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## Twiggs to be featured in Stanback's Artist Talk series

Special to The T&D Mar 30, 2016



The I.P. Stanback Museum & Planetarium will present a celebration of nationally recognized artist Dr. Leo Franklin Twiggs from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, March 31, as part of the museum's Artist Talk Lecture Series. The program will feature a slide presentation of Twiggs' works and a colloquium to discuss the significance of his works.

The conversation, with Interim Director Frank C. Martin II, will discuss Twiggs' new batik series that is dedicated to the victims of the tragic incident at Mother Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston on June 17, 2015. The program will be held in the Barbara A. Vaughan Recital Hall in the Fine Arts building on the S.C. State campus.

In his complex and highly nuanced works, Twiggs frequently engages with themes of Southern identity, and is well known for his batik representations of the Naval Battle Jack of the Confederacy as an emblem of contested regional identity. The conversation on Thursday will introduce his new images and assess issues of "Southernness" as a unique form of cultural expression and how this idea relates to American and African-American identity.

A native of St. Stephen, Twiggs received the Bachelor of Arts degree, summa cum laude, from Claflin University. He began post-graduate level studies at the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago and later received his Master of Arts degree from New York University, where he

studied with Hale Woodruff, the acclaimed African American painter and muralist of the Harlem Renaissance. Twiggs received a Doctorate in Art Education from the University of Georgia at Athens, and was the first American of African descent to obtain the terminal degree in art education from that institution.

As professor of art at S.C. State, he developed the major's in studio art and art education, established the visual arts department and was the first director of the I.P. Stanback Museum & Planetarium on the university's campus. Twiggs is professor emeritus in fine arts at South Carolina State.

In 1981, he received the Elizabeth O'Neil Award for outstanding individual contributions to the understanding and awareness of the arts in South Carolina, and was the first visual artist to be honored with the distinction.

He has had numerous exhibitions in local, regional, national and international venues, and his works have received recognition for their poignant beauty and conceptual sophistication from exhibitors such as the Studio Museum in Harlem and the American Crafts Museum, both located in New York City. Twiggs' batik paintings are included in various United States Embassy collections in Rome, Italy; Dakar, Senegal and in Togoland, among other international locations.

In 2002, Twiggs was selected to design an ornament for the White House Christmas tree by President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush.

This program is free and open to the general public; however, donations in support of the museum's programs are welcomed and greatly appreciated. Visitors are encouraged to use the parking lot opposite the Fine Arts building, adjacent to Smith-Hammond-Middleton Memorial Center.

To learn more,, call a member of the museum staff: Davion Petty, program manager, at 803-516-4599; Brenda Miller, museum administrator, 803- 536-7174; or Frank C. Martin II, interim director, 803-536-8388.

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