

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) is presenting an exhibition of artwork by Winston-Salem based artist Leo Rucker as part of SECCA's curated sale series *Southern Idiom*. The show is entitled *Painting Happy Hill* and features a series of acrylic on canvas paintings. *Happy Hill* will be on display in the Preview Gallery at SECCA, which is located at 750 Marguerite Drive in Winston-Salem. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, July 18, 2019 from 6 to 8 p.m. The reception is free and open to the public and will include a cash bar (no bar charge for SECCA Members). Rucker's artwork will be available for purchase and will remain on display through August 11.

Painting Happy Hill is an artistic interpretation of life in Happy Hill, one of Winston-Salem's oldest African American communities. The paintings source their images from the original photographs from Old Salem Museum and Gardens' archive, gathered for an "Across the Creek" project several years ago. This project is intended to bring attention to the lives of enslaved blacks from Salem who transitioned to freed people and created their own vibrant community called Happy Hill.

Winston-Salem-based Leo Rucker has been an artist since he was five years old. He received his degree in commercial art at Rutledge College and has completed numerous portraits and murals in Forsyth County. Rucker has most recently completed a tribute to the history and progression of transportation in the city of Winston-Salem through murals on the pillars of the city's transportation center. These murals include people, places, and things involved in its rich history. Rucker has taught at Sawtooth School for the Visual Arts and is the Lead Historic Interpreter at Old Salem Museums and Gardens at the St. Philip's African Moravian Heritage site. For more information, visit ruckerartstudio.webs.com.

Located in SECCA's Preview Gallery, *Southern Idiom* is a new series that explores local artists and the variety of forms they produce. Past artists include Chad Beroth, Frank Champion, Kevin Calhoun, Emily Clare, Ellen Heck, Eric Juth, Laura Lashley, Paul Travis Phillips, Cindy Taplin, and Mona Wu. Artwork in the series is for sale, and proceeds benefit both the artist and SECCA's exhibition fund.

About SECCA:

The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) in Winston-Salem, N.C. is a creative leader of the arts in the Southeast, a museum boldly giving artists of the region a platform for visibility while connecting local communities with the international world of contemporary art. Located at 750 Marguerite Drive, the museum is open Tuesday through Sunday. For hours, please visit secca.org. SECCA is an affiliate of the [North Carolina Museum of Art](http://NorthCarolinaMuseumofArt.org), a division of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. SECCA receives operational funding from The Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. Additional funding is provided by the James G. Hanes Memorial Fund.

About the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources:

The N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. Led by Secretary Susi H. Hamilton, NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North Carolina by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development. NCDNCR

includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 39 state parks and recreation areas, the N.C. Zoo, the nation's first state-supported Symphony Orchestra, the State Library, the State Archives, the N.C. Arts Council, State Preservation Office and the Office of State Archaeology, along with the Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, please call (919) 807-7300 or visit ncdcr.gov.

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<https://media.visitnc.com/Exhibit-Interprets-Freedmens-Lives-in-Winston-Salem-Community>