

**NEWS RELEASE**

**DATE: June 23, 2008**

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***Challenging Assumptions: Kansas African American Artists' Exhibit***

on Display at The Kansas African American Museum

June 27 – July 31, 2008

**Exhibit Party and Gallery Talk – Friday, June 27, 2008**

5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

The Kansas African American Museum is pleased to present a new exhibition *Challenging Assumptions: Kansas African American Artists' Exhibit* funded in part by a grant from the Kansas Arts Commission. The exhibit features the photographic works of Patricia Patterson and oils on canvas by Mitchell Pearson.

Ms Patterson's powerful exhibition depicts the faces, races and resulting clash of emotions at a rally of the National Socialist White People's Party. Using a style reminiscent of black and white newsprint photos, she tells stories that challenge the viewer's assumptions about the subjects' motives and viewpoints. Ms Patterson describes her approach to photography as, "looking for pictures that are unusual and out of the ordinary. I look for humor, struggles, pride and everyday life situations. I like shadows and contrast because it shows depth, action, vision and character. I do not want to take beautiful pictures. I just want to take pictures that tell the story."

Mr. Pearson's work features oils on canvas depicting African American cowboys and others at the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo. He captures the "cowboy mystique" and visually documents the skills and historical significance of the Black cowboy. Mr. Pearson's artistic approach is founded on what he refers to as "Colorism Theory." He states, "I seek to explore and manipulate different hues on a two dimensional plane to create vibrant, rhythmic passages." Pearson notes, "I know the contributions that the African American cowboys made to the American West were many. I know that this history must be told and retold, and kept alive." Pearson's talent brings history alive through the color, imagery and pageantry of a Wild West Rodeo.

**Exhibit Admission:** Free admission (donations requested)

**Museum Hours:** Tuesday – Friday 9-5 p.m.; Saturday – 2 -6 p.m.

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**Exhibit Opening and Gallery Talk – Friday, June 27, 2008**

*Challenging Assumptions: Kansas African American Artists' Exhibit* on Display at The Kansas African American Museum Exhibit Party; 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.;

Friday, June 27 2008

Featuring talks by the artists and the music of jazz guitarist Sterling Gray. Refreshments provided. No admission charge (donations requested).

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