

11-24-2007

Exploration and Wonder

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Exploration and Wonder

Exhibit Date Thanksgiving 2007-2008



Mary With Angelic Visions



Mary with a Vision of Angels



Mary Dedicated the Christ Child



Portrait of Mary



Malaika Favorite

is a visual artist from South Louisiana. She now resides in Augusta GA. Malaika's work is found in collections throughout the United States including: Emory University Goizueta Business School, Absolut Vodka collection, Morris Museum of Art, Augusta GA, Louisiana State University Print Collection, Baton Rouge, LA., Alexandria Museum of Art, Alexandria, LA., The Coca Cola Company, Atlanta, GA., Hartsfield International Airport, Atlanta, GA. And the National

Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati, OH. In fall 2007 she was commissioned to do a mural for the Alliance Theater based on the musical *The Women of Brewster Place*. The mural, completed in September, 2007, can be seen on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, GA.

Malaika received her BFA and MFA from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA in 1973. She taught in the art department at Grambling State University, 1973-1978 Grambling, LA and part time in the art department at Louisiana State University, 1988-89 and Augusta State University, Augusta, GA 1989-1993. She has worked as a full-time artist from 1993 to the present. In 1991 New Orleans Poetry Journal Press published a collection of her prints and poems, Title: *Illuminated Manuscript*. She has had art, poetry and articles published in several journals through the United States.

Her work is featured in *Art: African American* by Samella Lewis, *Black Art in Louisiana* by Bernardine B. Proctor and the *St. James Guide to Black Artists*, by Thomas Riggs (Editor), Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 1997 St. James Press. Her work has also been featured in *The International Review of African American Art*.

In 1998 Malaika was commissioned by the Fulton County Public Arts Project to create a series of paintings for the Harriett G. Darnell Multipurpose Facility in Atlanta, GA. In 2002 she received a grant from the Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs to create a series of paintings based on the hymn: "Lift Every Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson. Her work is currently in a traveling show In The Spirit of Martin, The Living Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 2002-2004 on display at The Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN August-November 2003. Sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. In 2004 Malaika completed a series of twenty washboard paintings for the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, OH. She also created a series of twenty-four paintings of African American and Diaspora poets for the Furious Flower Poetry conference held in Harrisonburg, VA.

Malaika, how did this series come to be?

a while back, I was in a show at the Marian Library; I think it was called, Marian Altar Pieces. I think someone I was working with at the time recommended myself and two other women to do the altar piece show. That is how I found out about the Institute.

Then a few years ago, I sent some slides of paintings. My original idea was to do a series based on the life of Christ. Instead, I was invited to



Holy Family



Holy Family Modern Version



Anna and the Child



Mary's Vision



Mary Tells Joseph



Lord When Did We See You Hungry



The Holy Ghost Shall Come upon You



Praise Him Heavenly Host



create a series on Mary. At first, I felt a bit overwhelmed because there are so many great paintings about Mary. I did not know what I could do to add to the great canon of works. As I thought about the idea, I decided I wanted to focus on how Mary reacted to the unexpected events in her life. I wondered how a woman would grasp such a great assignment. I remember a song I love to listen to entitled *Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue*. In the song, the writer says:

“God was just your little boy,
Lovely lady dressed in blue
teach me how to pray,
God was just your little boy
and you know the way.
Did you lift him up sometime
gently on your knee, like mother used to do to me
Did you teach him his prayers at night.”*

When I think about the paradox of teaching God how to pray, I find it funny and beautiful at the same time. The thought that God would humble himself and allow a young woman to teach him his prayers; that really touched me. I was able to peep into Mary’s soul and get some ideas for portraying her in a special way. I began to wonder what it was like to hold Jesus in her arms and he is just a baby. Wow! I suppose that is why I did so many Madonnas with the child. Not that any of them portray the Mary of the Bible but rather they portray the concept of Mary. I wondered how a sword could pierce her soul and how would I paint that feeling.

I am sure there will be more paintings based on this encounter with Mary. I just ran out of time and had to stop painting Mary to put frames on the paintings I had already created. I look forward to further explorations of the same theme as well as continuing my series, *Meditations on the Life of Christ*. I am especially interested in doing a series based on the parables of Christ. I would like to thank The Marian Library for inspiring these works and giving them an audience.

Exploration and Wonder

The works of Malaika Favorite will be at the Marian Library for a whole year (November 2007–November 2008) either as a separate show or in conjunction with special themes. Biblical and Marian, Malaika’s art takes a fresh look at classical features. Its inspiration takes origin with the nagging question: How was it possible? How was it possible that God chose a girl to give birth to His Son? How could He be so daring to entrust Himself to tender but fragile human hands? How come the Supernatural allowed itself to be coopted by the natural world? Exploring this fundamental question, Malaika ventures into a series of different avenues. Among them Mary’s visions; her way to deal with the inbreaking of the spiritual world in her existence. Again and again, the AfricanAmerican artist addresses the theme of the family, the Holy Family, the extended family of Jesus. This leads quite naturally to an artistic rendering of the relation between mother and child, of mothering, and almost invariably, the question of suffering, which in turn awakens and sharpens the artist’s sense of justice. Widespread as to its thematic, Malaika’s art is at least as versatile when it comes to color and style. From a plain naturalist approach to a discreetly cherished abstractionism, she skillfully plays a wide gamut of forms and color schemes.

*By Aaron Neville and released on his CD *To Make Me Who I Am*



Madonna and Child



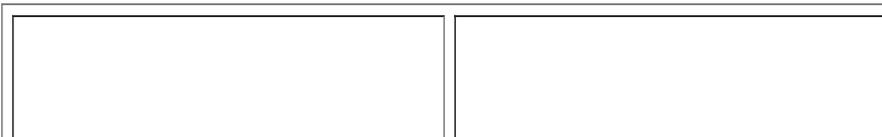
Blessed Art Thou Among Women



Behold the Handmaid of the Lord



Mary Protects Jesus from Herod



Annunciation



The Mary Window



**The Woman
at the Well**



Extended Family



Jesus, the Son of Man

The Good Samaritan



**Jesus Meets John
the Baptist**



Genealogy of the Holy Family



**And She Shall
Bring Forth a Son**



**The Gospel, Panel
1**

Return to
Single Artists Exhibits



**The Gospel, Panel
2**



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