ASH TO AMEN: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND BIBLICAL IMAGERY
June 22–Sept. 29
Program Release

BALTIMORE – The traveling exhibition Ashe to Amen: African Americans and Biblical Imagery—curated by Leslie King-Hammond, Ph.D., graduate dean emerita and founding director of the Center for Race and Culture at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)—will present African-American artists’ interpretations of Biblical stories and traditions through historic and contemporary art at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture from Saturday, June 22–Sunday, Sept. 29. Ashe to Amen is among the first scholarly explorations into how the Bible has informed the multicultural African-American community’s evolving artistic expression.

“Ashe to Amen explores complex questions about how African Americans used and interpreted the Bible since the first encounters Africans had in the New World,” King-Hammond said.

The exhibition’s title includes terms commonly used in African and African-American communities: amen and ashe. Among the Yoruba, ashe (pronounced AH-shay) is a crucial dynamic of the “inner eye” of the creativity of an artist and the power to make something happen. The words are affirmations—essentially, “so be it”—both in America and throughout the African diaspora.

The below accompanying exhibition programs, open to the public, will take place at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture, 830 E. Pratt St., Baltimore, Md., 21202.

Gospel Music Presentation: Oh Happy Day!
Saturday, June 22, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; special admission: $5.
Bring your tambourine and spend the afternoon grooving to gospel music performed by community church choirs and praise teams during the exhibition opening weekend of Ashe to Amen. Radio personality Ernestine Jones will be the emcee for the day. A craft activity will be available for children at the exhibition opening.

Curator’s Talk: Art, Religion and Storytelling
Saturday, June 29, 1 p.m.; museum admission required; sign language interpretation services provided.
Join curator Leslie King-Hammond for a gallery tour and discussion of how African-American artists interpret Biblical stories and traditions through their art. Meet exhibition artists from Ashe to Amen as they discuss their works on faith and spirituality.

Art Program: Wood Crafts With Little Builders (Ages 6–12)
Saturday, July 13, 1 p.m.; museum admission required.
Complete a carpentry project with Little Builders, Inc. Children will create an inspirational work of art for their home using wood, paint and ornamentation.

Interfaith Presentation: Charismatic Voices
Sunday, July 14, 3 p.m.; museum admission required.
This interfaith dialogue will explore instrumental sounds and human expressions that are “the voices” of Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and African-American Protestantism.

**Family Program: Madelia by Jan Spivey Gilchrist (Ages 6–12)**
*Saturda*y, Aug. 3, noon; museum admission required.
Participants will hear a story about a little girl who recreates her father’s sermon with her paint set. Following the story, visitors will view paintings and photos from the *Ashe to Amen* gallery and create their own inspired paintings.

**Sacred Spaces Bus Tours**
*Saturday*, Aug. 17 and *Sunday*, Aug. 25, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; $25.
These bus tours will visit prominent religious structures in the Baltimore metropolitan area, giving participants a visual experience of these architecturally, artistically, historically and culturally significant sites. An expert in the religious tradition highlighted in each specific tour theme will lead the group. The bus will depart from and return to the museum. Light refreshments will be provided.

**Dance Workshop: Praise Dance (Ages 6–12)**
*Saturda*y, Sept. 14, 11 a.m.; museum admission required.
Culture Kingdom Kids master liturgical dancer Jessica Smith will lead an interactive dance workshop that will teach both dancers and non-dancers about the impact of praise dance in the black church. Participants will learn worship choreography and learn how to create original liturgical choreography using sacred dance techniques including the ring shout, a ritualistic religious dance derived from African slaves.

**Flowing In the Spirit Gospel Dance Showcase**
*Saturda*y, Sept. 14, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.; $10, online tickets, $12, at the door.
Visitors will see uplifting, gospel dance performances showcased by professional and faith-based dance ministries, ranging from traditional dance to urban hip-hop. Dancer Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell, formerly of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, will perform at the showcase.

More information about the programs can be found on the museum website at [RFLewisMuseum.org](http://RFLewisMuseum.org). For interviews with curator Leslie King-Hammond, Ph.D., or high-resolution images, call the Reginald F. Lewis Museum at 443.263.1809 or MICA’s Office of Communications at 410.225.2300.

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Reginald F. Lewis Museum is Baltimore’s premier facility highlighting the history and accomplishments of African Americans with a special focus on Maryland’s African-American community. A Smithsonian affiliate, the museum is the East Coast’s largest African-American museum occupying an 82,000-square-foot facility with ample permanent and special exhibition space, interactive learning environments, auditorium, resource center, oral history recording studio, museum shop, café, classrooms, meeting rooms, outside terrace and reception areas. The museum is located near Baltimore’s Inner Harbor at the corner of Pratt and President streets. The museum is also accessible on Baltimore’s Charm City Circulator Orange and Green Routes.

Founded in 1826, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) is the oldest continuously degree-granting college of art and design in the nation. The College enrolls nearly 3,500 undergraduate, graduate and continuing studies students from all 50 states and 57 countries in fine arts, design, electronic media, art education, liberal arts, and professional studies degree and non-credit programs. Redefining art and design education, MICA is pioneering interdisciplinary approaches to innovation, research, and community and social engagement. Alumni and programming reach around the globe, even as MICA remains a cultural cornerstone in the Baltimore/Washington region, hosting hundreds of exhibitions and events annually by students, faculty and other established artists.

Located near Lincoln Center in New York City, Museum of Biblical Art (MOBLA) celebrates and interprets art related to the Bible and its cultural legacy in Jewish and Christian traditions through exhibitions, education and scholarship. For more information, please visit [www.mobia.org](http://www.mobia.org).