



## **Rising Up: Hale Woodruff's Murals at Talladega College**

*On View at the New Orleans Museum of Art May 16, 2014-September 14, 2014*

**New Orleans, La.**-Opening May 16 at the New Orleans Museum of Art, *Rising Up: Hale Woodruff's Murals at Talladega College* will bring six celebrated murals by renowned African-American artist, Hale Woodruff, to NOMA.

In 1938, the president of Talladega College in Alabama commissioned the Atlanta-based artist Hale Woodruff to create a series of murals for the college's new library. The resulting project—six large-scale murals portraying famous efforts against black oppression—would become among the most notable Depression-era expressions of the struggle for freedom and equality for blacks in America.

The first cycle, installed on the centennial of the 1839 mutiny on the slave ship *Amistad*, depicts the uprising, the trial, and subsequent return to Africa of the captives on that infamous ship. The companion mural series includes themes from the close of the Civil War to Woodruff's present day, touching upon themes of social justice, racial tension and harmony. Both cycles also pay tribute to the American Missionary Association, an organization that led the defense of the *Amistad* captives and later became instrumental in the founding of Talladega College and other educational institutions serving African Americans.

"Hale Woodruff's murals depict a seminal moment in the history of our country. The vivid colors and vibrant detail belie the significance of this event and make a real point of departure for an examination of the themes portrayed," says Susan Taylor, Director of the New Orleans Museum of Art. "NOMA is delighted to have these renowned murals featured prominently at NOMA to share with our community."

"*The Rising Up!* Tour displays a story of determination, resiliency, and the new African American experience," stated Dr. Billy C. Hawkins, President of Talladega College. "It is an honor to have NOMA apart of the national tour. We look forward to sharing Hale Woodruff's incredible artwork with the New Orleans community."

# NOMA

*Rising Up: Hale Woodruff's Murals at Talladega College* will be on view at NOMA from May 16 through September 14, 2014. An accompanying catalogue will be available for purchase in the Museum Shop.

## **Exhibition Organization and Credits**

*Rising Up: Hale Woodruff's Murals at Talladega College* is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia, in collaboration with Talladega College, Talladega, Alabama.



## **About Hale Woodruff**

Hale Aspacio Woodruff was born in Cairo, Illinois, and raised in Tennessee. In 1927, after formal art study in the United States, Woodruff moved to Paris and spent four years training at the city's progressive art academies. He studied the work of the Old Masters and the avant-garde, and met with African American expatriates, including Henry Ossawa Tanner. He began collecting African art and, after seeing works by Picasso and other modernists, started to incorporate African imagery into his paintings. In 1931, he established the first art school for African Americans in the Southeast at Atlanta University. He taught students at AU, Spelman College, and Clark University as well as high school and grade school children around Atlanta. In 1938, he also began teaching classes in art regularly at Talladega College.

## **About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden**

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses nearly 40,000 art objects encompassing 4,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing temporary exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The adjacent Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20th century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit [www.noma.org](http://www.noma.org).