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“Love embraces justice”
A salute to SCLC legend
Dr. Joseph E. Lowery

When confronted with the status of African American art and artists, he stated that African-American artists should be concerned with being American artists—that Africa has taken over their sense of self.

“What has happened to African-American Art is that it has been cross-contaminated with African art,” contended Mays. “I’m generationally American. I’m not African, but I see that a lot of African Art has infiltrated African-American experiences. I am an African-American but I consider myself a ‘global contemporary artist’”.

“It’s sad to say, but I am an endangered species,” Mays asserted. “I will not compromise what I know and I will paint what I know.”

I told him that I think he might have chance at leading the next generation, and being a visionary for other artists. He joked, “You know they usually kill the leader. I do like Paris, a city that has been there for 2,000 years where there is history, a foundation.” That artistic foundation has landed Mays in some auspicious venues over the years, including Mexico’s Galeria Clave, Paris’



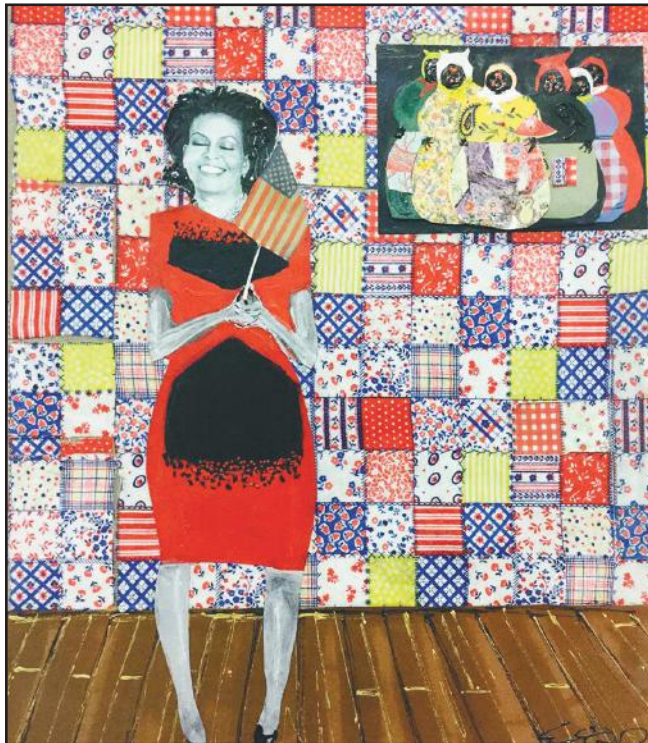
“Hot Sauce Kingdom” from the Katrina Series

Carrousel du Louvre, Mexico’s annual José Clemente Orozco Art competition, and New York’s Guggenheim museum, among others.

“The one thing I like about Paris, is that in this International setting I am catching the cross-roads of people from all over the world,” he mused. “I’ve made my studio my gallery. I don’t have to explain everyday who I am and what I’m painting.”

Will he ever leave Paris? Living around the corner from where Picasso painted “Guernica,” the pull of artistic legacy and history in the City of Lights is a tough call. With regard to the state of art in America and Atlanta specifically, the artist stated, “I am loving my country, but I want to see where the politics go in this country. ...the decline of Western culture might be an issue.”

If his experiences in Paris allow him to be the architect of his own soul and work, then I certainly understand why he might want to remain in Europe. His fans and collectors will nevertheless continue to enjoy Ealy Mays’ joyful and paradoxical style! sclc



“No More Mammies in the White House with Mammies”



ROBIN LIGON-WILLIAMS is an award-winning cultural producer, curator, and journalist based in Atlanta. Williams has served at the helm of several arts organizations, including the Indianapolis Philharmonic Orchestra, Garfield Park Arts Center, New Orleans Jazz Institute, and most recently was responsible for spearheading the Aviation Community Cultural Center for Fulton County.