

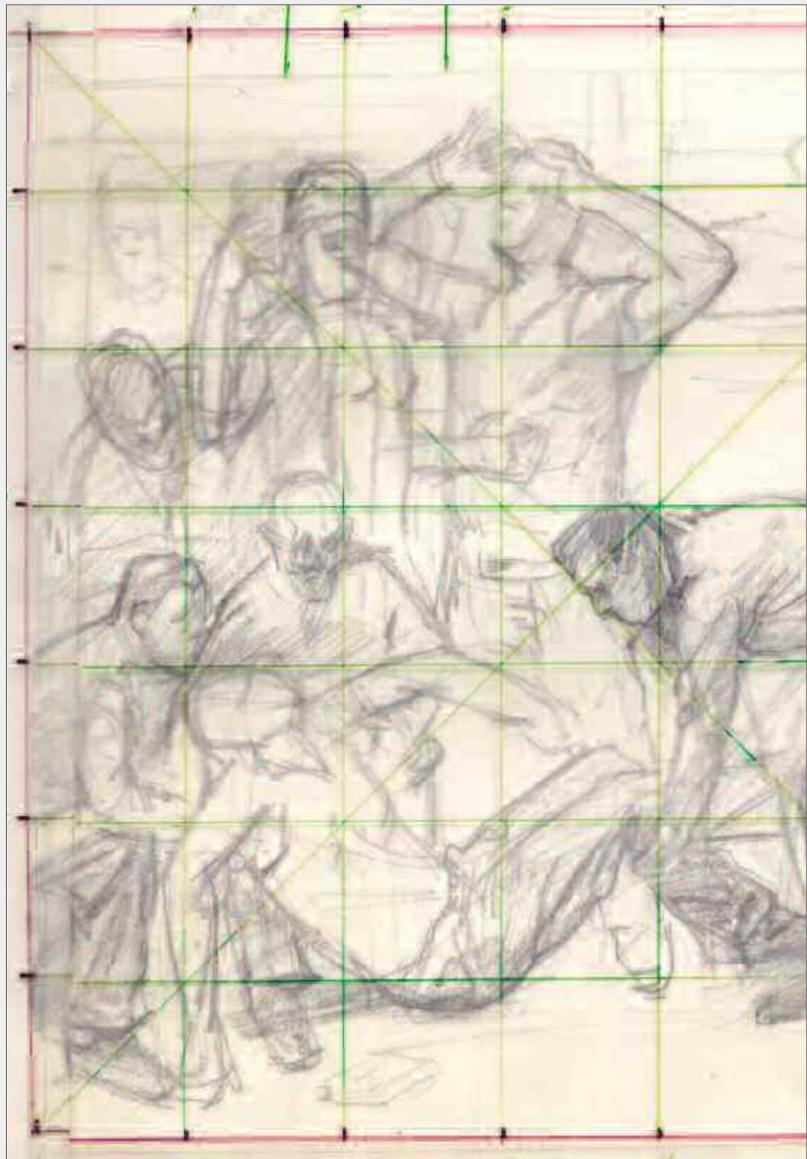
SAMUEL ADOQUE

THE INFLUENCE OF LINCOLN, GANDHI AND THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

A R T E X H I B I T I O N

Celebrating the Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King

SANKOFA GALLERY, FEBRUARY 14TH-MARCH 23TH 2014



- Studies and drawings for the painting Martin Luther King
- Oil studies of Piazza Navona from Rome, Italy
- Oil studies of Piazza Navona from Rome, Italy

HOW THE PROJECT STARTED

In 2002, former Miss Iceland and European Miss World, Gudrun Bjarnesdottir, sponsored Samuel Adoquei to take on any project the artist might find challenging. The only requirement for the project was that the artworks should be traditional, yet innovative and modern; the subject matter, universal and timeless. The upcoming exhibition consists of the artworks the artist created, all influenced and inspired by the philosophy and ideas of Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi and events in the American Experience,

After the completion of the project some of the artworks went on travel exhibitions organized by The Museum of American History, Washington D.C., The Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C., The Montgomery Museum of Fine Art Montgomery, Alabama The American Embassy in Ghana, as well as several Museums in the United States, but never before have all the paintings been together in the same gallery space.

After this intense period of painting Sam Adoquei took time off to finish two books, *How Successful Artists Study* and *Origin of Inspiration*. Both books were influenced by John F. Kennedy's quotes, "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country". Last year, *How Successful Artists Study* won best art book for art students and *Origin of Inspiration* won a Number 1 Best-seller award. Both books will be featured as part of the exhibition.

In 2012, for the first time since the sponsorship began, all the paintings returned to the artist. Please join us to celebrate the Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, during Black History Month and Sam Adoquei's new studio exhibition space at 32 Union Square East.

Skin Tones Project; Portraits. (Study of people and their skin tones by Sam Adoquei)



The New York Times
NEW YORK, THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2003

Inspired by Freedom and the King Legacy

By ELIZABETH OLSON

WASHINGTON, June 18 — Sherman Watkins was overseas in the Air Force during much of the civil rights movement, but when he returned, he felt compelled to paint the era and its leader, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., even though it meant years of hardship.

Sam Adoquei, an immigrant from Ghana, spent six years painting a triptych of Dr. King to thank Americans for "everything I know, for all my ideas and for what America gave me."

The New York-based artist Tim Rollins, on assignment in Munich four years ago, found that the Russian immigrant children he was teaching knew more about the American civil rights leader than the students he taught at home. He came back determined that his students at Kids of Survival in the South Bronx and Chelsea would learn about the importance of

four years of intensive research to put together, said Helen M. Shannon, a curator of the show and also director of the New Jersey State Museum.

The show's artists range from the famous, like Andy Warhol and Norman Rockwell, to the not especially well known. But some works are immediately recognizable, including one by Charles Moore, whose photographs of civil rights protesters backing under fire hoses wielded by police officers appeared in magazines and newspapers at the time. Rockwell's depiction in *Look* magazine of a pig-tailed black

depicting the life and times of a civil rights leader, without

military service abroad, "it dawned on me that I had to paint the entire movement. I didn't want to, but I felt I had worked several jobs and went to college. It was hard on everyone."

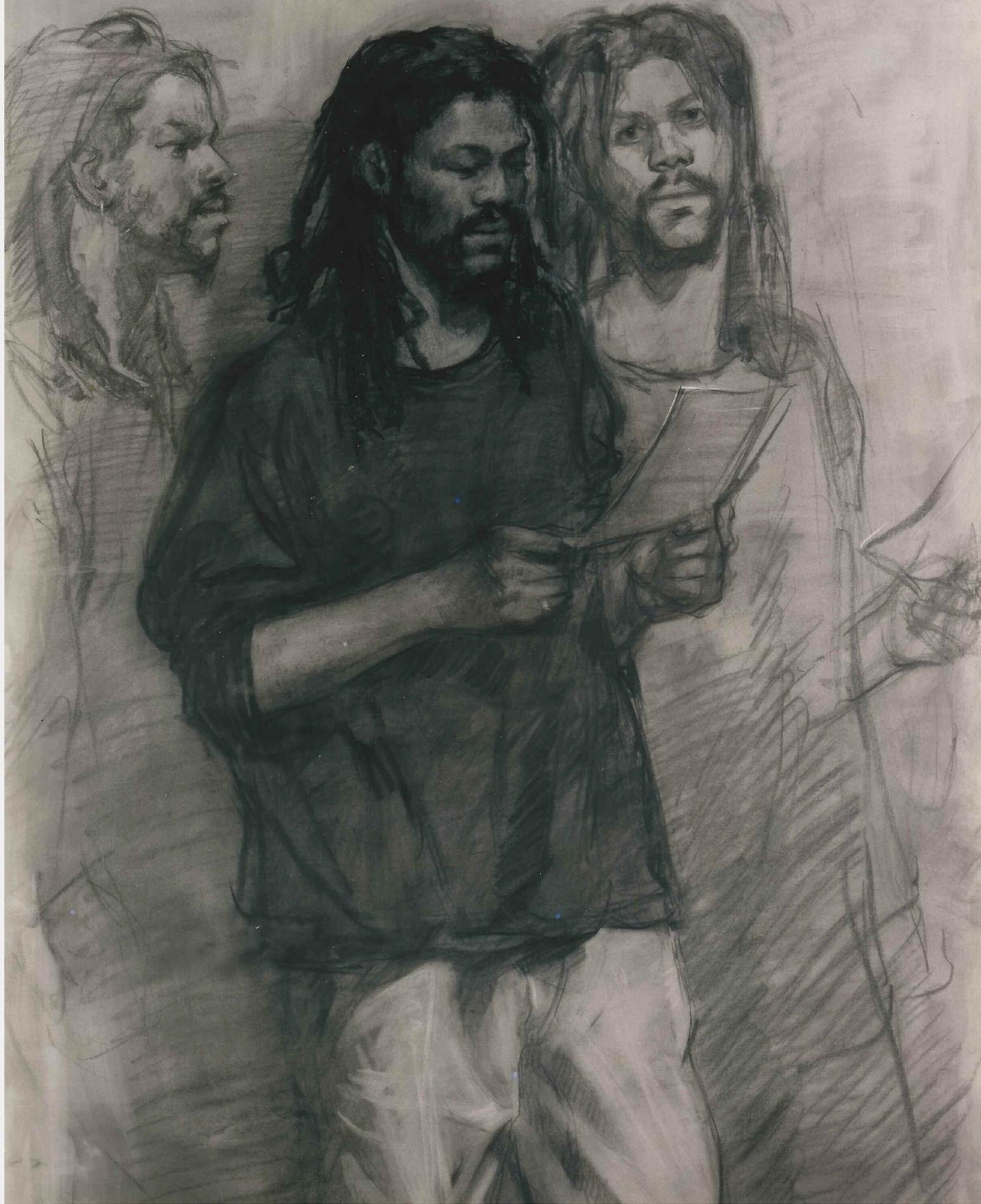
Mr. Watkins said of his composition "The L. Burial of Luther," which depicts the life and death of Dr. King in "A Price for Freedom," which is a photographic recreation of Dr. King's assassination. It is part of a 40-piece painting over the last two decades.

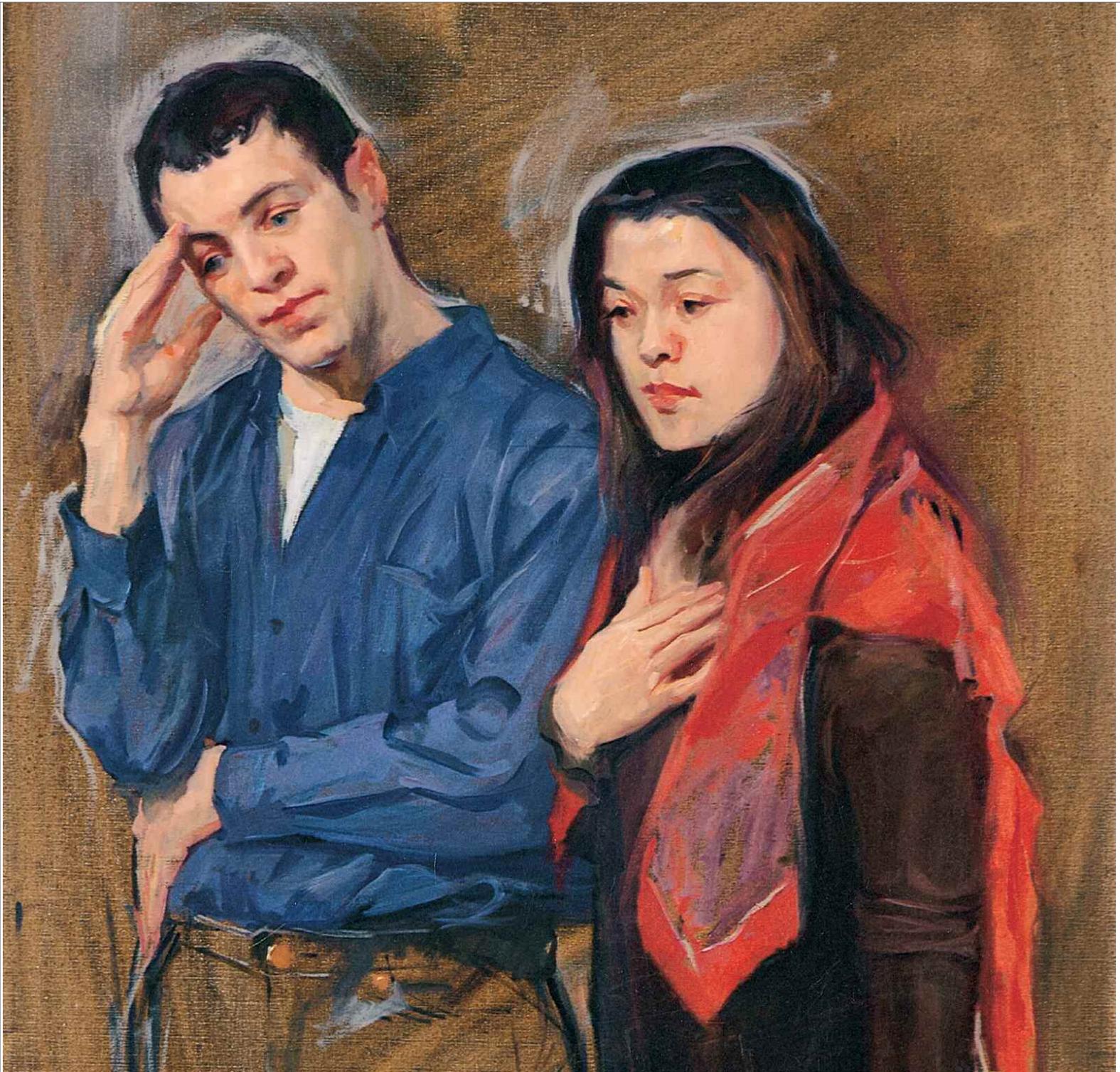
Mr. Adoquei took a very difficult time with his allegorical painting of the Burial of Martin Luther King, which he tried to convey the universal fight in his 1998 work. He painted it with people of many nations representing freedom, are tied together in a common struggle.





• Work in progres (center panel)





The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King (triptych, Center Panel Before completion) Oil on canvas 74x24in by



Mahatma Gandhi Coming to New York 1869–1948 by Sam Adoquei

HIDDEN SYMBOLS IN PAINTING

The theme was originally conceived from the classical religious subject “The Entombment,” which was painted in a more idealistic manner by Renaissance artists such as Raphael, Titian, and Caravaggio, as well as Rubens and Anthony Van Dyke.

The three main colors — red, white, and blue — used in this painting represent the colors of the United States of America. Since Dr. King fought not only for African-Americans but for all Americans, and had himself come from a very diverse background, the figures in the painting represent all racial groups.

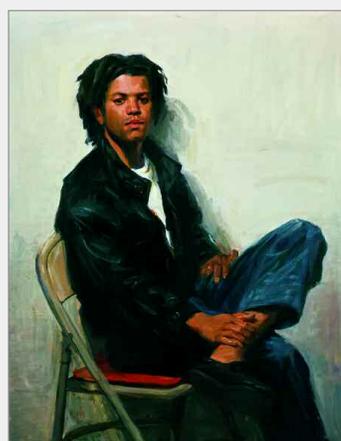
Everything in this painting is a result of close observation of ordinary people in my everyday surroundings — the figures are my friends, the cemetery is in Queens where I live,



and the pigeons are from Union Square where I have my studios. This emphasizes that Dr. King was a man who lived among us.

The two small side panels represent students of today. Before Dr. King, only a few students from all racial backgrounds and genders could obtain an education in the U.S. Now, women and nearly every ethnic group are represented in almost every educational institution. The figures/students include several ethnic groups - Irish, Italian, Asian, African (self portrait), Russian. The Indian helper at Dr. King's feet represents Gandhi's influence on Dr. King.

Several other examples of contemporary uses of classical allegorical symbols can be found in the painting. The three poles in the far distance, for example, allude to crucifixion. I included several birds, but instead of the ideal white dove — which is a traditional symbol of freedom, peace, and good news — the birds here are colorful pigeons. They are tied up with string and waiting to be released, representing the freedom yet to come, after Dr. King's death. The only excited birds are the semi-white ones (not the black pigeon with the string at the foot of the figure), knowing that for African-Americans, freedom would not come easily.



In this scene of Dr. King about to end his journey here on earth, the skull/skeleton represents a welcoming from other leaders to the new world Dr. King is about to enter. The

skull also reminds us that it was once as we are, and that one day we will be as it is. The skull also represents the idea that when we look at ourselves in the mirror and imagine the structure underneath our different colors and shades of skin, we can realize how humble, similar, and equal we all are.

The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King
(triptych, Left and Right Panel)
Oil on canvas by Sam Adoquei

Sam Adoquei's Bio

The author's professional artistic career started at 14 years of age. Mr. Adoquei was one of the youngest and the first African to teach in all major art institutions in New York City. The Art Students League of New York, and The National Academy School of Fine Arts, New York.

Several articles by and about Mr. Adoquei have appeared in national newspapers and magazines in the United States as well as in publications abroad and his paintings have appeared on the covers of books, magazines and newspapers. Most recently, the New York Times wrote an article about Mr. Adoquei's painting, "The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King." His painting, "Portrait of Rodney," was featured on the cover of Literature and Integrated Studies. Mr. Adoquei has painted portraits of people of all ages and from all walks of life—from business and military professionals to astronauts, rock stars and beauty queens. His artworks are in the collections of several art museums and are included in both private and public collections here and abroad.

Mr. Adoquei is the author of #1 Strand Books Best-seller *How Successful Artists Study*

<www.HowSuccessfulArtistsStudy.com>

His second book *Origin of Inspiration* won 3 months on a row #1 bestseller at Strand Books.

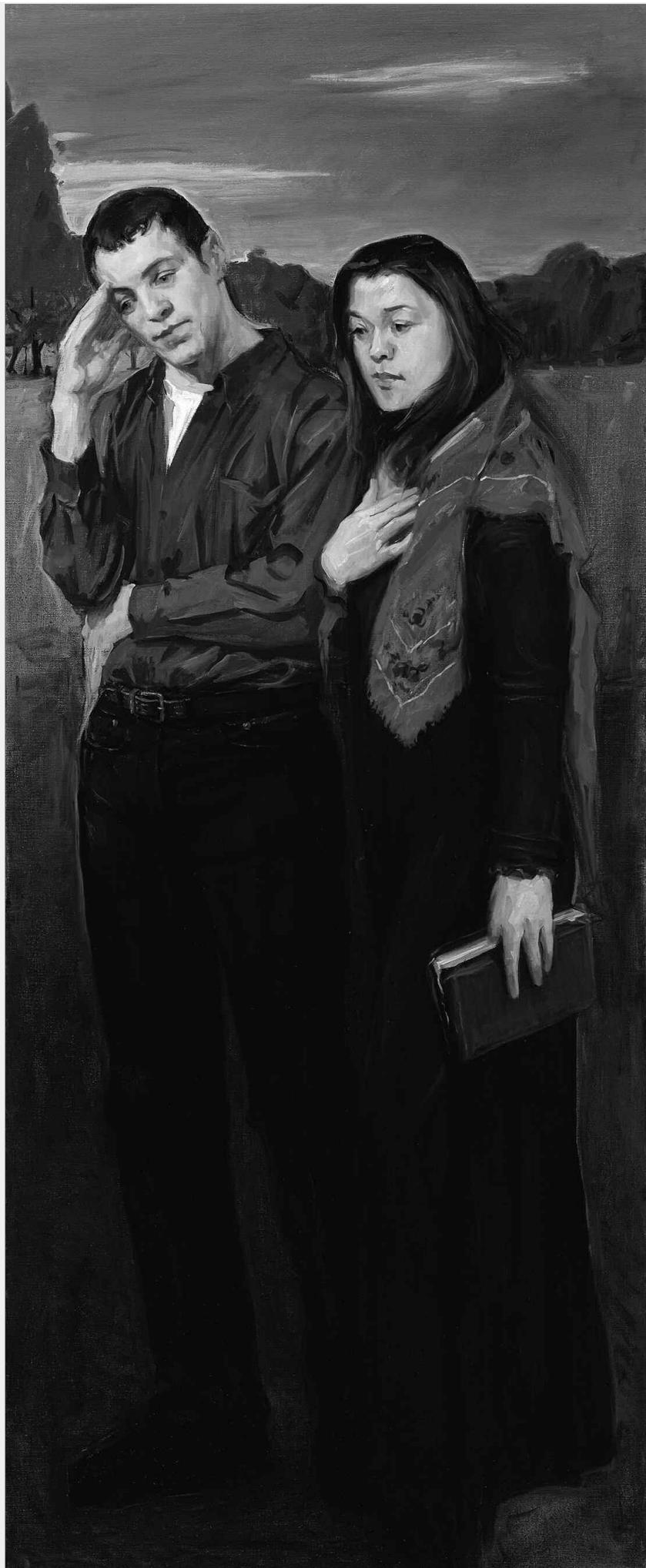
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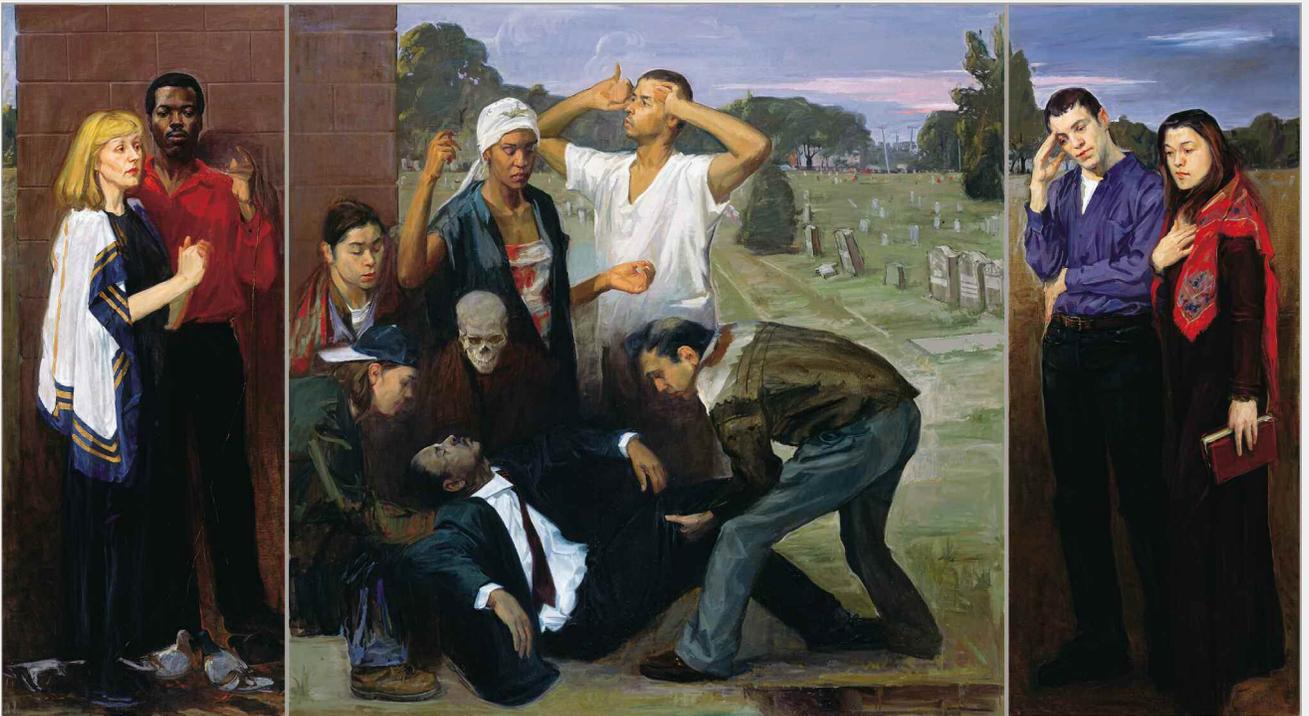


Historical achievement

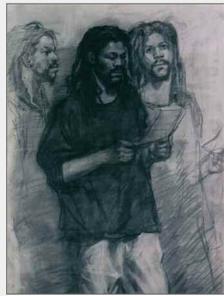
In 2010 the Harvard Club commissioned Sam Adoquei to paint a portrait of a former president. The portrait now hangs among some of history's best portraits artists in the collection of Harvard Club.

Recently, the city of Pomport, Bergerac France awarded Mr. Adoquei the city's Medal of Honor for his contribution and dedication to the arts and culture of the area, and for bringing out the hidden beauty of the area for international art enthusiasts. It was the first time in history that the city awarded its Medal of Honor to a foreigner and to an artist, an historical achievement in Western art for an artist with Mr. Adoquei's background.





The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King (triptych)



Top: Death of An American President

From left to right

Untitled

Prayers

Reciting a poem

Social Studies, Oil on canvas by Sam Adoquei

Prayers

HIDDEN SYMBOLS IN PAINTING

“So many great people have lived and many more are coming.”
Samuel Adoquei

The leafless flowerless plant, water, intruding daylight, corpse and animated figures, the youthful policeman uncertain of life, middle age and old age standbys, all represent the seasons, nature, life and ages of human: dry leaves have to fall in order to make new ones. Plant once losing its flowers forever continue to make new ones. The world is forever making opportunities to make great people.

The world is forever providing opportunities for great minds,
Good luck my friends you are all great people being made.



Portrait of Justice Constance Baker Motley. Collection Columbia University



Statue of Liberty, New York.

To loan the exhibition or find out more about the exhibition,
email to: unionsquarestudio@earthlink.net



Medal of Honor awarded
to the artist in France.



ABOUT SAMUEL ADOQUEI

Before Albrecht Durer was recognized as the greatest artist of the German Reformation, he reported in a letter dated February 7, 1506 that he was being criticized for taking on the Italian painting style. Michelangelo, too, before becoming the greatest artist of the Renaissance, had a hard time with the Romans because he was a Florentine, not a Roman. Paul Simon, one of the greatest musicians of our time, was at first criticized for taking music from Africa and popularizing it in the United States. The resulting CD, Graceland, became one of the best selling CDs of all time.



In the 21st Century in the art world in the United States the African-born Samuel Adoquei is following the historical tradition of creative minds challenging themselves with unfamiliar territory.

Upon Samuel Adoquei's arrival in the United States, while still a student, he won several international awards including the Gold Medal in Oil Painting and Best Traditional Oil Painting awards at the Knickerbocker Artists Annual Exhibition. He is the first African to teach in all of the prestigious art institutions in New York, and the youngest to teach at the National Academy School of Fine Art. He is collected by the Harvard Club and museums across the United States.



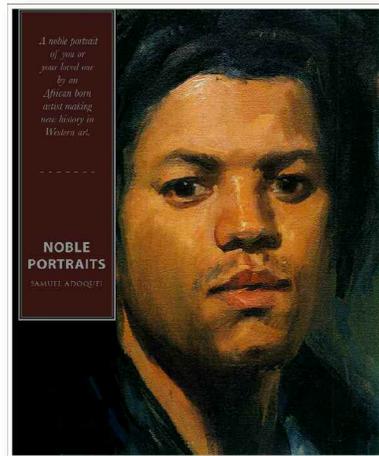
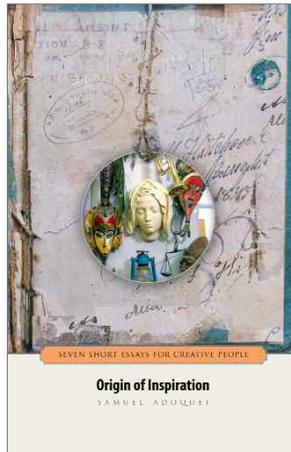
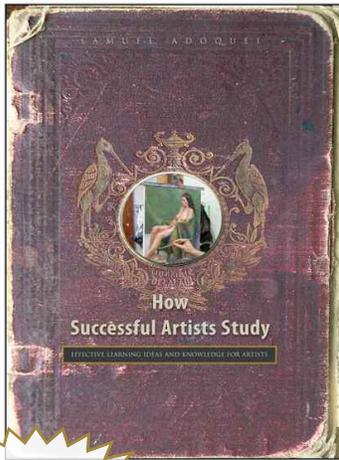
[click here to watch 10 minutes short documentary film](#)

The upcoming exhibition consists of the artist's masterpieces influenced and inspired by the philosophy and ideas of Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi and American History.



Books written by the artist.....

- **How Successful Artists Study**
- **Origin of Inspiration**
- **Noble Portraits** (Portrait Catalog)



**3 Months
#1 Bestseller**
STRAND BOOKS

STRAND BOOKS #1 BEST SELLERS

******* FIVE STARS**

ART TIMES May/ June 2010 ART TIMES

2012 Best Art Book for Art Students

Rolling Stone

Adoquei's book, Origin of Inspiration, a treatise on the best way to live a creative life, is full of ideas. R.S. Magazine, October 2014

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