

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

22-70

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

April 4, 2017

To recognize and honor Sam Gilliam for his many professional accomplishments, his countless contributions to the arts, and his well-deserved standing as one of the foremost artists to emerge from the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam was born in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1933, and received both a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from the University of Louisville;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam entered the U.S. Army in 1956 and served for 2 years;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam began his career in 1962, when he moved to the District of Columbia, and following an early figurative period, he began painting in an abstract idiom;

WHEREAS, in 1968, Sam Gilliam affirmed his place among American avant-garde with the creation of his draped works, with patterns resembling those found in African American “crazy quilts”;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam has been featured at several District of Columbia galleries, including the Corcoran Art Gallery;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam has taught art in the Washington, D.C. public school system and several universities, including Carnegie-Mellon and the Maryland Art Institute in Baltimore;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam has received numerous awards, including National Endowment for the Arts Activities Grants in 1967, 1973-1975, and 1989, and a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 1971;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam’s art has been displayed in the American Pavilion at the 1972 Venice Biennale and, the San Francisco Museum of Art, Kordansky’s gallery in Los Angeles, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam maintains an art studio in Ward 4 of the District of Columbia that features dozens of his Color Field style paintings;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam has been commissioned to create a multi-paneled, 28-foot-long piece for the lobby of the Smithsonian Museum of African American Culture and History, one of the highest profile commissions of his career;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam's spontaneous and improvisational techniques, particularly his pouring of pigments onto unstretched canvas, have cemented his place as a world-renowned artist;

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam's work across various forms of media has made him an extraordinary artist who has broken numerous boundaries; and

WHEREAS, Sam Gilliam, at 83 years of age and after more than 40 years of painting, has experienced an artistic rebirth and continues to reshape his position within the art world.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Sam Gilliam Recognition Resolution of 2017".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes Sam Gilliam's impact on the art community in the District of Columbia, honors his incredible career as both artist and teacher, and celebrates the lasting impact of his artwork.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.