

# VISUAL CREATIVITY

continued from page 4

(cover), Floyd Coleman, LeRoy Clarke, James Phillips, Faith Ringgold, Malcolm Bailey, Charles Searles, Ellsworth Ausby, Kwasi Seitu Asantey (Robin Harper), Vincent Smith, to name only a few.

Conversely, there are many black artists who are equally concerned with organizing their personal statements, regardless of subject matter or stylistic preference in accord with the best-known and agreed-upon esthetic criteria. This writer is convinced that for a black artist to be basically concerned with making his work esthetically interesting—whether his style is abstract, figurative or minimal—he is no less "black" for doing so. He is, in fact, saying that blacks are very much a divergent group, one that is contemplative, innovative and possessed of the same esthetic concerns as artists everywhere. Artists of this persuasion include Sam Gilliam, Alvin Smith, Wendell Robinson, Howardena Pindell, Ruth Tunstall, Minnie Evans, Wilbur Haynie, Adrienne Hoard, Lloyd Toone, Marvin Brown, William T. Williams, Thomas Sills, Raymond Saunders, William Majors, John Rhoden, Sue Irons, Ralph Arnold, Alma Thomas, Robert Gordon, Manuel Hughes, Marion Sampler, Ronald Burns, Walter Williams, Jack Whitten, Richard Hunt, Emilio Cruz, Russ Thompson, John Dowell, Juan Logan, the late Bob Thompson—among many others.

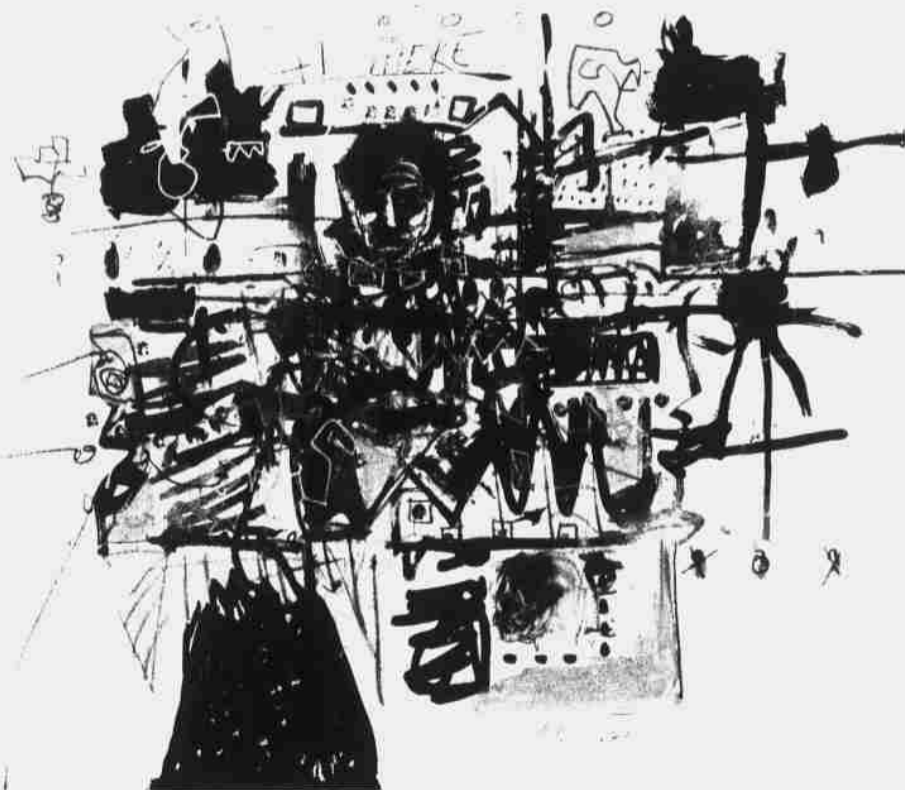
Finally, the primary efforts of the young black American artist should be directed toward the development of those positive, inherited and socially acquired skills and attitudes that he has access to by virtue of his African heritage and black experience in America, for this unique combination of backgrounds and influences has positive features. In addition, it makes for an effective and intellectual organism that offers the black artist the basis for evolving a potent art of concrete orientation. If this organism is nurtured with sincerity and dedication, there is no doubt in my mind that black artists will continue to achieve a high level of creativity, further enhancing America's leading role in the world of art.



Alvin Smith, New York painter-constructionist, once again proves his formidable versatility and artistry in this untitled minimal mixed-media sculpture from his recent Amherst College Series (1975).



HENRI GHENT, Doctor of Humanities (Hon.), Allen University, Columbia, S.C.; U.S. Armed Force Institute, Honolulu, Hawaii; New England Conservatory, Boston, Mass.; Georges Longy School, Cambridge, Mass.; University of Paris (France); private study in West Germany and England. Mr. Ghent's experience bridges both the performing and visual arts categories in which he earned international commendation, first as a concert artist for fifteen years, and later as a fine arts exhibition director and critic. His reputation as an arts administrator was gained during his tenure (1968-1972) as Director of The Brooklyn Museum's innovative Community Gallery—the first black American to assume a decision-making post with a major cultural institution in the United States. As a writer-critic, he has frequently contributed significant articles to virtually all the leading art journals, including *Art in America*, *Art International*, *Artforum*, *The Art Gallery Magazine* and *School Arts*, as well as *The New York Times* (Arts and Leisure Section), the *World Encyclopedia of Biography* (McGraw-Hill, 1973) and *The Crisis* magazine. In addition, he has lectured extensively at museums, universities and colleges in this country and abroad, and has organized and directed 55 exhibitions—including the widely acclaimed show, "EIGHT AFRO-AMERICAN ARTISTS", held in 1971 at the Rath Museum in Geneva, Switzerland—the first American so honored. Among the recent scholastic awards he has received are the Samuel H. Kress Foundation Research-Travel Fellowship, the Art Critics' Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a travel-study grant from the Ford Foundation (1974-75), as well as a commission from *The Art Gallery Magazine* to survey the contemporary art scene in Spain, as reported in a ten-page illustrated essay entitled "The Second Generation", featured in the June 1974 issue of the publication.



"Greetings to a Soul Brother" by Floyd Coleman. He combines figurative and abstract styles to make a relevant statement about his heritage and experiences as a black American.



"Carousel Form II (1969) by Sam Gilliam. This Washington, D.C. artist is the first American to liberate abstract painting from the conventional stretcher by dramatically suspending his canvases from the ceiling or informally draping them as "fabric paintings". This work projects Gilliam as one of the most innovative painters on the American art scene today.