FENIMORE
ART MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2025

***Romare Bearden: Artist – Activist – Visionary* Opens at Fenimore Art Museum**

Cooperstown, NY:

Fenimore Art Museum is pleased to announce the opening of *Romare Bearden: Artist – Activist – Visionary*, September 27 – December 31, 2025. The exhibition was organized by *The Romare Bearden Foundation, a New York based, public foundation dedicated to the legacy of preeminent American artist, Romare Bearden (1911-1988). Artist-Activist-Visionary* presents examples of Bearden's influences as an artist of social conscience and action. Bearden is recognized as one of the most important visual artists of the 20th Century, countered racial stereotypes with images drawn from history, literature, and the free world of his imagination.

Artist-Activist-Visionary, drawn from the Romare Bearden Foundation Collection, examines how he agitated for change through images and writing. Included are a diverse collection of original collage, watercolor, limited edition prints, reproductions, and rare archival material, including his magazine covers and editorial cartoons.

The exhibition traces Bearden's evolution into a true master artist. It begins with his editorial cartoons for university magazines, and later, national publications and newspapers. In the section called Rewriting History are examples where he takes on the past to engender pride as in *Black History*, a maquette for a public mural. In others he engages current events as in the *Mayor Lindsay* piece for *Time Magazine*.

To further engage with the community about this exhibition, the Community Foundation of Otsego County is pleased to sponsor "*Activism in the Art of Romare Bearden: A Lecture with Diedra Harris-Kelley*" on Saturday, October 4, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. In this special presentation, join *Diedra Harris-Kelley*, Co-Director of the Romare Bearden Foundation, as she discusses how and where activism shows up in the artwork of Romare Bearden throughout his life, from his early illustrations to his late watercolors. There is no additional cost to attend this lecture.

Experience the work of *Romare Bearden: Artist-Activist-Visionary* on display, September 27 – December 31, 2025 at Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown New York.

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About Fenimore Art Museum Fenimore Art Museum, located on the shores of Otsego Lake—James Fenimore Cooper's "Glimmerglass"—in historic Cooperstown, New York, presents changing exhibitions each season. Past shows have featured artists such as Keith Haring, Ansel Adams, Banksy, M.C. Escher, and many others. The museum features a wide-ranging collection of American art including folk art; important American 18th- and 19th-century landscape, genre, and portrait paintings from artists including Albert Bierstadt, Mary Cassatt, William Merritt Chase, Frederic Edwin Church, Childe Hassam, Martin Johnson Heade, Robert Henri, George Inness, Eastman Johnson, Joshua Johnson, Thomas Moran, Georgia O'Keeffe, Maurice Prendergast, John Singer Sargent, Max Weber, and James McNeill Whistler; more than 125,000 historic photographs representing the technical developments made in photography and providing extensive visual documentation of the region's unique history; and the renowned Eugene and Clare Thaw Collection of American Indian Art comprised of nearly 900 art objects representative of a broad geographic range of North American Indian cultures, from the Northwest Coast, Eastern Woodlands, Plains, Southwest, Great Lakes, and Prairie regions. Visit FenimoreArt.org.