

Norton Museum of Art Acquires *Super Blue Omo* by Njideka Akunyili Crosby

Mixed Media Painting That Was the Talk of Art Basel Joins Other Important Recent Acquisitions of Work by Women Artists

West Palm Beach, FL, July 6, 2016— The Norton Museum of Art today announced that it has acquired the painting that was the talk of the recent Art Basel art fair—*Super Blue Omo* (2016) by Njideka Akunyili Crosby. The mixed media painting, depicting a lone female figure, is the newest work created by the artist. It exemplifies her style, including her signature patterning made from transferring images of her own family and popular culture from her native Nigeria. Now based in Los Angeles, Crosby creates subtly subversive compositions that offer a unique perspective on her life in America and contribute to the figurative tradition. Crosby was recently announced as the winner of the Prix Canson 2016, the prestigious annual award for works on paper.



The Norton Museum of Art recently featured Crosby's work in its annual Recognition of Art by Women (RAW) exhibition series, which is dedicated to supporting the work of living women artists. The solo exhibition was the first survey of Crosby's career and featured 15 large-scale new and recent works. Created after the RAW exhibition closed, *Super Blue Omo* is a continuation of the ideas explored in that show. The work will be included in *Portals: Njideka Akunyili Crosby*, the artist's first solo exhibition in Europe at Victoria Miro, London from October 5 to November 5, 2016, and will then go on view at the Norton in February 2017. The acquisition was made possible through the generosity of Museum Trustee Irene Karp and her husband Jim.

Hope Alswang, Executive Director of the Norton Museum of Art, said, "We are thrilled to acquire this outstanding new work by Njideka Akunyili Crosby, the artist represented this year in the Norton's annual Recognition of Art by Women exhibition. *Super Blue Omo* takes its place at the Norton as both a part of the rich, varied and ever-expanding history of art and as an exceptional example of artistic practice, helping the Museum accomplish its mission to expose audiences to diverse art by pursuing an inclusive approach toward collecting and exhibiting."

Super Blue Omo joins a series of recent acquisitions by the Norton that have included important works by women artists. In early 2016, the Norton acquired *Bathers* (1913) by Marguerite

Thompson Zorach, who earned a reputation as one of America's leading modernists by becoming among the first to master Fauvism. The painting was featured in the Norton-organized exhibition *O'Keeffe, Stettheimer, Torr, Zorach: Women Modernists in New York*, which is now on view at the Portland Museum of Art in Maine. In spring 2016, through its Friends of American Art group, the Norton acquired Grace Hartigan's 1953 painting *Standing Figure*, created during the key period when she was moving beyond the self-reflexive, non-objective style of Abstract Expressionism to find her own artistic voice. The first painting by this important mid-20th-century artist to enter the Museum's permanent collection, *Standing Figure* will go on view beginning July 5.

About the Norton

Founded in 1941, the Norton Museum of Art is recognized for its distinguished holdings in American, European, and Chinese art, and a continually expanding presence for Photography and Contemporary art. Its masterpieces of 19th century and 20th century European painting and sculpture include works by Brancusi, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso, and American works by Stuart Davis, Hopper, O'Keeffe, Pollock, and Sheeler.

The Norton presents special exhibitions, lectures, tours, and programs for adults and children throughout the year. In 2011, the Norton launched RAW (Recognition of Art by Women), featuring the work of a living female painter or sculptor and funded by the Leonard and Sophie Davis Fund/MLDauray Arts Initiative. In 2012, the Norton established the biennial, international Rudin Prize for Emerging Photographers in partnership with Beth Rudin DeWoody, named in honor of her late father, Lewis Rudin.

In 2016, the Norton broke ground for a visionary expansion designed by architecture firm Foster + Partners, under the direction of Pritzker Prize-winning architect Lord Norman Foster. The project reorients the Norton's entrance to the main thoroughfare of South Dixie Highway, restoring the symmetry of the museum's original 1941 design, and includes a new 42,000-square-foot West Wing that doubles education space, and increases gallery space for the Norton's renowned collection. The transformation of the Museum's 6.3-acre campus will create a museum in a garden, featuring new, verdant spaces and a sculpture garden.

The Norton is located at 1451 S. Olive Ave. in West Palm Beach, FL., and during construction through December 2018 is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. and Thursday, noon to 9 p.m., **and is free to the public**. The Museum is closed on Mondays and major holidays. For additional information, please call (561) 832-5196, or visit www.norton.org.

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IMAGE: Njideka Akunyili Crosby (Nigerian, born 1983), *Super Blue Omo*, 2016. Acrylic, transfers, colored pencils, and collage on paper. 84 x 108 in. (213.4 x 274.3 cm). Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida. Purchase, acquired through the generosity of Jim and Irene Karp, 2016.178. Image of courtesy the Artist and Victoria Miro, London. © Njideka Akunyili Crosby

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