

PETER WILLIAMS

Black Exodus

March 27th - May 15th, 2021



Peter Williams (b. 1952, Nyack, NY) chronicles current and historical events, interspersing pictorial narratives with personal anecdotes and fictional characters to create colorful paintings about the diverse experiences of Black Americans. With boldness and humor, he often tackles the darkest of subjects including, but not limited to, police brutality, lynching, slavery, mass incarceration, and other realms of racial oppression. Williams uses cultural criticism to form new creation myths, retelling the history of America from fresh and cosmic perspectives. He recently retired from his position as Senior Professor, Fine Arts Department, University of Delaware and taught at Wayne State University for 17 years prior.

Williams earned his MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art and his BFA from Minneapolis College of Art and Design. He is the recipient of the 2021 Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Fine Arts by the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and the 2021 American Academy of Arts and Letters Purchase Prize. He is the recipient of the 2020 Artists' Legacy Foundation Artist Award and was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2018 the National Academy of Design. Other awards include the Djerassi Resident Artists Program (2018), Joan Mitchell Awards (2004, 2007), Ford Foundation Fellowships (1985, 1987), and McKnight Foundation Fellowship (1983). His paintings are held in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Walker Art Center, Whitney Museum of American Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, Delaware Art Museum, Davis Museum of Art/Wellesley College, Escalette Permanent Collection at Chapman University Ft., Orange, CA; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC; Wayne Museum of Art, Howard University, Washington DC; Wayne State University, Detroit; as well as private collections including Jorge M. Perez/El Espacio 23, Miami, FL; Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH; McEvoy Family Collection, San Francisco, CA; Mott-Warsh Collection, Flint, MI; Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection, Palm Beach, FL; Bill and Christy Gautreaux, Kansas City; CCH Pounder, New Orleans, LA; Rev. Al Shands, Louisville, KY; and Kelly Williams and Andrew Forsyth, Palm Beach, FL, among others. He lives and works in Wilmington, DE.