

Art and Race Matters: The Career of Robert Colescott

September 20, 2019 through January 12, 2020

TRAVELING EXHIBITION

Curated by Lowery Stokes Sims and Matthew Weseley

ARTIST(S) Robert Colescott

The Contemporary Arts Center is proud to open our 2019 – 2020 exhibition season with Art and Race Matters, the first comprehensive retrospective of one of America's most compelling and controversial artists, Robert Colescott (1925-2009). The exhibition will reveal 85 total works throughout 53 years of his career that both bring to the surface and challenge diversity and racial stereotypes. Art and Race Matters is organized by Lowery Stokes Sims, a long-time Colescott scholar, and CAC's Alice Weston & Harris Director, Raphaela Platow, with assistance from Matthew Weseley. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue highlighting Colescott's extensive career published by Rizzoli Electa and will be touring several museums around the United States all facilitated by the CAC.

"Given the crises of race relations, political propaganda and image manipulation in the current American landscape, Colescott's career has never been more relevant," says Curator Lowery Stokes Sims.

"His perspectives on race, life, social mores, historical heritage and cultural hybridity allow us to forthrightly confront what the state of global culture will be in the immediate future." Colescott's approach to his paintings—in what seems like an offhand, sarcastic, satirical and even caustic manner—allows us to confront what the state of global culture will be in the next decade.

The CAC was awarded a Sotheby's Prize for Art and Race Matters in winter of 2018 for curatorial excellence and putting together an exhibition that will break new ground and challenge our understanding of art today. The exhibition will approach Colescott's work both in terms of chronology and the themes and subjects he dealt with over the course of his career. It will explore his oeuvre through issues such as the American Dream and assimilation aspirations, mass media imagery, notions of beauty, sexual and gender transgressions to name a few.

"Robert Colescott is an artist I have been interested in for a long time as a painter and astute purveyor of American society," says CAC Alice & Harris Weston Director, Raphaela Platow. "I feel strongly that Colescott's exploration of race, identity and politics in the US are as pertinent

as ever. This major survey outlining Colescott's overall contribution is a timely undertaking that will also reevaluate the artists place within the art discourse."