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Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative Presents The Arts & Racial Justice Panel Series: "Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Visual Arts"

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With Moderator Charlayne Hunter-Gault

January 25, 5 p.m.

This four-part series brings artists, and arts and civic leaders together for

courageous conversations about inclusion and diversity in the arts. Panel members in this event are Gale Fulton-Ross, Steven High, Katherine Pill, and Anne-Marie Russell.

(Sarasota-Manatee, FL; January 1, 2021) The Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative, a nonprofit organization that promotes using the unifying power of the arts to nurture inclusion and diversity across the regional arts and cultural landscape, presents "Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Visual Arts," part of its free Arts & Racial Justice Panel series, Monday, January 25, 5-6:30 p.m., via the Zoom webinar platform. The moderator for the discussion is Charlayne Hunter-Gault, a leading civil rights activist, journalist and former foreign correspondent for National Public Radio, CNN, and the Public Broadcasting Service. Panel members include Gale Fulton-Ross, a renowned artist and arts advocate; Steven High, executive director of The Ringling; Katherine Pill, curator of contemporary art at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg; and Anne-Marie Russell, executive director of Sarasota Art Museum. The series is sponsored by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, and a collaboration with Florida Studio Theatre's Forum Series. ***The event is free, but registration is required at www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org by January 20.***

According to Michéle **Des Verney Redwine**, SBAC's president, SBAC's Arts and Racial Justice Panel series will provide a forum for artists and arts and civic leaders to participate in a dialogue Redwine describes as "courageous conversations." The first panel will explore issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the visual arts. The three other events are: March 1 (performing arts/theater); April 19 (media/literary); May 10 (education).

Redwine explains that Irene Oakley-Johnson, SBAC's treasurer, created the idea for the series.

"SBAC's Arts and Racial Justice Panel is a first step to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion in a broad community discussion where organization leaders from all the arts join people representing African American, and Caribbean Diaspora ethnic and racial sectors of the community," says Oakley-Johnson.

"Diversity is the first step in building a healthy community," says Redwine. "How can we be more inclusive? How can we point out our blind spots, widen racial parity in our organizations and civic infrastructures, encourage diversity hiring criteria, and highlight opportunities for artists of color in our region? How can we offer access to the arts to both artists of color and audiences of color? This series will look hard at real-life challenges, provoke and question and, ultimately, explore transformative solutions."

For more information about the Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative, visit www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org.

About Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative

The Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative is a nonprofit organization in Sarasota-Manatee, FL. Its mission is to advocate for greater exposure to African-American artists and artists of African descent throughout the greater Sarasota-Manatee region and to provide educational forums and symposia to expose area residents, visitors, students, and others to the work of these artists. **Visit www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org.**

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