

For immediate release

Contact:

Sofia Blom

[sofia.blom@restonarts.org](mailto:sofia.blom@restonarts.org)

703.471.9242

## ***Radcliffe Bailey: The Great Dismal Swamp***

Reston, VA – The Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) is pleased to present *Radcliffe Bailey: The Great Dismal Swamp*, on view from April 21 through August 18, 2017. Radcliffe Bailey (b. 1968, Bridgeton, New Jersey; lives and works in Atlanta) is a nationally-recognized painter, sculptor, and mixed-media artist who layers imagery, culturally resonant materials, and text to explore themes of ancestry, race, and memory. *The Great Dismal Swamp* is the artist's first solo exhibition in the DC metro area. He has previously participated in group exhibitions at the Smithsonian Institution, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and the David C. Driskell Center at the University of Maryland.

Bailey has long treated issues of race and the historical experiences of African Americans in his work, exploring his personal ancestry as well as the history of slavery. At GRACE, Bailey will present a selection of mixed-media works mining historical themes, including the Underground Railroad and the legacy of slavery in Virginia's Great Dismal Swamp, a federally-designated national wildlife refuge in Southeastern Virginia. The Swamp concealed and sheltered communities of slaves fleeing captivity on the Underground Railroad.

"Viewing Radcliffe's work is like digging through strata of history, encapsulated in lush layers of paint, embodied within evocative objects, or reflected in found images of African Americans," observed guest curator Holly Koons McCullough, formerly of GRACE and now Executive Director at the Arlington Arts Center. "This body of work is underpinned in part by the artist's own family history in Virginia, which was the home of both his father and grandfather. Although deeply rooted in his personal and cultural heritage, Bailey's work ultimately addresses universal themes of identity and ancestry, hurt and healing, displacement and endurance."

GRACE's Executive Director and Curator, Lily Siegel, adds, "We are thrilled to be presenting Bailey's first monographic exhibition in the DC area. It is a perfect fit for the Greater Reston Arts Center as we continue to grow and present excellence in national and international contemporary art that has deep relevance for the region."

Bailey received a BFA in 1991 from the Atlanta College of Art. His work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; the Denver Art Museum; and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta; among many others. The artist is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

# GreaterRestonArtsCenter

## EVENTS:

### **Artist's Talk: Radcliffe Bailey**

April 20, 7:30pm, free and open to the public  
George Mason University, School of Art, Room 1007

### **Opening reception**

April 22, 5–7pm, free and open to the public  
Greater Reston Arts Center

### **Creative Responses**

April 27, 6–7pm: Boris Willis  
Final Thursday of the month, April–July, free and open to the public  
Creative professionals respond to the work on view in the gallery.  
Greater Reston Arts Center

### **Curator's Talk: Holly McCullough**

May 6, 4pm, free and open to the public  
Greater Reston Arts Center

For more information please visit [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org)

*Radcliffe Bailey: The Great Dismal Swamp* is funded in part by the Arts Council of Fairfax County.



The Greater Reston Arts Center is dedicated to enriching community life by promoting involvement and excellence in the contemporary visual arts. Its gallery showcases exceptional emerging and established artists from the mid-Atlantic region and beyond; its GRACE Art program delivers art enrichment experiences in over 40 schools regionally, impacting over 20,000 students; and its annual Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival is among the top such events in the country. The Greater Reston Arts Center is always free and open to the public.

The Greater Reston Arts Center gratefully acknowledges the leadership of its Board of Directors and the support of its sponsors, members, and patrons. GRACE programs are supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Arts Council of Fairfax County, and the Reston Community Center.

