



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JazzMasters: Bay Area Treasures

New work by James Gayles

March 15 - April 13, 2008

Thursday evening, March 20, 2008, Artist Reception 6-9PM

Marcus Shelby Quartet to perform with Faye Carol

OAKLAND, Calif. – January 30, 2008 – Swarm Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition **JazzMasters: Bay Area Treasures** with new works by James Gayles.

On December 4, 1987, the United States Senate passed a resolution designating Jazz "a rare and valuable national American treasure of international importance". The resolution states that "Jazz has achieved preeminence throughout the world as an indigenous American music and art form, bringing to this country and the world a uniquely American musical synthesis and culture through the African-American experience," among other attributes. Just west of Swarm Gallery, on 7th Street, there was a vibrant stretch of jazz and blues clubs, a cultural mecca that drew musicians and music lovers from all over the country in the 40s and 50s.

The exhibition at Swarm, "JazzMasters," includes representations of great figures in jazz by artist James Gayles (a musician himself). This series of portraits pays tribute to contemporary and historical jazz practitioners, with an emphasis on the Bay Area's own. The subjects of his works are those who were born, settled or developed their skills in the Bay Area, most residing in Oakland. Some are legends, some are lesser known, and all represent the breadth of musical talent that inhabits our home. James integrates his figures with more abstract backgrounds, playing of many improvisational themes of jazz. He has captured the unique affect of each of his subjects, ranging from Marcus Shelby to John Coltrane.

We are happy to announce a special program in conjunction with the exhibition, **Artist Talk and Panel: Jazz and Visual Art**, on Thursday, March 27, 2008, 6:30PM. This panel will be moderated by Greg Bridges from KCSM and KPFA. Panel members include: *Angela Wellman* (Jazz Musician, Educator, Executive Director, Founder and Dean of the Oakland Public Conservatory of Music, Leader of the Count Basie Tribute Orchestra), *Wanda Sabir* (Arts Columnist for Bayview Newspaper and Writer), *Duane Deterville* (Writer, Visual Artist, Musician, Co-Director and Co-Founder of Sankofa Cultural Center, Organizer for the Sankofa Jazz Symposium series, Co-author of the recently published book "Black Artists in Oakland"), *Marcus Shelby* (Jazz Musician, Educator, Leader of the Marcus Shelby Jazz Orchestra & the Marcus Shelby Quartet. Has composed jazz scores for theater and the ballet. Recently voted one of the most influential persons in the Bay Area), *Kimara Dixon* (Photographer, Jazz Musician) and the exhibition artist, *James Gayles*.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

EXHIBITION: **JazzMasters: Bay Area Treasures | James Gayles**

DATES: March 15 - April 13, 2008
Swarm Gallery is open to the public Tuesday – Sunday 12 – 6PM
Every First Friday of the month until 9PM and by appointment

ARTISTS
RECEPTION: Thursday, March 20, 2008, Artist Reception 6-9PM
Marcus Shelby Quartet to perform with Faye Carol

PROGRAM: Thursday, March 27, 2008, 6:30PM
Artists Talk and Panel: Jazz and Visual Art

LOCATION: Swarm Gallery, 560 Second Street, Oakland CA 94607
www.swarmstudios.net

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