

Black from page C1

African-American photographers were not only achieving success but recording the likenesses of leading political and cultural figures. C.M. Batten's portraits of Booker T. Washington (1908) and W.E.B. Du Bois (1909) print from a 1918 photograph were part of a series published and sold throughout the country.

Well known studio photographer James VanDerZee captured the spirit of Harlem for more than 60 years and left an archive of more than 15,000 images, including a 1932 photograph showing a prosperous middle-class couple in raccoon coats posed with an automobile.

"There's great street photography and portraiture," said Barr. "On the other side of the wall are Gordon Parks' portraits of Ella Watson, a cleaning woman struggling to raise grandchildren and an adopted daughter. The first section shows daily life in homes, the Tuskegee Institute. There are folks playing checkers, a baseball team. It shows the diversity of the community, all the different ways they lived. These are not just stereotypes. There's a lot of dignity."

Many firsts were included in the success stories. Cole was the first of the first black studio photog-

raphers in the Cleveland area in the early 1920s. Augustus Washington was the first black to own a studio in St. Paul, Minn. Florestine Perrault Collins broke boundaries as well. She worked in a New Orleans studio in the 1920s and '30s but initially passed for white to work as a photographer's assistant in 1909.

"I've learned a lot in the process of preparing for and installing this exhibit," said Barr. "We were all waiting for Deb Willis' research to get published. We all knew these African-American photographers were out there but never knew who they were."

Section two showcases the work of Milton Hinton, a jazz musician as well as a photographer. His access to backstage and dressing rooms allowed him to make photographs where few men had gone before. Hinton was in the television studio in the 1950s with Billie Holiday and Count Basie and on the streets of Harlem with Lester Young and Roy Eldridge.

Morgan and Marvin Smith documented a concert by Ella Fitzgerald and Chick Webb at the Savoy Ballroom in 1938. Ernest Withers captured the duality of life in Memphis two

decades later. Withers' photograph of Elvis Presley and J.B. King is in sharp contrast to the reality of his image focusing on a colored waiting room sign in the 1960s.

"For a white rock 'n' roller to be seen with a black blues man was pretty unprecedented in this time," said Barr.

Times were soon to change. In 1963 the introduction of a civil rights bill in the U.S. Senate, a week after the murder of Martin Luther King, produced a rise in socially committed photographers such as Jonathan Eubanks, who chronicled the activities of the Black Panther party. Eubanks showed the Panthers were not just a militant organization but provided a breakfast program for children. Robert Haggins humanized leaders such as Malcolm X, before and after he was a member of the Nation of Islam, by showing him with celebrities such as Muhammad Ali.

Photographs of the marches, meetings and rallies document the struggles of the era, and the tragedy. Moneta Sleet Jr. records the grieving Coretta Scott King and her daughter, Bernice, at the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Atlanta in 1968. Joe Pisters shows the aftermath of riots in Watts in Los Angeles in 1965. An armless mannequin lies face down on the sidewalk as a police officer walks the shattered streets.

The story continues

By the 1970s many African-Americans began studying photography and redefining the image but never forgot history. They brought insight to the past and challenged viewers to relate their own experiences to the subject matter. Themes of identity, spirituality and family are prevalent in contemporary African-American photography. New approaches to portraiture include Donald Camp's use of pigment to dissolve the image. He creates a mystery while speaking of the fear and distrust of men.

Dennis Olanzo Callwood shows the stories behind bars by incorporating text added by incarcerated teenage gang members. "A Memory of Jasmine" tells of a young man locked up three times with 4-year-old son Alex.

Albert Chong incorporates old family photos into a work then surrounds it with vibrant pink flowers.

"Contemporary African-American



Faces of grief: (Left) Moneta Sleet, Jr. took this photograph of Coretta Scott King and her daughter Bernice at the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Atlanta in 1968. The photo earned Sleet the distinction of being the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize.

can photographers use a lot of identity issues. With women artists, there's gender issues at play."

Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith became the spirit of American as Amalia Amaki transfers their photos onto fabric and arranges them with flags. Cynthia Wiggins takes pride in the working hands of her grandfather, a longshoreman, steelworker, father, and brother, a maintenance mechanic. Bill Gaskins documents hair styles in the 1990s. Kamboi Olufemi and Ceren Simpson Hip Hop culture and performers.

"This exhibit is important because Deb has knowledge of the other history. The exhibit is unprecedented not only photographically but in documenting black culture. No one's ever brought it all together before, the history of African-Americans, their lives."

Nancy Barr will discuss the contributions of African-Americans to the history of photography as seen in works from the exhibition 6-7:30 p.m. Friday, July 6. The lecture is part of First Friday activities at the DIA.

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music by commissioning works by composers Samuel Barber, Ulysses Kay, and Charles Wuorinen. Over the years, such illustrious musicians as Itzhak Perlman, Jessye Norman, Leonard Bernstein, James Galway, and Jean-Pierre Rampal have appeared in concert.

"It had been all volunteer and now we have a talented staff," said Beznos, a Franklin resident who taught English at Wayne State University before joining the Chamber Music Society of Detroit. "We just announced a Charitable Planned Giving Campaign. We're building the organization to make it stronger."

"We're now selling our own tickets to increase the convenience for people and to keep prices lower."

And there's more variety in the series, said Beznos. This year, the eight-concert season spotlights the talents of violinist Joshua Bell, pianists Emmanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman and Daniel Barenboim, the Shanghai Quartet, Fleisher-Jolley Tree Trio, Borromeo String Quartet, and Miami String Quartet at the Seligman Performing Arts Center in Beverly Hills and Orchestra Hall in Detroit.

"It's going to be an extraordinary season," said Beznos. "Daniel Barenboim hasn't been in this area for decades. He performs very few recitals because he's conductor of the Chicago

Symphony. There's lots of lead-up activities. He's a spokesperson for the Middle East as we're contacting local Jews and Arabs and creating a dialogue. We're reaching into areas of the community we haven't before."

"Some of the other highlights are Joshua Bell; he's a fabulous violinist. The Emmanuel Ax and Yefim Bronfman concert will have two stars performing. If we had either it would be wonderful but to have both and to do rarely heard two piano repertoires."

Beznos is encouraging chamber music lovers not to wait to purchase tickets. Subscriptions for the eight-concert series range from \$158 to \$492 for box seats at Orchestra Hall and on stage seating at the Seligman Center.

"I'm not sure everyone's aware how important this is to have in their neighborhood and not to wait. The best seats go first. We've already gone beyond last year's total subscription sales and the brochures were just mailed," said Beznos.

"I love the music and the Chamber Music Society is the 10th oldest such organization in the U.S. (recognized by Chamber Music America) with one of the largest subscription bases. It's important for metro area audiences who long to hear the music performed live."

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side. That's why she and the rest of the band have been selling fruit and coffee along with working in the concessions stands at the Silverdome. It's worth working for the \$2,700 cost to each student.

"The reason I wanted to go was to experience all of the different cultures and languages," said Jessica Maxer. "I especially want to go to Venice because it's on the water and to hear the Italian language."

Reasons for going vary from an opportunity to meet cute foreign boys to Christopher Mumaw wanting to get "away from my parents and brothers for two weeks," but all agree this is the chance of a lifetime.

"It's nice because kids get the opportunity to share their music," said Lucia who took over as band director in 1989. This is his second tour with the students. "Many of these kids may never get the opportunity to go back. They spend the vast

majority of their education reading about it. These kids have the experience. They're literally walking through history, standing where William Tell shot the apple. They get to walk through the palaces where people ruled the country."

"We try to give every student who comes through the music and band program the opportunity to go once during high school. It's a tradition here at Thurston we're very proud of. It's an educational experience. In Germany, kids don't study music during the day. We talk about the differences on the trip. But my favorite part is watching the kids experience these new surroundings, the incredibly beautiful setting that they tour and perform in. The Swiss Alps are the most beautiful thing I've ever seen - having the kids stroll in the market place in Salzburg and visit Mozart's home, just to watch them grow before your eyes and learn."

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