

Emma Amos

MEMORY

January 31 – March 2, 2013
Opening Reception: January 31, 6 – 8pm



Emma Amos, *Memory*, 2012, Acrylic on Linen and African Fabric Borders, 80 x 57 inches

Flomenhaft Gallery is proud to announce *Memory*, an exhibition of works by **Emma Amos**. Included are new paintings and also important works from her long career. *The Gift*, a historical work, has a major presence in this exhibit. It has been nineteen years since its last appearance.

The Gift is a series watercolors: forty-eight life portraits of women artists Amos completed between 1990 and 1994 with many friends who individually visited the artist's New York studio for their portraits. "It started with my desire to give to my daughter, India Amos, all of my women artists-friends. I wanted her to know and have all of these important and powerful women and their legacy, as they had been so important to me."

The project soon grew into a larger project, including well known women and artists who agreed to come to her studio. "They all sat for an hour while I painted their portrait. **Elizabeth Catlett**, for instance, was in town once in 1991 and I asked her. She came and that's when we became friends." Their friendship lasted for more than twenty years, including frequent visits to Catlett's home in

Cuernavaca, Mexico. Some of them are Amos long-time friends like artists **Joyce Kozloff**, **Camille Billops**, **Joan Semmel**, writer **bell hooks**, and Bronx Museum's director **Holly Block**, to name a few. Other artists were either women Amos admired or who had been part of groups that she had joined herself like the editorial team of *HERESIES* and other important activist groups from the eighties. "All of those women helped to change the way the art world sees women artists. Together, we really had this force of making them pay attention." Here, she refers to Museums and galleries that before some staple movements did not give as many opportunities to women as they gave to male artists. *The Gift* also includes the likes of **Lucy Lippard**, **Lorna Simpson**, **Lorraine O'Grady** and many others. Some of the depicted artists have confirmed their attendance to the opening reception and others like **Vivian Browne**, **Shirley King** and **Catlett**, who have passed, make this a rare opportunity to see all of their images together.

Amos works in this show also depict more than portraiture. Within her new creations are the potent images of a beautiful woman resting in *Memory* and of a boy innocently reading as in *Geometry*. Men are also represented in *Hope*, a depiction of two athletic men running in a race. That is an important view for Emma Amos: that men and women can be equally represented in her works. Memories of her heroes, like **Katherine Dunham**, and the South compose a lucid image of the history and the legacy of African Americans in this culture, as well as her own participation in the History of Art. **Amos** brings us clear memories of what we may want to remember, and why.

Painter, printmaker, and weaver **Emma Amos** was born in 1938 and grew up in Atlanta, Georgia. She attended the five-year program at Antioch University in Yellow Springs, Ohio and spent her fourth year abroad at the London Central School of Art, studying printmaking, painting, and weaving. She received a BA from Antioch, and then returned to the Central School to earn a diploma in etching in 1960. She earned her MA from New York University in 1965.

Amos's first solo exhibition was in an Atlanta gallery in 1960. During her time at New York University Hale Woodruff invited her to become a member of **Spiral**, a group of black artists that included **Romare Bearden, Norman Lewis**, and **Charles Alston**. She was the group's youngest and only female member.

In 1974 she began teaching at the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts, and in 1977 developed and co-hosted with Beth Gutcheon *Show of Hands*, a crafts show for WGBH Educational TV in Boston, which ran for two years. In 1980, Amos became an assistant professor at the Mason Gross School of Art, Rutgers University. She served as chair of the department from 2005 to 2007 and retired in 2008 as Professor II. She is a member of the National Academy Museum and a Governor of Skowhegan.

Amos's work has been exhibited internationally and is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, Birmingham Museum, the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Morris Museum, the New Jersey and Minnesota state museums, and the Dade County and Newark museums, and many others. She has been awarded numerous grants including a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, a Rockefeller residency in Bellagio, A New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Painting, a NEA Fellowship in Drawing, A Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women Caucus of Art among others, and a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Residency in Italy in the upcoming Fall 2013.