



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Melissa Richardson Banks (213) 446-3467 art @causeconnect.net
Yvette Shearer (310) 213-5682 yvette@shearerpr.com

Echoes of Movement and Culture: Artist June Edmonds Extends the Legacy of Women and Artists of Color Engaged in Abstract Art

Now on view at Riverside Art Museum through Sunday, November 27, 2022

Riverside, CA (October 10, 2022)—June Edmonds’ large-scale abstract paintings melodically combine color, repetition, movement, and balance. The Los Angeles-based artist’s works fit squarely within the Western tradition of abstract art, yet her style is a voice all its own and connects to her African American roots. Featuring 19 paintings and drawings, her exhibition *Rhythmic Inquisitions | June Edmonds* is now on view at Riverside Art Museum in its downstairs Members Gallery through Sunday, November 27, 2022.

Organized by the museum’s guest curator Lisa Henry, the exhibition includes works from Edmonds’ signature *Energy Wheel Paintings* series inspired by her meditation practice. The artist’s recent abstract compositions featuring interlocking forms are also on display such as “Only a Gardener” created in 2021. Edmonds’ evocative paintings and thoughtful drawings uncover the artist’s beautiful spiritual journey. Her collaborative concepts explore the alignment of multiple identities such as race, nationality, gender, or political leanings.

“The most soul-stirring, heart-opening memories that I have are black ... and rhythmic,” says Edmonds. “They feel like love at its beginning and transform into full color.”

“I have been following June’s work for many years and I am very excited to be able to bring such a tremendous selection of her work to the Riverside Art Museum, her first show in the Inland Empire,” says Henry. “Her hypnotic paintings and drawings are part of a long tradition of Black abstraction that needs to be acknowledged.”

A 2022 recipient of the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship in Fine Arts, Edmonds’ work is on par with the level of mastery achieved by pioneering African American abstract artists Alma Thomas (1891-1978) and Norman Lewis (1909-1979). Like Thomas and Lewis, Edmonds explores the depths of abstraction while simultaneously reflecting on spirituality, identity, and cultural history. (In 1972, Alma Thomas was the first African American woman to have a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Norman Lewis became the first Black artist to win the top prize at the Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, in 1955.)

Different from recent shows in Los Angeles, the exhibition in Riverside moves away from Edmonds’ figurative works, allowing the artist’s abstract works to shine instead. Focusing on her dramatic charcoal drawings and her embrace of full pure color in her paintings, *Rhythmic Inquisitions* also includes early examples of Edmonds’ iconic color wheel paintings, as well as mixed media works that can be seen as a transition from drawings and paintings.

Rhythmic Inquisitions | June Edmonds
Saturday, August 27 through Sunday, November 27, 2022
Riverside Art Museum @ 3425 Mission Ave., Riverside, CA 92501
(951) 684-7111 • www.riversideartmuseum.org

VISIT THE MUSEUM: Purchase admission tickets at the door or make reservations in advance online at <https://riversideartmuseum.org/get-tickets>. Admission tickets are valid for Riverside Art Museum and The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture – both are open Wednesday through Sunday from 10am to 4pm. First Sundays are free at Riverside Art Museum during October through May from 1pm to 4pm. First Thursdays at Riverside Art Museum and The Cheech are free 6pm to 9pm year-round as part of the citywide [Riverside Artswalk](#). Bank of America customers enjoy free admission during the first full weekend of every month by presenting their active credit or debit card from the bank, along with a photo ID, to gain one free general admission to RAM and The Cheech as part of the [Museums on Us® program](#). Advance museum reservations are recommended for cardholders and accompanying non-cardholders.

PHOTO: June Edmonds in her Los Angeles studio (photo by Chris Warmald).

ARTWORK IMAGES: (1) “Only a Gardener” by June Edmonds, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 84 x 110 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles; (2) “Untitled” by June Edmonds (undated), oil on canvas, 20 x 20 inches. Courtesy of the artist; (3) “Know Thyself (Slippin’)” by June Edmonds, 2015, oil on canvas, 40 x 30 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

ARTIST JUNE EDMONDS lives and works in Los Angeles where she was born in 1959. Edmonds received her MFA from Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, and a bachelor's degree from San Diego State University. Earlier this year, Edmonds was awarded a 2022 Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Fine Arts by the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. Guggenheim Fellowships are grants awarded annually since 1925 by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation to those "who have demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts." Among the many prizes and residencies, Edmonds has attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and is the recipient of the inaugural 2020 AWARE Prize, presented by the French nonprofit Archive of Women Artists Research and Exhibitions; a 2018 City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Grant (COLA) and Exhibition at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery; a California Arts Council Individual Artist Grant; Helene Wurlitzer Foundation artist residency in Taos, NM; and a Dorland Mountain Community artist residency in Temecula, CA. Edmonds has completed several works of public art for the City of Los Angeles and the Department of Cultural Affairs, including an installation at the MTA Pacific Station in Long Beach, CA. Her paintings are held in collections throughout the United States including the California African American Museum, Los Angeles; Mead Art Museum, Amhurst College, Amhurst, MA; Davis Museum, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA; and the Michael Rubel Collection, Los Angeles, CA, among others. Edmonds is represented by [Luis De Jesus Los Angeles](#) and her website is www.juneedmonds.com.

CURATOR LISA HENRY has been a guest curator for institutions on both the east and west coasts, including The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, The California African American Museum, and The MAK Center for Architecture. Henry has also worked with Riverside Art Museum on several projects including the 2020 exhibitions, *Brenna Youngblood: Lavender Rainbow* and *Sheila Pree Bright #1960Now*. The exhibition is generously made possible at Riverside Art Museum by Betty & Walter Parks.

ART HISTORIAN RICHARD ALLEN MAY, III is a scholar, educator, cultural critic, and artist dedicated to the history and contributions of African American artists. As an editor of *AFRICOBRA: Experimental Art Toward a School of Thought* by Wadsworth Jarrell, his foreword was included in this book published in 2020 by Duke University Press. May has presented his research on African American art at the San Jose State Art History Symposium, the New Critical Perspectives on African American Art History at the David C. Driskell Center in Maryland and the College Art Association's annual conference in 2010 in Chicago. Since 2021, he has taught survey courses in art history at Bowie State University, an HBCU (Historically Black College, University) in Maryland. As a lecturer in the African American Studies Department at Cal State Fullerton, Cal State San Bernardino, and ArtCenter College of Design, he incorporates the study of African American artists in his instruction to students. May has contributed art exhibition reviews, curator profiles, artist interviews and book reviews for Los Angeles-based magazine, *Artillery* for over six years.

RIVERSIDE ART MUSEUM is one museum with two locations: the Riverside Art Museum (RAM), housed in a National Historic 1929 building designed by Hearst Castle and AIA Gold Medal-winning architect Julia Morgan, and The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture of Riverside Art Museum (The Cheech), just one block away in downtown Riverside, the "City of Arts & Innovation." RAM integrates art into the lives of people in a way that engages, inspires, and builds community by providing high quality exhibits and art education programs that instill a lifelong love of the arts. A 60-plus-year-old, non-profit cultural arts institution, RAM strives to be a distinguished, yet accessible institution that serves as a cultural, collaborative, and educational focal point for our diverse community. Originally formed in the early 1950s by a loosely knit group of artists, RAM purchased and moved into Julia Morgan's 1929 Riverside YWCA building in the 1960s, renovating it to become the museum. At this site, visitors can expect to see a mix of solo, group, and permanent collection exhibits featuring traditional and contemporary/modern art. Key exhibition initiatives have been to uplift untold stories—from female artists to historically understudied Inland Empire artists, designers, and architectural movements, to artists uplifting urgent messages of social justice. A permanent Julia Morgan tribute exhibition sheds light onto this pioneering architect.

RAM's desire to further engage and serve the community was the impetus to create The Cheech, which opened on June 18, 2022. The Cheech is a public-private partnership between RAM, the City of Riverside, and comedian Cheech Marin—one of the world's foremost collectors of Chicano art. Marin's gift of approximately 500 works by Chicana/o/x artists to RAM's permanent collection makes the collection a repository for one of the largest holdings of Chicana/o/x art by a non-ethnic specific contemporary art museum. The Cheech is dedicated to showcasing Chicana/o/x art and honoring and exploring its continued social, cultural, and political impact through a comprehensive exhibitions program of the permanent collection, temporary exhibitions organized at the center, and nationally touring exhibitions that align with the center's vision. The Cheech will work collaboratively with community partners to present thought-provoking educational programming that explores the complexity of Chicana/o/x culture not only through the visual arts, but in both music and film as well, recognizing that this art is evolving and expanding its definitions and parameters in response to current social conditions and in conversation with global artistic movements. Find RAM on Instagram and Facebook [@riversideartmuseum](#). Find The Cheech on social media as [@thecheechcenter](#)