



Pérez Art Museum Miami
1103 Biscayne Blvd.
Miami, FL 33132
305 375 3000
pamm.org



**Pérez Art Museum Miami Presents *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night*,
Opening May 26, 2017**

Exhibition brings together paintings and sculptures from one of Jamaica's most important historical artists and is the first exhibition of his work outside of Jamaica



John Dunkley, *Back to Nature*, 1939. Collection National Gallery of Jamaica.

MIAMI —May 15, 2017—Pérez Art Museum Miami presents *John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night*, on view May 26, 2017 – January 14, 2018. The exhibition, on view in the museum's Rose Ellen Meyerhoff Greene and Gerald Greene Gallery, presents the work of **John Dunkley** (b. 1891, Savanna-la-Mar, Jamaica; d. 1947, Kingston), widely considered to be one of Jamaica's most important historical artists. *Neither Day nor Night* will include paintings from the 1930s and '40s alongside a smaller selection of carved-wood and stone sculptures. Dunkley's paintings are defined by their distinctive dark palette, detailed imagery—often landscapes—and psychologically suggestive underpinnings. His intimate sculptures reflect more figurative elements—people and animals—and offer insights into his unique iconography. His oeuvre spans little more than a decade, and only approximately 50 paintings are known to exist today, alongside a small number of sculptures. Although his work is well represented in the collection of the National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, as well as in international private collections, Dunkley has not been the focus of a solo exhibition since the 1970s, and never before outside Jamaica. This exhibition is a unique opportunity to bring together a substantial grouping of his work and to create an international context for its study. Dunkley's work has previously been show at PAMM as part of the large group exhibition *Caribbean:*





Crossroads of the World (2014). This current project reflects PAMM's on-going commitment to fostering new scholarship and deeper investigations of artists working in the Caribbean region.



The exhibition is organized by PAMM's Associate Curator **Diana Nawi** with **Nicole Smythe-Johnson**, an independent curator and writer based in Kingston. **David Boxer**, an art historian and artist, and the foremost expert on Dunkley's work, has served as an advisor for the exhibition. Boxer has long studied Dunkley's practice, preserving his legacy, and Nawi and Smythe-Johnson have been working to realize an exhibition of his work for over two years. "Organizing an exhibition of Dunkley's work, which is so compelling and singular, is an exciting and necessary outgrowth of the conversations I had with local institutions, artists, and curators during my many trips to Kingston," says Nawi. "*Neither Day nor Night* represents a critical opportunity to deepen our understanding of this artist's work and allows us to look beyond the well-known 1970s Jamaica of the international imagination, exploring a history of the island that predates its independence," explains Smythe-Johnson.

Dunkley was born in rural northwestern Jamaica, and as a young man traveled to Costa Rica, Cuba and Panama to work, eventually settling for a time in Chiriquí, a province in western Panama. There he worked as a barber and began to create his first small paintings. Concurrently, he is also believed to have worked as an assistant to a studio photographer active in the region, possibly retouching and coloring photographs. Dunkley returned to Jamaica in the mid-to-late 1920s, where he established his own barbershop near downtown Kingston's busy port, and to make paintings and carvings. Dunkley was working at a pivotal time in Jamaica's history, and like figures such as Marcus Garvey, he is part of a generation of West Indian men who traveled abroad to work, both in the region and internationally, and returned home to contribute to the formation of what would eventually become an independent nation. His life and work provide rich insight into the broader economic and social factors, as well as the popular culture, that defined this era in Jamaica and the Caribbean.

John Dunkley: Neither Day nor Night is organized by PAMM Associate Curator Diana Nawi with Nicole Smythe-Johnson, independent curator. David Boxer serves as curatorial advisor on this exhibition. This exhibition is presented by Davidoff Art Initiative and the catalogue for this exhibition is supported by Furthermore: a program of the J. M. Kaplan Fund.



ART INITIATIVE

About Pérez Art Museum Miami

Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) promotes artistic expression and the exchange of ideas, advancing public knowledge and appreciation of art, architecture and design, and reflecting the diverse community of its pivotal geographic location at the crossroads of the Americas. A 32-year-old South Florida institution formerly known as Miami Art Museum (MAM), Pérez Art Museum Miami opened a new building, designed by world-renowned architects Herzog & de Meuron, in Downtown Miami's Museum Park on December 4, 2013. The facility is a state-of-the-art model for sustainable museum design and progressive programming and features 200,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor program space with flexible galleries; shaded outdoor verandas; a waterfront restaurant and bar; a museum shop; and an education center with a library, media lab and classroom spaces. For more information, please visit www.pamm.org, find us on Facebook (facebook.com/perezartmuseummiami), or follow us on Twitter (@pamm).

Media Contacts:

PAMM | Alexa Ferra | aferra@pamm.org | 786 345 5619

FITZ & CO | Taylor Maatman | tmaatman@fitzandco.com | 646 589 0926

FITZ & CO | Ellen Dulsky Watkins | ewatkins@fitzandco.com | 646 589 0929

###





Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. Support is provided by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners. Additional support is provided by the City of Miami and the Miami OMNI Community Redevelopment Agency (OMNI CRA). Pérez Art Museum Miami is an accessible facility. All contents ©Pérez Art Museum Miami. All rights reserved.

