannie Carlo, a talented artist who taught ceramics. He worked in printmaking, jewelry design and ceramics and in 1932, was the first African American to exhibit in the prestigious International Print Show. He was a founding member of Karamu Artists, Inc. and participated in the exhibition at Associated American Artists in New York in 1942 as well as many May Shows during the 1930s and 1940s at the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Hughie Lee-Smith (1915-1999)

As a child, Hughie Smith (later Lee-Smith) moved from Florida to Cleveland with his mother and settled into a middle-class neighborhood near E. 105th Street. He was talented in both visual and performing arts and participated in both at Karamu. He attended East Tech High School (where he ran on the track team with Jesse Owens) and later the Cleveland School of Art, graduating in 1938. He was a founding member of Karamu Artists, Inc. and performed and traveled with Karamu's professional dance company in the early 1940s. After service in the Navy during WWII and additional college education in Detroit, he moved to New York City where he spent his later years as a college professor. The city of Cleveland celebrated Hughie Lee-Smith Day on October 19, 1984.

Charles L. Sallée Jr. (1911-2006)

A native of Sandusky, Charles Sallée's talents in the visual arts were nurtured and supported by his parents from an early age and, after the family moved to Cleveland, shared at Karamu. His talents were rewarded with a college scholarship from Karamu, and he became the first African American student to attend and graduate from the Cleveland School of Art. He taught art classes at Karamu and obtained a second college degree in education from Western Reserve College. He participated in many Works Progress Administration projects during the Depression, including a number of commissions for various Cleveland low-income housing projects. A founding member of Karamu Artists, Inc., he participated in their exhibition at Associated American Artists in New York in 1942. After Army service during WWII, he returned to Cleveland and began a career in interior design, with the Café Tia Juana Nightclub, the Grand Ballroom at Stouffer's Inn on the Square, and the clubrooms at Cleveland Stadium among his most well-known.



William E. Smith (1913-1997)

William E. Smith began classes at Karamu at age 16, after the Jelliffes discovered him homeless and living on pennies a day that he earned sweeping the floor of a local theater. He participated in visual arts classes and designed costumes and sets for Karamu theatrical productions. In 1935 he was awarded a college scholarship from Karamu, which he used to attend classes at the John Huntington Polytechnic Institute. His works were represented in the Cleveland Museum of Art May Show numerous times during the late 1930s and 1940s, and while working as an instructor at Karamu, he became a founding member of Karamu Artists, Inc. and exhibited prints, drawings and watercolors in the 1942 exhibition at Associated American Artists. After WWII, he moved to California where he continued making artwork and encouraging younger African American artists.

Curtis E. Tann (ca. 1915-1990)

Curtis Tann began classes at Karamu at the age of four. Unfortunately, his parents were not supportive of his artistic interests. Encouragement of Karamu instructors and fellow students helped him to develop his talents, which encompassed various media but were focused on enameling, ceramics, and watercolors. During the Depression years, Tann declined a college scholarship in order to work for the Works Progress Administration to support his family. Two of his watercolors were featured in the Karamu Artists, Inc. exhibition at Associated American Artists in New York in 1942. During WWII he served in the Army Signal Corps and produced watercolors depicting the lives of GIs. Later in life he relocated to Los Angeles, where he became a respected teacher and designer.

ABOUT KARAMU HOUSE

Karamu House was founded in 1915 as the Neighborhood Association by Russell and Rowena Jelliffe in cooperation with the Second Presbyterian Church. Located at 2239 East 38th Street, and popularly known as the Playhouse Settlement, it offered programs in the performing and visual arts to the mostly African American residents of the Central Avenue neighborhood. In 1927, a theater next to the settlement was purchased and given the name Karamu, Swahili for "a place of joyful meeting," eventually adopted for the entire settlement. Karamu became acclaimed for innovative, high quality programs in theater, dance and the visual arts and alumni such as Langston Hughes went on to international fame. After a fire in 1939, the settlement was rebuilt in 1949 at its current location at East 89th and Quincy. Today, Karamu remains active in the community and is preparing to celebrate its centennial in 2015.

ABOUT CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY BLACK STUDIES PROGRAM

The Black Studies Program at Cleveland State is an interdisciplinary academic program that consists of approximately 89 courses offered by 20 different departments in four different colleges of the University. Black Studies operates an African American Cultural Center which features revolving exhibits, lectures, films, videos and other programs and activities for the public. It also conducts Black Aspirations Week, the radio program "Images," and the Jazz Heritage Orchestra.



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STORY IDEAS

- Cleveland of the 1930's – early 1940's...what else was happening in the local art scene? Nationally?
 - Historical context on the times and culture that influenced the creation of these works
- History/influence of the Works Projects Administration in Cleveland (transportation, parks, housing)
 - Cleveland Institute of Art alumni (Lee-Smith, Sallée)
 - Karamu House alumni; other works to come out of the settlement
 - The Politics of Art: How WPA Art Influenced Generations
 - Other forms of Cleveland reform, charity and philosophy of the era
 - Russell and Rowena Jelliffe – interview son Dr. Roger Jelliffe
 - Charles J. Sallée, Jr. – interview sister June Sallée Antoine
 - Map of where works were/are displayed

Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage
HARDSHIP TO HOPE:
AFRICAN AMERICAN ART FROM
THE KARAMU WORKSHOP
Advisory Committee

Tania Anochin
Project Manager, Cleveland State University

June Sallée Antoine
Vice Chair, Sankofa Fine Arts Plus

Gregory Ashe
Executive Director, Karamu House

Bill Barrow
Special Collections Librarian, Cleveland State University

Marcie Bergman
Executive Director, Cleveland Arts Prize

Ernestine Brown
Pioneering Gallery Owner and Art Educator

Amy Budish
Community Volunteer

Marilyn Cagin
Community Volunteer

Barbara Volin Cohen
Maltz Museum Volunteer – Docent – Artist - Teacher

Mark Cole
Associate Curator of American Art, Cleveland Museum of Art

Barbara Colombi
Community Volunteer

Mary Louise Hahn
Consultant, The Ansfield-Wolf Book Awards

Lauren Hansgen
Executive Director, Cleveland Artists Foundation

Dr. Roger Jelliffe
Cardiologist/son of Russell and Rowena Jelliffe

Peter Lawson Jones, Esq.
Actor-Attorney-Former Elected Official

Sean Martin
Associate Curator of Jewish History, Western Reserve Historical Society

Charles Mintz
Photographer

Margie Moskovitz
Maltz Museum Volunteer

Reuben and Dorothy Silver
Actors – Directors – Karamu Hall of Fame Inductees

Marsha Simon
Maltz Museum Volunteer

Robert Thurmer
Art Gallery Director, Cleveland State University

Dr. Michael Williams
Black Studies Director, Cleveland State University

Warren Wolfson
Chair, Jewish Federation of Cleveland Community Relations Committee

COMING SOON TO THE MALTZ MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE



Women playing mah jongg in the Catskills, c. 1960
Collection of Harvey Abrams



Leisure-class ladies playing a floating game of mah jongg, 1924
Courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

JANUARY 2012

Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage 2929 Richmond Rd. Beachwood, OH 44122 216.593.0575

Visit www.MMJH.org for more information