

ARTFORUM



Nina Chanel Abney, *Untitled*, 2012.
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PEGGY COOPER CAFRTZ BEQUEATHS MAJOR COLLECTION TO HARLEM'S STUDIO MUSEUM

Thelma Golden, director and chief curator of the Studio Museum in Harlem, announced today that the institution received a bequest of more than four hundred works by contemporary artists of African descent from the legendary civil rights activist Peggy Cooper Cafritz, who passed away earlier this year.

“We are humbled that the indomitable Peggy Cooper Cafritz chose the Studio Museum to help steward the legacy of her incredible vision,” Golden said in a statement. “Peggy was a trailblazing champion of artists of African descent, and at her core believed deeply in the power of art. Through her collecting and her support of artists, she quite literally transformed the way the world viewed black artists.”

Among the artists whose work is represented in the gift are many alumni of the museum's signature Artist-in-Residence program, including Sadie Barnette, Sanford Biggers, David Hammons, Titus Kaphar, Simone Leigh, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas, and Kehinde Wiley, in addition to artists such as Nina Chanel Abney, Iona Rozeal Brown, Nick Cave, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Theaster Gates, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Malick Sidibé, Lorna Simpson, Kara Walker, Carrie Mae Weems, and Jack Whitten.

The respected arts patron and educator also left 250 works to the Washington, DC, high school the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Cofounded by Cooper Cafritz in 1974, the institution boasts of the only museum studies high school program in the country. Pieces by BK Adams, Miya Ando, Alexandre Arrechea, Louise Bourgeois, Mark Thomas Gibson, Hannah Greely, Walter Loby Hamilton, Jas Knight, Eva Sussman, and many others will enter the school's collection.

Commenting on the gift, Zachary Cafritz, Cooper Cafritz's son, said: "This is, of course, a bittersweet moment. Our mom would have loved to see this bequest come to fruition. But we're thrilled this collection will live on in two places so close to her heart. . . . Both institutions are dedicated, as she was, to fostering the careers of young artists of color."