

Renowned Sculptor Selma Burke Honored in a Powerful, New Invitational African American Art Show in New Hope, PA

The Selma Burke Invitational African American Art Show Will Feature More Than 60 Works of the Artists She Mentored, Taught, and Inspired, May 31–June 29, 2025

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, May 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Phillips' Mill Community Association proudly announces a powerful new exhibition, [The Selma Burke Invitational African American Art Show](#), paying homage to one of America's most notable sculptors and art educators of the 20th century, an artist who just happened to call New Hope home for the last 40 of her 95 years. This signature exhibition will feature more than 60 works by many African American artists Burke mentored, taught, and inspired, including James E. Duprée and Kimberly Camp; the exhibition will be on view from May 31 through June 29, 2025.

Born in Mooresville, North Carolina, in 1900, [Selma Burke](#) rose to national prominence through her contributions to American art, namely her extraordinary artwork and dedication to teaching others. She became an integral figure of the Harlem Renaissance, founded the Selma Burke School of Art, and earned her MFA from Columbia University. She later founded the Selma Burke Art Center in Pittsburgh and eventually settled in New Hope, Pennsylvania, leaving an indelible mark on the local arts community through her leadership at the Solebury School and Robert McClellan's New Hope School of Art. In 1977, she also founded the Bucks County Sculpture Show, which is still held annually today.

Burke's work can be found in major institutions, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the James A. Michener Art Museum, the Studio Museum of Harlem, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.



Sculptor Selma Burke with her relief of FDR

She is perhaps best known for her relief portrait of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which became the model for the dime.

The exhibition showcases a dynamic range of contemporary and historical works by Burke-mentored and -inspired artists, including celebrated New Hope resident James E. Duprée. "James was invited to exhibit in the show Artists for Goode (1984–85)," recalls Mary Flamer, PMCA Board Member and Chair of the Selma Burke Show Committee. "Ms. Burke attended the event and immediately took a liking to him, supporting his later exhibitions at the Studio Museum in Harlem." Duprée's work is held in the Philadelphia Museum of Art collections, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York, and Kunsthall Charlottenborg in Copenhagen.

Award-winning artist Kimberly Camp, also featured in the show, fondly remembers Burke's generosity. "Selma Burke was extremely generous to us back in the '70s and '80s, letting us know we could come to her studio. I can remember meeting her at a National Conference of Artists meeting. She was very involved with the organization's Philadelphia chapter," recalls Camp, a former president and CEO of the Barnes Foundation and founding director of the Smithsonian Institution's Experimental Gallery. Camp's paintings and distinctive dolls have been exhibited in over 100 shows, including the Smithsonian and a recent exhibition at the Hunterdon Art Museum. Camp will display three dolls at Phillips' Mill, including a possible tribute piece to Burke

Pomba Gira, 2025 by artist Kimberly Camp. 48" stoneware, velvet, organza, ling kok, High John root, deer antler, chicken bone, bison tooth, beads.

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Artists like Burke helped preserve the nation's Black history and culture. Her art portrayed strong figures, many being women, challenging stereotypes and celebrating Black history, art and culture.”

Mary Flamer

herself. “I love that Phillips' Mill is doing this tribute to Selma Burke because women artists, especially Black American women artists, are often tossed aside,” says Camp. “Most museum collections still have not made progress in this area.”

Joining Duprée and Camp, are more than two dozen artists whose works have been loaned directly or sourced from essential collectors such as Trenton arts champion Lawrence Hilton. Expect to see works by Chakaia Booker, Adjoa Jackson Burrowes, Frank Bowling, Wendell Brooks, Willie Cole, Lamerol Gatewood, Lonnie Holley, Curlee

Raven Holton, Kenneth Lewis Sr., James Little, Vivian McDuffie, Lisette Morel, Nell Painter, Janet Taylor Pickett, Danielle Scott, Danny Simmons, Ron Tarver, and Mickalene Thomas. The

exhibition also features historical works by renowned artists such as Faith Ringgold, Romare Bearden, Edward Bannister, Thornton Dial, Herbert Gentry, Richard Hunt, Wifredo Lam, Norman Lewis, and Hale Woodruff.

Mary Flamer is excited to be bringing this exhibition to Phillips' Mill, introducing many of these esteemed artists, whose works are included in museums, collections, and galleries internationally, to the local area for the first time. She notes that over the years, Black artists like Selma Burke have helped preserve the nation's history and culture. "Art explains things that sometimes words can't," says Flamer. "Through her art, Selma portrayed strong figures, many Black women, which challenged stereotypes and celebrated Black art, history, and culture."



Janet Taylor Pickett: Memory of Water II, 2021 by artist Janet Taylor Pickett

The Selma Burke Invitational African American Art Show runs May 31–June 29, 2025 and is partially made possible by a generous grant from the Bucks County Foundation. Gallery hours are Saturdays and Sundays, 12:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. Admission is \$7; free for PMCA members. Most artwork will be available for purchase. Interested collectors should contact Holly Lovejoy, Selma Burke Show Committee Member, at Selma@phillipsmill.org.

Phillips' Mill Community Association, located at 2619 River Road, New Hope, PA, has been a home for the arts since 1929. To learn more about the Selma Burke show, and about the historic gristmill, its illustrious history as the Birthplace of Pennsylvania Impressionism, other events, and membership, visit phillipsmill.org. Questions? info@phillipsmill.org, 215-862-0582.

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