



OGDEN MUSEUM
OF SOUTHERN ART

**Ogden Museum of Southern Art to Honor Celebrated Artist Lonnie Holley
And William S. Arnett, Founder of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation
At Annual Gala**

***O What a Night!* Gala to Take Place on October 19**

NEW ORLEANS, LA (September 18, 2019) – On Saturday, October 19, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art will host its annual *O What a Night!* gala. Now in its 14th year, the gala celebrates the diversity and dynamism of art from the American South and recognizes the Ogden Museum’s mission to expand knowledge of Southern artists and culture. As part of the event, each year the Ogden Museum honors two individuals who have contributed greatly to the health and vibrancy of the arts community. For 2019, the museum will give its Opus Awards to critically-acclaimed artist Lonnie Holley and the founder of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation, William S. Arnett. They join prior esteemed recipients of the Opus Awards, including artists John Alexander, George Dureau, Lin Emery, and George Rodrigue; community activist Fran Villere; noted collectors and philanthropists Pamela J. Joyner and Alfred J. Giuffrida; and David Kerstein, President of The Helis Foundation, among numerous others. Both Holley and Arnett will be honored at the gala, by the 2019 chairs of the event, Mathilde and Richard Currence and Michelle and Lamar Villere.

Lonnie Holley’s artistic practice is characterized by creative experimentation and improvisation. It spans an incredible range of media, including drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, performance, sound, and most recently film. Among his most readily recognizable works are his large-scale sculptures comprised of found objects, which serve as complex visual narratives of specific times, places, and people. Holley’s sculpture, *Headed to the Land We Were Promised (Glory)*, was recently installed on New Orleans’ Poydras Corridor, home to a public art exhibition supported by the Ogden Museum and presented by The Helis Foundation. Holley’s works have been featured in a range of solo and group exhibitions, and are included in the collections of such esteemed institutions as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the American Folk Art Museum, among many others. Additionally, Holley’s film, *I Snuck Off the Slave Ship*, premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival, and his 2018 album, “MITH,” was acknowledged as among the top ten records of that year by the *New Yorker* and *Newsweek*. Driven by a voracious curiosity and personal imperative to create, Holley’s work is a testament to his incredible vision and innate talent.

William S. Arnett is an art historian, philanthropist, collector, and the founder of the influential Souls Grown Deep Foundation. Arnett is recognized for amassing a critical and expansive collection of work by largely undiscovered African American artists from the American South. His efforts established a context for understanding the depth and relevance of work by these artists, many of whom developed their practices outside the traditional structures of the art world.



OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART

Among the artists that he helped bring to prominence are Thornton Dial and Lonnie Holley. In 1996, in partnership with the City of Atlanta and the Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University, Arnett organized the survey exhibition, *Souls Grown Deep: African American Vernacular Art of the South*. The accompanying two-volume publication remains the most in-depth examination of work by self-taught artists. Now, his Souls Grown Deep Foundation is responsible for actively bringing these works into public collections and to display as part of major exhibitions, including a recent presentation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

“William Arnett’s discoveries and publications have led to revelatory exhibitions at major institutions across the U.S., and have reshaped the acquisitions philosophies of many American museums, in acknowledgement of the artists that have yet to receive the institutional examination and recognition they so richly deserve,” said William Pittman Andrews, Ogden Museum Executive Director. “We are delighted to honor William for his passion, drive, and profound impact on the arts at our upcoming gala. We equally look forward to celebrating the work and vision of artist Lonnie Holly, whose artistic depth and imagination are boundless.”

The *O What a Night!* gala will kick-off at 6:00 PM, with a cocktail reception held in the historic Patrick F. Taylor Library, designed by the master architect Henry Hobson Richardson, and a silent auction presented by Neal Auction Company. During the reception, guests will enjoy contemporary Southern fare, courtesy of New Orleans chefs, Mike Stoltzfus and Kristen Essig, and their restaurants, Coquette and Thalia. Coquette, a Magazine Street favorite for a decade, is known for placing emphasis on locally sourced products and international inspirations. Thalia, Stoltzfus and Essig’s newly opened restaurant in the Lower Garden District, is already a popular neighborhood go-to for casual Southern dining.

Following, gala attendees will enjoy a seated dinner, with a crafted menu from James Beard award-winning chef, Justin Devillier of La Petite Grocery and Justine. At La Petite Grocery, Devillier puts his creative spin on traditional New Orleans cuisine in an intimate and historic setting. Devillier’s newest restaurant, Justine, combines the sophistication of a Parisian brasserie with the playfulness of New Orleans’ French Quarter. The centerpiece of the gala will be a live auction, presided over by Sotheby’s auctioneer Christy Williams Coombs. This year’s auction features major works by Bo Bartlett, Aron Belka, Dusti Bongé, William Christenberry, Michael Deas, Thornton Dial, George Dunbar, Skylar Fein, Simon Gunning, Horton Humble, and Adler’s Jewelry, among many more. Musical entertainment will be provided by noted trumpet player Jeremy Davenport and his band, along with the band Patrick and the Swayzees.

***O What a Night!* Gala Sponsors**

Underwriters for the year’s gala include La Petite Grocery and Justine, along with Roger H. Ogden & Ken Barnes. Sponsors include Coleman E. Adler, Coquette, ELEMENT RENTAL, Goldring Family Foundation, The New Orleans Advocate, Neal Auction Company, Sazerac, Inc. and Charles Urstadt & David Bernard. Benefactors include Matt Arnett, Paul Arnett, William S.



OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART

Arnett, Arthur Roger Gallery, Bo Bartlett, Aron Belka, Paul Bongé, Callan Contemporary, Mathilde & Richard Currence, Michael Deas, George Dunbar, Skylar Fein, Simon Gunning, Daynese & Randy Haynie, The Helis Foundation, Gregory Holt & Lucy Burnett, Horton Humble, IBERIABANK, Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, Kevin Kelly, Catherine Makk, Matthew Moreland & Patrick Welsh, Henry & Pat Shane, Christopher Villere and Michelle & Lamar Villere.

O What a Night! Gala Committee

The 2019 gala committee includes Coleman E. Adler II, Chris Alfieri, Matt Arnett, Paul Arnett, Troi & Ron Bechet, Suzie & Ted Bloch, Meaghan & Joe Bonavita, Tristan Bultman, Tracy Copeland, Lauren & Bryan Fitzpatrick, Dr. Jerry & Carolyn Fortino, Sarah & Richard Freeman, Monica Ann Frois & Eve Masinter, Walton & Jeffrey Goldring, William Goldring, Ariel & L. Kasimu Harris, Jessie Schott Haynes & Beau Haynes, Daynese & Randy Haynie, Kevin Kelly, Allison Kendrick, Rita Benson LeBlanc, Catherine Makk, Matthew Moreland & Patrick Welsh, Gregory Morey & Scott James, Martha Murphy & Jack Leahy, Betsy Nalty & Dick Simmons, Michelle & Field Ogden, Roger Ogden & Ken Barnes, Judith Oudt, Tia & Jimmy Roddy, Christa & Matt Schwartz, Troy Scroggins & Keith Malvitz, Laura & Sonny Shields, Holly & Geoffrey P. Snodgrass, Karen Solomon, Stacy & Jay Underwood, Christopher Villere, Shirelle & Joel Vilmenay, Thomas P. Westervelt, Dawn Wheelahan, Michael Wilkinson and Amanda & Teddy Winstead.

About the Ogden Museum

Located in the vibrant Warehouse Arts District of downtown New Orleans, Louisiana since 1999, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art welcomes 85,000 visitors annually to experience and learn about the artists and art movements of the American South. It is home to a collection of more than four thousand works, making it the largest and most comprehensive repository dedicated to Southern art in the nation, with particular strength in the genres of Self-Taught art, Regionalism, photography, and contemporary art. The Museum is further recognized for its original exhibitions, public events and educational programs, which examine the development of visual art alongside Southern traditions of music, literature and local craft. Among its recent exhibitions are *Piercing the Inner Wall: The Art of Dusti Bongé* (2019), *New Southern Photography* (2018-2019), *The Whole Drum Will Sound: Women in Southern Abstraction* (2018), and *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection*, presented by The Helis Foundation (2017-2018).

The Ogden Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. with extended hours on Thursdays from 6 – 8 p.m. for Ogden After Hours. Admission is free to Museum Members and \$13.50 for adults, \$11 for seniors 65 and older, \$6.75 for children ages 5-17 and free for children under 5.

The Museum is located at 925 Camp Street, New Orleans Louisiana 70130. For more information visit ogdenmuseum.org or call 504.539.9650.

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