

International Travel Exhibition: *negritude*

The National Alliance of Artists from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (NAAHBCU) is excited to embark upon our first international traveling exhibition entitled *negritude*, taking place in the northern, southern, and western regions of India. The exhibition will travel to museums, universities, and galleries and feature panel presentations, including NAAHBCU members.

In January our traveling exhibition will begin in Kerala Lalithakala Akademi in Ernnakulam, Kerala. The city is a beautiful waterfront promenade, dating back to ancient times located in the mainland portion of the city of Kochi in central Kerala, India. Kerala Lalithakala Akademi's leading panel discussion is "Contextualizing the Afro-American Art: Some Reflections," led by Professor Johnnie Mae Maberry of Tugaloo College and Dr. Peggy Blood, Professor of Savannah State University. Other panelist include: Ravinder Reddy (Sculptor), Bipin Balachandran (Art Critic) and Tom J Vattakuzhy (Artist, Executive Committee Member, Kerala Lalithakala Akademi) and Professor Ajayakumar (Artist, Critic and Former Principal, College of Fine Arts, Kerala)

In the first week of March, the exhibit travels to Banaras Hindu University museum located in the city of Varanasi. Varanasi, is a city in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh C on the banks of the Ganges River. The city dates back to the 11th century B.C. and is regarded as the spiritual capital of India. Banaras Hindu University leading panel presenter is Professor Dwight Smith of Fayetteville State University along with professors from Banaras Hindu University.

The exhibition will further travel to Dakshina Chitra Heritage Museum of the Varija Gallery in Santiniketan, West Bengal. Shantiniketan is located in West India within the community of Bolpur. The city is flanked between the Ajay and Kopai River. Panel presentations on African-American Art will be held by Professor Dwight Smith of Fayetteville State University and Dr. Peggy Blood, Professor of Savannah State University.

In mid-April, the last exhibition on our tour will be held at Art Sanskriti Bhavan Gallery in Panji, Goain. Panjin, the state capital of Goa, is located in Southwest India on the banks of the Mandovi River. Presentations will include Professor Marvette Aldrich of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University (former professor of Winston-Salem State University), Professor Ricky Calloway of Fort Valley State University, and Dr. Peggy Blood, Professor of Savannah State University. Dr. Blood

will present with local artists on art, opportunities, challenges, and African American Art.

Here, art will serve as a vehicle for exchange between two cultures by providing a rare opportunity for members of our organization to experience the diverse cultures of India and for citizens in India to experience African-American art and expression of culture. We believed this project can produce positive outcomes in the communities for greater appreciation of culture and social understanding beyond "the art" itself.

Special Thanks: The NAAHBCU takes this opportunity to give special thanks to Fullbright Scholar, Neeta Omprakash, international curator and critic for undertaking the huge job of coordinating *negritude*. The NAAHBCU thanks Mr. Dan Moore of APEX Museum for the loan of four historical paintings. Thanks also to Mr. Roy Carter and the Administration of North Carolina A&T for their loan from their collection,.

Thanks to Chairman Mr. Nemom Pushparaj, Secretary Mr. Punniam Chandran, and staff of Lallithkala Akademi in Kerala for hosting the inaugural show, panel discussion, visiting speakers, and for co-sponsoring the exhibit.

The NAAHBCU thanks Chairman Mr. Nemom, Art Historian, Professor Chandran TV from Trivandrum

College of Fine Arts for his co-ordination, Chairman Mr. Nemom Pushparaj and Art Historian, Professor Pradosh Mishra, the Head of the Department of Art History, BHU, Varanasi for agreeing to host the exhibition, a panel discussion, and encouraging students to organize and participate in collateral events. We thank the Dean of the Faculty of Visual Arts BHU, Varanasi for their full support. The NAAHBCU thanks Professor Shiv Kumar from Kala Bhavan, Professor Sanjoy Kumar Malik, the Principal of Kala Bhavna, the curator of Art Gallery Nandan, Santiniketan, Ms. Deborah Thiagarajan the founder of Dakshinchitra Heritage Museum, and Ms. Gita Hudson the program officer and curator for hosting *negritude* in the Varija Art Gallery.

The NAAHBCU thanks Mr. Govind Gawde, minister for Art and Culture, government of Goa, without whose support it would not have been possible to have this exhibit in Goa. We also thank Mr. Gurudas Pilarnekar, the Director of the department of Art and Culture, Goa for hosting the show in the Art Gallery at Sanskriti Bhavan, Patto, Panjim, Goa.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you at one of the NAAHBCU's exhibitions or conferences.

Peggy Blood