

Jacob Lawrence

Moving Forward: Paintings, 1936–1999

FEBRUARY 13 - MARCH 22, 2008



Red Earth—Georgia, 1947. Egg tempera on hardboard, 20 x 24 inches

DC Moore Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of *Jacob Lawrence: Moving Forward, Paintings 1936–1999* on February 13, 2008. Organized to celebrate the artist's long and productive career of over sixty years, this retrospective exhibition includes more than fifty paintings and drawings that represent the range of Lawrence's work. Beginning with lively street scenes of 1930s Harlem, when the young artist was establishing the philosophy and aesthetic of his art, it features important examples from every decade of his working life, concluding with some of his final narratives of labor and leisure in the 1990s. The exhibition continues through March 22, 2008.

Jacob Lawrence (1917–2000) was one of the most prominent American painters of the twentieth century. He worked in a highly personal manner, creating modernist views of everyday life as well as epic narratives of American history and historical figures. His work is direct and forceful, in keeping with his life-long conviction that art can effect social change. At the same time, it is essentially humanistic, exploring the many challenges of African-American life as a means of addressing the universality of the human experience.

Among the highlights of the exhibition is *The Long Stretch*, a strikingly modernist painting from 1949 that depicts a crucial moment in a baseball game when a runner beats a throw to an infielder who strains to catch the ball. Conceived to commemorate the success of Jackie Robinson, the first African American to play in the major leagues, it also alludes to the struggle to integrate professional baseball after World War II.

Also on view is *Red Earth* of 1947, which was part of a commission by *Fortune* magazine for ten paintings that examined postwar conditions in the South. Several of the works were published in the magazine in color, along with a brief essay by the photographer, Walter Evans. The subject of *Red Earth*, rural Southern black farmers, relates it to Lawrence's epic *Migration* series of six years earlier.

The artist's highly acclaimed *Hiroshima* series, done in 1982 for a limited edition of John Hersey's well-known book on the horrific event, is another focal point of the exhibition. The eight works capture the devastation wrought on the city's population through views of people going about their daily routines at the fateful instant that the atomic bomb detonated. *Hiroshima* is complemented by representative works from three other series that engaged Lawrence in the 1990s—*Builders*, a subject that first appeared in his work in the mid-1940s, and two new series, *Supermarket* and *Games*.

Jacob Lawrence: Moving Forward is the most comprehensive of the six exhibitions of the artist's work that have been organized by DC Moore Gallery. Many of the paintings in the show come from the Jacob Lawrence estate. The exhibition also offers a rare opportunity to see a number of paintings from private collections that have not been on public view for decades. Together, they confirm Jacob Lawrence as an iconic figure in American art, a modernist painter who successfully balanced a life-long commitment to addressing many of the major social issues of the 20th century with an allegiance to abstract aesthetics.

**A FULLY ILLUSTRATED, 80-PAGE CATALOG WITH AN APPRECIATION BY DAVID DRISKELL
AND AN ESSAY BY PATRICIA HILLS IS AVAILABLE.**

DC MOORE GALLERY IS THE EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE JACOB LAWRENCE ESTATE.

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DC Moore Gallery specializes in twentieth-century and contemporary art. The gallery is located on the eighth floor of 724 Fifth Avenue between 56th and 57th Streets and is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 to 5:30. Press viewings can be arranged prior to the exhibition.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, OR TO ARRANGE A VIEWING,
PLEASE CALL SANDRA PACI AT 212-247-2111**