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Hammer Museum Announces Public Engagement Partnership with Art + Practice

Debut offsite exhibition at new art and social service campus in Leimert Park

Charles Gaines: Librettos: Manuel de Falla/Stokely Carmichael opens February 28, 2015

(Los Angeles, CA)— The Hammer Museum announced today a new Public Engagement Partnership with Art + Practice (A+P), an art and social service nonprofit in Leimert Park created by artist **Mark Bradford**, philanthropist and collector **Eileen Harris Norton**, and social activist **Allan DiCastro**. The Hammer and A+P partnership develops a new model for collaborative, offsite arts programming. The debut exhibition *Charles Gaines: Librettos: Manuel de Falla/Stokely Carmichael* – a presentation of new work by Los Angeles-based artist Charles Gaines – opens on February 28, 2015 in conjunction with the survey of his early work, *Charles Gaines: Gridwork 1974-1989*, showing at the Hammer Museum starting February 7.

Art + Practice has four spaces on its campus: a technology lab and classrooms for foster youth, artist lecture space, artist studios, and an exhibition space for visual art. The collaboration between the Hammer and A+P is supported by a grant from **the James Irvine Foundation**.

“The museum is so excited to collaborate with Art + Practice. I believe this project will have deep resonance in the Leimert Park community and will extend the Hammer’s acclaimed Public Engagement program beyond the museum’s walls,” said Hammer Director **Ann Philbin**. “It’s a model for how institutions—and artists—can reach out, embrace, and become meaningful to an audience outside of their usual spheres.”

“Annie has been a supporter of Art + Practice since the inception of this idea a few years ago, even before the partnership was discussed,” said artist **Mark Bradford**. “It seems natural to collaborate with the Hammer, a museum that supports artists working in Los Angeles and a place where I have a long history since my work was shown in the 2001 exhibition *Snapshot: New Art from Los Angeles*.”

The historically important artistic neighborhood of Leimert Park has long been considered a center for African American arts and was featured prominently in the Hammer’s 2012 exhibition *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*. Venues like the Brockman Gallery gave visibility and validation to many black artists at a critical time in the 1960s, and the neighborhood continued to foster a thriving cultural community for artists, musicians, performers, and residents alike. A+P co-founder and Los Angeles native Bradford spent much of his childhood in Leimert Park at his mother’s hair salon and later set up his studio there. The new 17,000 square foot A+P campus on Leimert Boulevard serves as both an art exhibition space and a facility that serves transitional age foster youth in classrooms, a computer lab, and offices for mental health services. A+P is partnering with **The RightWay Foundation (RWF)** to provide job and life skills training and to help find employment for foster youth who are aging out of the foster care system.

The Hammer will be responsible for organizing the exhibitions in the Art + Practice gallery space. The first exhibition will be *Charles Gaines: Librettos: Manuel de Falla/Stokely Carmichael*, presenting a new, 12-part body of work by Los Angeles conceptual artist Charles Gaines – an influential educator at CalArts where Bradford studied. Highlighting the influence of John Cage and his notions of chance and

indeterminacy in composition, the new work takes as its foundation a 1911 opera, *La Vida Breve (Life is Short)* by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla. Onto this tragic tale of love mired by classism, Gaines transposes a fiery 1964 speech by Civil Rights activist and Honorary Prime Minister of the Black Panthers Stokely Carmichael as the libretto. Employing a systems-based conceptualism central to his practice, Gaines combines music and text to call attention to the long-standing class racial and economic struggles in the United States while recognizing the power of music to bridge difference.

The Hammer will present two public programs in conjunction with *Librettos* at A+P as well as artist talks with foremost figures in contemporary art. The Hammer will also oversee components of the A+P artist residency program. Future exhibitions include solo exhibitions of Njideka Akunyili-Crosby and John Outterbridge, and a group show of the first year's artists in residence—Dale Brockman Davis, Aalia Brown, and Sandy Rodriguez. Visit [Art + Practice on the Hammer blog](#) and A+P's [website](#) for updates about upcoming programs and exhibitions at A+P.

The Public Engagement Partnership is overseen by **Allison Agsten**, the Hammer's curator of Public Engagement. The Hammer has appointed an assistant curator, **Jamillah James**, to implement the exhibitions and programs, in collaboration with Hammer senior curators. The Hammer will also work closely with A+P to offer organizational expertise and guidance, helping A+P grow into a thriving community nonprofit organization.

Charles Gaines: Librettos: Manuel de Falla/ Stokely Carmichael is organized by **Anne Ellegood**, senior curator, and **Jamillah James**, assistant curator.

Hammer Museum at Art + Practice is a Public Engagement Partnership made possible by the James Irvine Foundation.

Public Engagement at the Hammer is a curatorial program dedicated to developing artist projects that create an exchange between visitors and the museum. Enacted both inside and outside the galleries, Public Engagement projects range from an experiential installation focused on housing in Los Angeles to residencies with a lending library and an experimental orchestra.

The Hammer Museum's Public Engagement program is supported, in part, by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

ABOUT ART + PRACTICE

Conceived and founded by artist Mark Bradford, philanthropist and collector Eileen Harris Norton and social activist Allan DiCastro, Art + Practice (A+P) is an arts and education private operating foundation based in Leimert Park, Los Angeles. A+P's mandate is to create a developmental platform that, on one hand, supports the acquisition of practical skills for foster youth, and, on the other, stresses the importance of creative activity within a larger social context. To learn more about A+P visit artandpractice.org.

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum at UCLA believes in the promise of art and ideas to illuminate lives and build a just world. Free to the public, the museum's collections, exhibitions, and programs span the classic to the contemporary in art, architecture, and design. As a cultural center, the Hammer Museum offers nearly 300 free public programs a year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances at the Billy Wilder Theater which also houses the UCLA Film & Television Archive. The Hammer's international exhibition program focuses on wide-ranging thematic and monographic exhibitions, highlighting contemporary art since the 1960s and the work of emerging artists through Hammer Projects and the Hammer's biennial, *Made in L.A.* The Hammer is home of the

Armand Hammer Collection of American and European paintings, as well as the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries Collection and the Hammer Contemporary Collection. The Hammer Contemporary Collection focuses on art of all media since 1960 with an emphasis on works of the last ten years, works on paper, and art made in Los Angeles. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts—comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists’ books from the Renaissance to the present—and oversees the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden at UCLA.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free and open to the public. Visit www.hammer.ucla.edu for current exhibition and program information and call 310-443-7041 for tours.

Hours: Tuesday–Friday 11am–8pm, Saturday & Sunday 11am–5pm. Closed Mondays and national holidays. The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard in Westwood, Los Angeles. Parking is available onsite for \$3 (maximum 3 hours) or for a \$3 flat rate after 6pm.