FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEWS RELEASE
Date: May 1st, 2019
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DAVID C. DRISKELL CENTER TO PRESENT:
RECKONING WITH “THE INCIDENT”:
JOHN WILSON’S STUDIES FOR A LYNCHING MURAL

COLLEGE PARK, MD. — The David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland is proud to announce its Summer 2019 exhibition, Reckoning with “The Incident”: John Wilson’s Studies for a Lynching Mural. The exhibition shows the preparatory work for Wilson’s no longer extant mural “The Incident,” which depicted a lynching by the Ku Klux Klan witnessed by an African American family. Reckoning with “The Incident” will be on display at the Driskell Center from Monday, June 3rd, 2019 through Friday, August 9th, 2019, with a public opening reception on Thursday, June 6th from 5-7PM.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION:
Reckoning with “The Incident”: John Wilson’s Studies for a Lynching Mural is a collection of twenty-three preparatory sketches, prints, and paintings created by John Wilson (1922-2015) for “The Incident”, the mural he painted while studying in Mexico City in 1952. The exhibition also includes a mural-sized, black and white fabric scrim of the mural itself.

The mural was a street-level depiction showing twice-life-sized figures in a style influenced by his time in Mexico and admiration of Mexican Muralists like Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and Siqueiros. According to Wilson, “[mural painting] is a public thing because it’s available to masses of people. And so, through Mexican art I began to experience a sense of how to depict my reality.” Wilson’s work continued to focus on social justice, and his 1986 three foot bust of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is still on view in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C.
This traveling exhibition is organized by the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT, and curated by Pamela Franks, Williams College Museum of Art, formerly of Yale University Art Gallery, and Elisabeth Hodermarsky, Yale University Art Gallery. This exhibition is made possible by the Isabel B. Wilson Memorial Fund and opened at Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College, IA, followed by the David C. Driskell Center, University of Maryland, College Park, the Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, GA, and finally, the Yale University Art Gallery.

In Yale University Art Gallery’s press release for the exhibition Hodermarsky states that: “though no longer extant, John Wilson’s mural on the subject of a racial-terror lynching survives today in these numerous, beautifully articulated, and deeply emotive preparatory studies that attest to the transformative power of Wilson’s art. Ranging from details in chalk of hands, feet, guns, and ropes to compositional cartoons in gouache, Wilson’s forcefully rendered studies help us contemplate the legacy of lynching and its indelible stain on America’s collective psyche.” For additional information, please visit: https://artgallery.yale.edu/exhibitions/exhibition/reckoning-incident-john-wilsons-studies-lynching-mural

ABOUT THE DAVID C. DRISKELL CENTER
The David C. Driskell Center honors the legacy of David C. Driskell—a Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Art, Artist, Art Historian, Collector, Curator, and Philanthropist—by preserving the rich heritage of African American visual art and culture. The Driskell Center is committed to preserving, documenting, and presenting African American art, as well as replenishing and expanding the field of African American art. All programs at the David C. Driskell Center are free and open to the public. The facility is wheelchair accessible. For further information regarding exhibitions and activities at the Driskell Center, please call 301.314.2615, email driskellcenter@umd.edu, or visit www.driskellcenter.umd.edu. The Driskell Center’s programming is supported in part by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council and private donors.

The Driskell Center Gallery’s hours are Monday through Friday from 11AM to 4PM. The Driskell Center observes all University of Maryland closings due to inclement weather and holidays; the Center will be closed on July 4th and July 5th, 2019. The David C. Driskell Center office is open daily during the weekdays from 9AM through 5PM.