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Detroit Artists Market Presents “Hughie Lee-Smith Returns”



“The Wind”, ca. 1970s
Hughie Lee Smith
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DETROIT, January 17, 2009 – The Detroit Artists Market is proud to announce a special exhibition of works by Hughie Lee-Smith (1915-1999). “*Hughie Lee-Smith Returns*” opens to the public on Friday, February 13, 2009 and runs through Saturday, February 28, 2009. A Gallery Talk is scheduled on Saturday, February 21, 2009, from 4-6pm.

Hughie Lee-Smith first showed at the Detroit Artists Market in a four-person show in 1947, and was a regular part of Market activity in the 1940s and 50s. He shaped his early career in Detroit, and earned the Detroit Institute of Arts Founders Prize in 1953. He was also locally known as a favorite art teacher, providing private lessons to area enthusiasts. Lee-Smith had a long, abiding relationship with the Detroit Artists Market, which was among the first venues that would show the work of African-American artists. He attributed his early success “...in large measure to the generous exposure given my paintings at The Detroit Artists Market.”

In the words of his stepdaughter, Karen Bowers, “Lee-Smith is largely famous for his surreal, melancholy depictions of desolation, alienation and urban decay. However, in the 60’s his work began to take on a more ominous tone, with stark and desolate landscapes; others with a *mise en scene* of tantalizing riddle reflected by the juxtaposition of objects and figures. In his portraiture, he possessed an uncanny ability to capture a typical facial expression which could well bespeak the imprint of the very essence of that person.” And the late Adolphus Ealey, renowned critic, sums it up: “His canvases force you think. You cannot leave his work unaffected.”

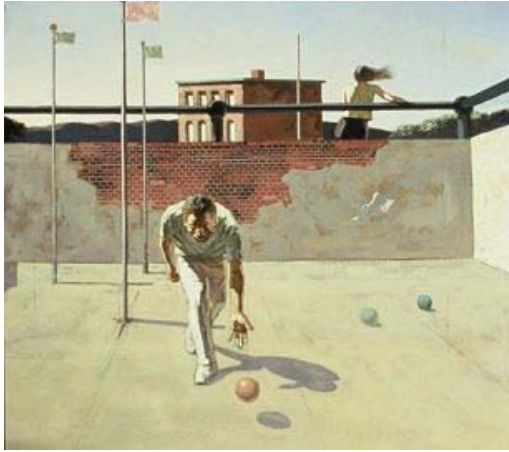
Lee-Smith’s works are in many public collections including Howard University, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the National Museum of American Art. While the world continues to discover the beauty and mystery of his iconic figurative scenes as well as his drawings and the more abstract later works, “Hughie Lee-Smith’s family is fulfilling his wish to once again share his work with the Detroit community,” says Detroit Artists Market Director Nancy Sizer. “It is our privilege to welcome Hughie Lee-Smith’s art and legacy back to the Detroit Artists Market.”

About the Detroit Artists Market

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) was established in 1932 and is the oldest, continuously operating nonprofit contemporary art gallery in the Detroit area. The DAM fosters a vibrant and distinctive artistic community in Detroit and Michigan by promoting, exhibiting and selling the works of emerging and established artists. DAM accomplishes this through art exhibitions, educational programming, and by serving as a resource to understanding and enjoyment of art.

The gallery is located at 4719 Woodward Avenue at Forest in Detroit (three blocks south of the Detroit Institute of Arts). Hours are 11am to 6pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. Exhibitions and events are free of charge. On-site parking is available. For more information on DAM programs, please call (313) 832-8540, e-mail info@detroitartistsmarket.org or visit www.detroitartistsmarket.org.

Detroit Artists Market - Additional Images of paintings by Hughie Lee-Smith



Hughie Lee-Smith, "Ball Player in Court"
oil on canvas, ca. 1990

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Hughie Lee-Smith, "Ambiguities"
oil on canvas, 1991

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Hughie Lee-Smith, "Two Abstract Masks and Profile",
watercolor and ink, 1993-94

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