

# Works from African-American collection shine at Burchfield

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The achievements of Western New York artists will be recognized during Black History Month at the Burchfield-Penney Art Center.

"We want to target minority artists in order to give them better representation," Nancy Weekly said, director of the curatorial department at the center. Many of the works are part of the M&T Bank Collection at the center and were acquired in 1992.

"Works by African-American Artists from the Collection" will be presented in the Up-Front Gallery through April 13. The collection development project was funded by M&T Bank to strengthen the Burchfield-Penney Art Center's holdings by several African-American artists from Western New York.

The exhibition features works by illustrator Joel

Peter Johnson, photographers Tyrone Georgiou and David A. Gordon, painters Wilhelmina Godfrey, James Pappas, Jeanette Shropshire, and William E. West, Sr.

Political images and perceptions lie behind many of the pieces. Johnson's "Prometheus Bound" is a painting of a crouched, restrained figure. "It seems to portray an image of slavery, of being held back or controlled," Weekly said. The "Please" series by Shropshire, portrays a black woman in a kerchief. It is painted in black and white to signify the austere conditions of apartheid.

"Composition Relative to Musical Construction" by Pappas, is a series based on jazz and his response to music. "You can see the rhythm and fluidity in his drawing," Weekly said. It was done in collaboration with the Amherst Saxophone Quartet.

"Sint Maerten" by Godfrey is a 1989 seascape

acrylic painting of a scene from the West Indies. On the opposite wall, Georgiou's "Generic Axiom", "Lost in the Woods" and "Odd Archeology", three small-scale photographs and sculpture displays, describe "our time as perceived in the future," Weekly said. "Georgiou used images pulled from the media," she said.

West's "254 Broadway" is a 1957 watercolor of city buildings. West was a friend of and worked with Charles Burchfield. His piece "Untitled" was donated as part of the Charles E. Penney collection of works.

The "Hold" series Gordon contains three gelatin silverprints that document African-American spiritual activities in a church. The series portrays a baptism, the laying of hands and a preacher speaking. Weekly described it as "a documentary kind of nature."

"It's a strong piece, it really captures nature," she said.

## African American History Month

