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EVOLVE THE GALLERY

Grand Opening Celebration & Exhibition featuring ...

Lights, Camera, Affirmative Action!

An exploration and celebration of black cinema in America
Works and Commentary by
MILTON 510

The Harlem Renaissance was a cultural movement that spanned the 1920s and 1930s. It grew out of the changes that had taken place in the African American community since the abolition of slavery. Characterizing the Harlem Renaissance was an overt racial pride that came to be represented in the idea of the New Negro, who through intellect and production of literature, art, and music could challenge the pervading racism and stereotypes to promote progressive or socialist politics, and racial and social integration. The creation of art and literature would serve to "uplift" the race.¹

SACRAMENTO, CA – Evolve the Gallery owners Brady and A.Michelle Blakeley will replicate the Harlem Renaissance cultural theme as they commence the celebration of their art gallery's opening Saturday, September 4, 2010 (6:00-10:00pm), which will include an exclusive preview and reception. Situated in Sacramento's historic Oak Park, the gallery is located at 2907 35th Street. Works by notable award-winning artist and Oakland, California native "Milton 510" Bowens will be on exhibit throughout the month.

Until the great depression, the Harlem Renaissance was underwritten and backed by philanthropist and real estate baron John Harmon. Brady said, "Had the Black artists of that time not been dependent upon philanthropic handouts, but supported by their contemporary's patronage, the Movement could have sustained itself." He continued, "When the current economic downturn began, many artists were immediately affected because art collecting drastically slowed, much like during the onset of the Depression."



Evolve the Gallery

In direct contradiction to history and even during the current economic climate, the young African American couple is opening a private contemporary fine art gallery in an attempt to correct a period in art history that could have easily been avoided, had people understood the importance and value of preserving their own culture. **Evolve the Gallery** provides a fitting venue for Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area artists to showcase their talents and display their respective works.

A.Michelle commented, "History would tell us it is the wrong time to open. It's even harder to sell culturally-based or challenging work. However, our mission is to give opportunity to new vision and edgy work, and to infuse new interest and excitement into the preservation of not just African American art, but the diverse art culture."

The gallery's opening will be observed all through September, and will include a public grand opening reception (Sept. 11th); screenings of popular Black Cinema films; art commentary; and a provocative "Exploring Black Cinema" panel discussion with "Blacula" director William Crane, Milton 510, and other special guests. Visit www.EvolvethetheGallery.com for September 2010 calendar of events.

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"Milton 510" Bowens

Bowens commented on the upcoming showcase, "This third installment in an ongoing collection of fine art works explores and celebrates Black Cinema past and present and its impact on the African American Culture. Instead of attempting to depict the content of the selected films from one narrow viewpoint or focus on the obvious stereotypes that label some. Eyes artistically depict the films from a multitude of viewpoints to represent their cultural value in a greater, more interesting context."

He continued, "... eye hope to show the viewer that there are multiple sides to all stories and these films were ground breaking in many ways, and extremely important to not only Black Culture but World Culture. EYE believe strongly that Fine Art can start the manner in which we celebrate, validate, preserve and pass down our Legacies on our own cultural terms."

Evolve the Gallery co-owner Brady has a passion and appreciation for art; A.Michelle likes what she likes. However, the married pair admit to being relative novices. Michelle said, "Although we are not formally educated in the arts, we are quite fortunate to have considerable access to and relationships with a wide variety of artists, curators, collectors, enthusiasts, gallerists, and the like—some of whom are now on our gallery's advisory board.

Brady believes African American culture and diverse fine artists are under-represented in the Sacramento area. "It's our responsibility, as African Americans, to do what we can to not only re-establish our rightful place at the table in the fine art industry, but to elevate our gifted and talented diverse artists by supporting, collecting and valuing their creative works and educating our children on many contributions African Americans have made to the art world."

ABOUT THE GALLERY:

Established by 20-year married couple Brady and A.Michelle Blakeley, **Evolve the Gallery** is a private fine art gallery based in Sacramento, CA, the art nucleus of Northern California and an emerging focal point for fine art in the West. The newly opened **Evolve the Gallery** will soon become the premiere venue for all evocative fine artists to show their works in an exclusive, personal, and intimate environment in the historic Oak Park neighborhood near downtown Sacramento. The Blakeleys aspire to provide useful and valuable guidance to emerging, mid-career and established fine artists who may be new to the West Coast or new to the Sacramento art movement. www.EvolvetheGallery.com

ABOUT THE ARTIST (Milton 510):

Milton Bowens' formal art education took off while he attended the Renaissance Art School in Oakland during his junior and senior high school years. After graduating, Milton completed one year of study at the California College of Arts and Crafts before enlisting in the United States Armed Forces, where he became an Illustrator and continued his art studies. During this time, two of the military's most prestigious museums: John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Museum, Fort Bragg, North Carolina and Don F. Pratt Memorial Museum, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, collected Milton's artwork.

After serving his tour of duty, Bowens returned to the Bay Area where he continued his education. Inspired by great artists such as Jean Michel Basquiat, Robert Rauschenberg, Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence and Andy Warhol, Bowens changed his focus from illustration to fine art. That shift proved crucial for Bowens who is now considered a great artist in his own right as well as an inspirational public speaker and community activist. Bowens has been the subject of over twenty solo exhibitions, and has participated in several group exhibitions. His work can be found in numerous public and private collections.

¹Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlem_Renaissance

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EDITORS: RSVP your intent to cover the Sept. 4th private opening reception to 916-572-5123 or amb@evolvethegallery.com. Photo journalists are welcome!