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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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California Museum Presents ***Black Pioneers*** Pictorial Quilt Exhibit

First-of-its-kind exhibit depicts underexplored aspects of Black history in the West

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — June 6, 2023: The California Museum announces the opening of ***Black Pioneers: Legacy in the American West***, a timeline of original pictorial quilts exploring the path of Black history in the West. On view from June 10 through October 1, 2023, the exhibit dispels the myth that Black people in the old West were mostly cowboys, showing the rich diversity in African Americans' occupations and achievements in society, religion, education and the arts from 1528 through the Civil Rights Movement.

Organized by The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art and curator, historian and artist Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi, *Black Pioneers* features 50 quilts created for this exhibit by the Women of Color Quilters Network.

"Quilts and quilt making are important to America and Black culture in particular because the art form was historically one of the few mediums accessible to marginalized groups to tell their own story, to provide warmth for their families and to empower them with a voice through cloth," said Dr. Mazloomi.

Quilts were chosen as the exhibit's visual medium because they highlight the intersection of African Americans in the western frontier with the art form's important role in African American history. For African American women, quilts have always been at the core of artistic expression, taking form in their social, economic and spiritual lives.

"We are honored to host *Black Pioneers* at the California Museum," said Executive Director Amanda Meeker. "The quilts themselves are works of art, with elaborate materials and intricate details. The artistic and narrative elements of the quilts come together to create a powerful visual history lesson that we hope will leave visitors with an expanded view of Black history and American history."

For more information on the exhibit, visit <https://www.californiamuseum.org/black-pioneers>.

ABOUT THE JAMES MUSEUM OF WESTERN & WILDLIFE ART

The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art, located in St. Petersburg, Florida, provides experiences that inspire human connection and transformation through art depicting the peoples, landscapes and history of the American West, and wildlife of the world. The museum engages the community through programs and educational opportunities, for all ages, that bring our history to life and amplify voices that are not often at the forefront of mainstream Western art.

ABOUT DR. CAROLYN MAZLOOMI

Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi's own quilts have been exhibited extensively nationwide. She also has curated 21 exhibits of quilts made by members of the Women of Color Quilters Network, a non-profit she founded in 1985 to educate, preserve, exhibit, promote and document quilts made by African Americans. Among the exhibitions she has curated is *Still We Rise*:

Race, Culture and Visual Conversations, which visually surveys 400 years of African American history. The largest traveling exhibit of African American quilts ever mounted, it appeared at the California Museum in 2018.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA MUSEUM:

The California Museum—home of the California Hall of Fame—focuses on the state’s rich history, its diversity and its unique influence on the world of ideas, innovation, art and culture. Through interactive experiences, the Museum inspires visitors to make a mark on history. Located at 1020 O Street in the March Fong Eu Secretary of State complex, the Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. General admission is \$8-\$10. Plan a visit at <https://www.californiamuseum.org>.

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