



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

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**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART NAMES AMY SHERALD
2018 RECIPIENT OF DAVID C. DRISKELL PRIZE**

Sherald to be honored at 14th annual Driskell Prize Dinner on April 27

ATLANTA, Feb. 8, 2018 – The [High Museum of Art](#) today announces artist [Amy Sherald](#) as the 2018 recipient of the [David C. Driskell Prize](#) in recognition of her contributions to the field of African-American art. A Georgia native now based in Baltimore, Sherald is acclaimed for her profoundly creative and distinctive portraits of African-American subjects. In 2017, she received the commission to paint former first lady Michelle Obama’s official portrait for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, which will be unveiled on Feb. 12, 2018.



“A clear unspoken granted magic,” 2017, oil on canvas.

Accompanied by a \$25,000 cash award, the Driskell Prize, named for the renowned African-American artist and art scholar, was founded by the High in 2005 as the first national award to celebrate an early- or mid-career scholar or artist whose work makes an original and important contribution to the field of African-American art or art history. Sherald will be honored at the 14th annual [Driskell Prize Dinner](#) at the High on Friday, April 27, at 7 p.m. Proceeds from the High’s Driskell Prize Dinner support the David C. Driskell African American Art Acquisition Funds. Since their inception, the funds have supported the acquisition of 48 works by African-American artists for the High’s collection.

“Sherald is a remarkable talent who in recent years has gained the recognition she so thoroughly deserves as a unique force in contemporary art,” said Rand Suffolk, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., director of the High. “We are honored to select her as this year’s recipient and to support her incredible work, which celebrates America’s diversity and rich cultural heritage.”

Born in Columbus, Ga., in 1973, Sherald trained as a painter in Atlanta and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Clark Atlanta University. Following a Spelman College International Artist-in-Residence program in Portobelo, Panama, she went on to receive her master’s degree in painting from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Upon graduating in 2004, she was

diagnosed with congestive heart failure, and after completing a residency in Norway, Sherald moved home to Georgia to care for her family. She returned to Baltimore in 2008 to refocus on her practice, and her work began to gain national attention in 2011 when the National Museum of Women in the Arts acquired one of her paintings. Sherald received a life-saving heart transplant in December 2012 and, after her recuperation, resumed working in her studio in Baltimore. In 2016, Sherald was the first woman to win the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery's Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition for her 2014 painting "Miss Everything (Unsuppressed Deliverance)." An accompanying exhibition, "The Outwin 2016," has been on tour since 2016 and opens at the Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina, in June 2018. The New York Times selected Sherald among "19 Artists to Watch" in 2017.



"Try on dreams until I find the one that fits me. They all fit me.," 2017, oil on canvas.

The selection process for the 2018 recipient of the Driskell Prize began with a call for nominations from a national pool of artists, curators, teachers, collectors and art historians. Sherald was chosen from among these nominations by review committee members assembled by the High: [Andrea Barnwell Brownlee](#), the 2013 Driskell Prize recipient and director of the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art; [Valerie Cassel Oliver](#), the 2011 Driskell Prize recipient and curator of modern and contemporary art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; and the High's Wieland Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Michael Rooks.

The 2018 Driskell Prize Dinner is co-chaired by Helen Smith Price, Jane Jackson and Matthew T. Echols with Honorary Chair Ambassador Andrew Young. Tickets for the black-tie event may be purchased by contacting Rhonda Matheison at rhonda.matheison@high.org or 404-733-4403.

About Amy Sherald

Sherald (American, born Columbus, Ga., 1973) received her Master of Fine Arts in Painting from Maryland Institute College of Art (2004) and Bachelor of Arts in Painting from Clark Atlanta University (1997). She was a Spelman College International Artist-in-Residence in Portobelo, Panama, in 1997. Sherald has had solo shows at venues including Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago (2016); Reginald F. Lewis Museum, Baltimore (2013); and Sonja Haynes Stone Center, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. (2011). In May 2018, she will present a solo exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis. Group exhibitions featuring her work include "Face to Face: Los Angeles Collects Portraiture," California African American Museum, Los Angeles (July 2017) and "Southern Accent," Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, N.C. (2016). Her work was recognized with the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant (2014) and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (2013), and she has completed residencies with Odd Nerdrum (private study), Larvik, Norway (2005); Tongxian Art Center, Beijing, China (2008); Creative Alliance, Baltimore (2016); and Joan Mitchell Foundation, New Orleans (2017). In addition to being in the National Portrait Gallery, her work is held in public and private collections including those of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art

(Kansas City, Mo.) and The Columbus Museum (Columbus, Ga.).

About the David C. Driskell Prize

Established by the High in 2005, the David C. Driskell Prize is the first national award to honor and celebrate contributions to the field of African-American art and art history. Past recipients include [Naima J. Keith](#) (2017), [Mark Bradford](#) (2016), [Kirsten Pai Buick](#) (2015), [Lyle Ashton Harris](#) (2014), [Andrea Barnwell Brownlee](#) (2013), [Rashid Johnson](#) (2012), [Valerie Cassel Oliver](#) (2011), [Renee Stout](#) (2010), [Krista A. Thompson](#) (2009), [Xaviera Simmons](#) (2008), [Franklin Sirmans](#) (2007), [Willie Cole](#) (2006) and [Kellie Jones](#) (2005). A cash award of \$25,000 accompanies the prize. Proceeds from the High's annual Driskell Prize Dinner support the David C. Driskell African American Art Restricted and Endowment Acquisitions Funds, other ongoing African American initiatives and expenses associated with the David C. Driskell Dinner. The current balance of the David C. Driskell African American Art Acquisition Endowment Fund is \$1.1 million. Through the David C. Driskell African American Art Acquisition Restricted Fund, the High has acquired works by artists including Romare Bearden, Rashid Johnson, Radcliffe Bailey, Nick Cave, Willie Cole, John T. Scott and Renee Stout.

About David C. Driskell

[David Driskell](#) (American, born 1931) is a practicing artist and scholar whose work on the African Diaspora spans more than four decades. The High's relationship with Driskell began in 2000, when the Museum presented the concurrent exhibitions "To Conserve a Legacy: American Art from Historically Black Colleges and Universities" and "Narratives of African American Art and Identity: The David C. Driskell Collection," which examined African American art in the broad historical context of modern and contemporary art. Born in 1931 in Eatonton, Ga., Driskell is distinguished professor emeritus at the University of Maryland, College Park. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Howard University in 1955 and his Master of Fine Arts degree from Catholic University in 1962. He also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine in 1953 and studied art history in The Hague, the Netherlands, in 1964. More information about Driskell is available at www.driskellcenter.umd.edu.

About the High Museum of Art

Located in the heart of Atlanta, Ga., the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 16,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially that of artists from the American South; a burgeoning collection of modern and contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from pre-history through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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Media contacts:

Resnicow and Associates
Clarissa Marzán
Account Executive
cmarzan@resnicow.com
212-671-5173

The High Museum of Art
Marci Tate Davis
Manager of Public Relations
marci.davis@high.org
404-733-4585