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“Plumb Line: Charles White and the Contemporary” at California African American Museum
By BLOUIN ARTINFO
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The California African American Museum is hosting “Plumb Line: Charles White and the Contemporary,” an exhibition celebrating the life of the iconic artist by displaying art by contemporary artists whose work resonates White’s influence. The exhibition is on view through August 25, 2019.

Charles White (April 2, 1918 – October 3, 1979) was a Chicago-born artist, known for his powerful depiction of African-American history, culture, and lives in paintings and murals. As an artist of color, White’s influence was profound — in a career spanning five decades, he dedicated himself to creating art that shed light on the everyday lives of African Americans as well as the lesser explored issues of social justice, civil rights, and dignity.

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At CAAM's "Plumb Line: Charles White and the Contemporary," around 25 black artists create work to honor White in their own ways. For the exhibition, these contemporary artists, have created works dealing with the subject of "black individual and collective life" and resonates with White's continuing influence.

"From abstraction to figuration, the artists of 'Plumb Line' find conversation with White through the largesse of their canvases, expansive renderings of black skin and black community, and in the treatment of black past and presence in ways that are both epic and intimate," the museum says. "The plumb line, an architectural tool used to determine verticality, is a featured element in White's 'Birmingham Totem,' suggesting the work of black artists as architects of change. White himself can also be considered an artistic plumb line: a builder of black artistic opportunities and a compass directing us toward new aesthetic, liberatory possibilities."

Merrick Adams, Sadie Barnette, Dawoud Bey, Diedrick Brackens, Greg Breda, Bisa Butler, Alfred Conteh, and Njideka Akunyili Crosby are among the featured artists in the exhibition. The show is curated by Essence Harden, independent curator, and Leigh Raiford, Associate Professor of African American Studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

The exhibition is on view through August 25, 2019, at the California African American Museum, 600 State Dr, Los Angeles, CA 90037, USA.