

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### POPULAR "HIGHWAYMEN" PAINTINGS ON DISPLAY AT PBCC FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(January 8, 2003 – Palm Beach Gardens, FL) In the 1950s, when a group of African-American painters from Ft. Pierce began selling their landscape paintings from their car trunks on the roadside, they were merely trying to make a living. Today their work is experiencing a buying renaissance and is the subject of newspaper and magazine articles (including a feature story in *The New York Times*) and even a book.

One "Highwaymen" collector, Phil Materio, an artist in fused glass and co-owner with his wife Shannon of McMow Art Glass in Lake Worth, has loaned 32 of the paintings for exhibition at The Art Gallery at Eissey Campus at Palm Beach Community College in Palm Beach Gardens.

Most of the paintings in the exhibit are the older, more valuable works on upsom board. They include six paintings by one of the most accomplished Highwaymen painters, Alfred Hair. Hair began learning how to paint from mentor Albert Backus when Hair was 14; he later became a mentor to other Highwaymen painters who regularly gathered to paint together, sharing technique and critique. Those dramatic landscapes of Florida have been labeled "true folk art" because the 26 artists were largely self-taught, and they sold their work for nominal prices to average income Americans.

The **exhibit opens Feb. 4** from 5 to 8 p.m. at PBCC in Palm Beach Gardens, 3160 PGA Blvd., at The Art Gallery at Eissey Campus and **ends Feb. 26**. Gary Monroe, visual arts professor at Daytona Beach Community College and **author of "The Highwaymen: Florida's African-American Landscape Painters,"** will speak on **Feb. 6** at 7 p.m. in the Meldon Lecture Hall, BB Building, at PBCC in Palm Beach Gardens. His lecture is sponsored by the Florida Humanities Council.

Gallery hours are from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday, Thursday and Friday, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, and from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday. For more information, call (561) 207-5008.

The exhibition will feature an overview of Highwaymen paintings and includes the works of Alfred Hair, Livingston Roberts, James Gibson, Harold Newton, Sam Newton, Lem Newton, Al Black, Robert Butler, Hezekiah Baker, Mary Ann Carroll, S.M. Wells, Johnny Daniels, James Gibson, Willie Daniels, R.A. McLendon and George Buckner.

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