

HEMPHILL

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RENÉE STOUT

When 6 is 9: Visions of a Parallel Universe
September 29 - December 15, 2018

Washington DC — HEMPHILL is pleased to announce the exhibition *Renée Stout, When 6 is 9: Visions of a Parallel Universe* opening on Saturday, September 29, with a reception from 6-8pm. The exhibition will remain on view through December 15, 2018 and features new sculpture, painting and mixed media works.

We remain caught in the insidious evil maw of our country's original sin, still looking to the promises of "we the people" and "pursuit of happiness" given in the U.S. Constitution, our founding text. Today we feel threats to these still unfulfilled aspirations. Yet an incurable idealism persists in the American soul. A response to these threats is a need to dream, to transcend, to see beyond our difficulties to a cure, to something better.

All art contains hope. At its most basic, an artwork evidences the wish to communicate. Even when reduced to only color and form, it inherently aims to engender something in the viewer. This *something* cannot be measured objectively, and its comprehension depends on a kind of magical thinking. In the exhibition *When 6 is 9: Visions of a Parallel Universe*, Renée Stout uses the conjurer's imagery passed through her African American heritage to address our present state of stress and the subsequent need to dream. The subjects, one might say the voices, in her work speak to the madness of our time from their individual viewpoints. As we move through the exhibition, an elucidative empathy to these personal narratives fortifies our sense of whole beings, un-discountable, full of meaning. Progressing towards the end of the show we find ourselves in a parallel universe. Stout describes this as a place "where the spirits of mysterious colorful people... intersect in spaces teeming with possibilities."

The founding text, setting us on a national journey, was a new contract of citizenship. The spiritual content of the contract requires us to work toward better circumstances for all, correct past transgressions, and to dream of a "more perfect union." Stout's *When 6 is 9: Visions of a Parallel Universe* decries the contract being set on its head. Using the pressure caused by our current moral and physical crisis to power her dreams, she pictures ways out of the chaos. Reminded of the Delmore Schwartz short story "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities," we might reverse his title to serve as the coda to the exhibition, "in responsibilities begin dreams." Renée Stout's show does not look away, it looks into and then dreams beyond.

Renée Stout is a recipient of the Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award (2018), Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize (2012), David C. Driskell Prize (2010), a Joan Mitchell Award (2005), The Pollock Krasner Foundation Award (1991 & 1999), the Anonymous Was a Woman Award (1999), and The Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (1993). Her work is included in such collections as The Africa Museum, Berg en Dal, Netherlands, The Baltimore Museum of Art, The High Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The National Gallery of Art, The San Francisco Museum of Fine Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture, among others. Stout was the subject of the traveling exhibition "*Tales of the Conjure Woman*," originating at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art in 2013, a solo exhibition, "*Funk Dreamscapes from the Invisible Parallel Universe*" at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, WI in 2018 and "*Church of the Crossroads: Renée Stout in the Belger Collection*" at the Belger Center in Kansas City, MO in 2018. This is her 5th exhibition at Hemphill Fine Arts.

HEMPHILL was founded in Washington DC in 1993. The exhibition schedule features modern & contemporary art in all media by artists ranging from emerging to mid-career to modern masters.

GALLERY HOURS

Tuesday–Saturday, 10:00am–5:00pm, and by appointment.

The gallery will be closed November 22 - 24 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday and will resume regular hours on November 27.

Image: Renée Stout, Bellona, 2018, acrylic and mixed media on panel, 24" x 24"

IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR REPRODUCTION.

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