

LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

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JUNE EDMONDS: JOY OF OTHER SUNS

September 18 – October 30, 2021

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 18, 3 to 6 PM

Luis De Jesus Los Angeles is very pleased to announce **JUNE EDMONDS: Joy of Other Suns**, the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition will be on view from September 18 through October 30, 2021, with an opening reception to be held on Saturday, September 18th from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Appointments are optional and may be made at luisdejesus.com/contact.

Concurrently, Edmonds will be the subject of a 40-year survey exhibition titled **JUNE EDMONDS: Full Spectrum**, opening September 25th at Laband Art Gallery, Loyola Marymount University, in Los Angeles. The exhibition has been organized by Laband Gallery Director and Chief Curator Karen Rapp.

June Edmond's latest body of work continues her exploration of race and history, using social abstraction as a means to navigate these complex issues. In her paintings, Edmonds commemorates the historical contributions of African American female pioneers and early landowners in Southern California. She is particularly drawn to the stories of Bridget "Biddy" Mason (1818-1891), former slave turned Los Angeles land owner, entrepreneur and philanthropist; María Rita Quintero Valdés de Villa (1791-1854), an African-Mexican and granddaughter of Luis Quintero, one of the original settlers of Rancho Rodeo de las Aguas (*Ranch of the Gathering Waters*)—known today as Beverly Hills; and Henrietta VanHorn-Debose (1855-1931), the first Black woman and early property owner to settle in La Jolla. Edmonds expands on these histories, considering the implications of the Great Migration in the 20th Century and how it fundamentally changed the United States.

In many of the works on view, Edmonds has departed from the layered impasto texture that has dominated her "energy circle" and flag paintings and employed a flatter application of paint. With this new development, she moves into a wider conversation about painting and geometric abstraction, with an emphasis on sharply defined edges, overlapping forms, clear composition, hard lines, minimal texture, and vibrant, pure color. The prominent leaf shapes in these paintings embody feminine energy and birth, while the sinuous curves allude to the geography and streets where these women lived, drawing parallels to the discriminatory practice of redlining and the racially restrictive covenants that created housing inequality in American cities. Edmonds points to the paradox of these trailblazing Black women once owning the very land of some of the most exclusive neighborhoods in the United States.

Throughout her career, Edmonds has been revisiting and redefining traditional Western color theory, exploring how profoundly color relates to emotion and trauma, and are thus able to express visual cues about power and systemic disenfranchisement. Edmonds has amplified these concepts in her public art, having recently completed a mural in La Jolla (*Ebony on Draper and Girard*) to honor the legacy of Black pioneers. By incorporating the forgotten narratives of Black Americans into her canvases and public art, the artist not only gives prominence to their stories, but encourages a dialogue about race, nationality, gender, and politics and the complex overlap of these identities.

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The title of this exhibition, **Joy of Other Suns**, was inspired by Isabel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, a historical study of the mass exodus of Black Americans from the South. This in turn was drawn from a poem by American author Richard Wright, reflecting on his own experience migrating from the South to Chicago in the 1920s:

*I was leaving the South
To fling myself into the unknown...
I was taking a part of the South
To transplant in alien soil,
To see if it could grow differently,
If it could drink of new and cool rains,
Bend in strange winds,
Respond to the warmth of other suns
And, perhaps, to bloom.*

– Richard Wright

In addition to her 40-year survey exhibition at Loyola Marymount University, Edmonds will be the subject of forthcoming solo exhibitions at Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA and University Art Gallery, California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, CA. She is the recipient of the inaugural 2020 AWARE Prize, presented at The Armory Show by the French non-profit *Archive of Women Artists Research and Exhibitions*; a 2018 City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Grant (COLA) and Exhibition at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery; a California Arts Council Individual Artist Grant; Paducah Artist Residency in Kentucky; Helene Wurlitzer Foundation artist residency in Taos, NM; and Dorland Mountain Community artist residency in Temecula, CA. Edmonds has exhibited at the California African American Museum, Davis Museum of Art, the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Luckman Fine Art Gallery at California State University Los Angeles, Watts Tower Art Center in Los Angeles, CA, Angels Gate Art Center in San Pedro, CA; and the Manhattan Beach Art Center in Manhattan Beach, CA.

Edmonds has completed several works of public art, most recently with Murals of La Jolla, with the city of Los Angeles and the Department of Cultural Affairs, including an installation at the MTA Pacific Station in Long Beach, CA. Her paintings are held in collections throughout the United States including the California African American Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Mead Art Museum, Amhurst College, Amhurst, MA; Davis Museum, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA; David Owsley Museum of Art at Ball State University, Muncie, IN; The Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH; as well as Rodney M. Miller Collection, New York, NY; Michael Rubel Collection, Los Angeles, CA; David Rogath Collection, Greenwich, CT; Gail and George L. Knox Collection, La Jolla, CA; and Kelly Williams and Andrew Forsyth Collection, Palm Beach, FL, among others.

For further information, including images and previews, please call 213-395-0762, or email:

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