



For Immediate Release

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National Portrait Gallery Acquires Stephen Towns Portrait of Joyce J Scott



(Baltimore, MD) **Stephen Towns Studio** and **Goya Contemporary Gallery** are pleased to jointly announce the **National Portrait Gallery's** recent acquisition of Stephen Towns' portrait of Baltimore artist Joyce J. Scott (b.1948, Baltimore, MD) painted by Baltimore artist Stephen Towns (b. 1980 Lincolnvile, SC). The acquisition was made official in February 2024.

Stephen Towns lives and works in Baltimore, MD. He trained as a painter with a BFA in studio art from the University of South Carolina and has also developed a rigorous, self-taught quilting practice. In 2018 the Baltimore Museum of Art presented his first museum exhibition, *Stephen Towns: Ruminations and a Reckoning..* Coincidentally, the exhibition marked the first solo exhibition at The Baltimore Museum of Art featuring a Black artist since Joyce J. Scott's *Kickin' It with the Old Masters* in 2000.

"Joyce J. Scott is a living legend, not just in Baltimore, but across the nation. Her multidisciplinary practice bears witness to the beauty and brutality of the human condition by way of stunningly crafted objects, and her works place viewers in dialogue with some of our most challenging truths" said Amy Raehse, manager of the Scott Art Trust and Partner at Goya Contemporary Gallery, Scott's primary representative for over 25 years.

Both Towns and Scott have met with an extraordinary level of success in recent years. In 2023, Towns wrapped a three-city touring solo museum exhibition *Declaration & Resistance* and released his first monograph of the same name. This summer he will complete a three-month residency at ALMA | LEWIS, and in September *Stephen Towns' Private Paradise: A Figurative Exploration of Black Rest and Recreation* will open at the Rockwell Museum in Corning, NY. In 2016, Joyce J. Scott was awarded a prestigious MacArthur 'Genius' Fellowship, followed by three honorary doctorates. Her works have entered the top private and public museum collections worldwide. In 2024, among countless other exhibitions, Scott opened a major 50-year traveling museum retrospective co-organized by the Baltimore Museum of Art and Seattle Art Museum.

"I'm so honored to be the subject of Stephen's painting," said Joyce J. Scott. "It's just fabulous. I don't even know what to say because it's that good."

"Joyce is a powerhouse and I wanted to capture her in all of her regal splendor, but also visually signify her rightful position as a leader in the arts" said Stephen Towns.

The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery tells the multifaceted story of the United States through the individuals who have shaped American culture. Spanning the visual arts, performing arts and new media, the Portrait Gallery portrays poets and presidents, visionaries and villains, actors, and activists whose lives tell the nation's story. **The National Portrait Gallery is located at Eighth and G streets N.W., Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000**

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