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**From:** Columbia Museum of Art  
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**Sent:** Monday, January 9, 2017 2:11 PM  
**To:** Haley, Nikki  
**Subject:** Unique African-American Artist Finds His Way to CMA to Discuss Debut Exhibition

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## NEWS RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:  
RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE

January 9, 2017

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### Unique African-American Artist Finds His Way to CMA to Discuss Debut Exhibition

**FAAAC presents an Evening with James Williams**

*Friday, January 27 | 6:00 p.m.*



James Williams, *Cartography Series No. 9: I'm Not There Yet (No.10)*, 2015

**Columbia, S.C.** – The Columbia Museum of Art and the Friends of African American Art & Culture are pleased to present a lecture and discussion from North Carolina artist James Williams on Friday, January 27, at 6:00 p.m. The program focuses on the artist's debut museum exhibition *Making Maps: The Art of James Williams*, on view at the CMA through February 5.

A former standout football player turned teaching artist, Williams works and resides in his hometown of Greensboro, N.C., and is an associate art professor

at Guilford Technical Community College's Jamestown campus. His multimedia, abstract-expressionistic work uses the ancient tradition of cartography as a means of exploring, interpreting, and understanding daily life.

"Making maps can lead you in many directions," says Williams. "They can give you the freedom to navigate what's important about the journey, and thus can help you determine how far your imagination wants to travel."

Through a series of works, Williams acts as a traveler, using paint, ink, tape, graphite, and paper-weaving techniques to explore various spaces through maps of dense, layered color. This exhibition is the third and final iteration of *Spoken*, an exhibition series that highlights the unique perspectives and powerful voices of African-American artists, many of whom are represented in the museum's collection.

"Williams is part of a long tradition of abstract-expressionist action painters, such as Sam Gilliam, whose work is often ignored and/or challenging to understand because there are no clear or easily identifiable 'black' themes," says CMA Consulting Curator Porchia Moore, creator of the *Spoken* series and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of South Carolina. "What we see with *Making Maps* is an artist whose work is as much about technique and intellectual exercise of craft as it is about exploring this central theme of making maps as a means to process one's life. In this regard, the exhibition forces us to think about notions of blackness not as a primary mechanism for accessing the work, but of the artist himself and, more importantly, his technique and style of creating art."

The FAAAC is a CMA membership affiliate group, inclusive of all genders, ethnicities, and ages, whose members are brought together by an appreciation for the artistic and cultural contributions of African Americans.

"Maps are representative of lands unexplored, possibilities, potential," says Darion McCloud, FAAAC president. "How fitting that the Friends of African American Art & Culture bring Mr. James Williams to Columbia to discuss his exciting work as we embark on the next phase of our collective adventures."

\$8 / \$5 for FAAAC members

For more information, visit [columbiamuseum.org](http://columbiamuseum.org).

### About the CMA

The Columbia Museum of Art is a charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to lifelong learning and community enrichment for all. Located in the heart of downtown Columbia, S.C., the CMA ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and creative educational programs. At the heart of the CMA and its programs is its collection, which encompasses 7,000 works and spans 5,000 years of art history. Established in 1950, the CMA now welcomes more than 150,000 visitors annually and is a catalyst for community creativity and education, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds. It is the recipient of a National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a National Art Education Association award for its contributions to arts education, a National Park Foundation Award, and two Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Governor's Awards for the Arts for outstanding contributions to the arts in South Carolina. To learn more, visit [www.columbiamuseum.org](http://www.columbiamuseum.org).



### General Info:

803-799-2810

[www.columbiamuseum.org](http://www.columbiamuseum.org)



### Location:

1515 Main Street | Columbia, SC 29201

### General Admission:

\$15 or less every day! Always FREE for members

### Museum Hours:

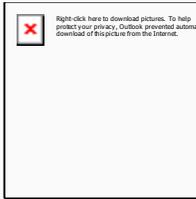
Open 6 days a week!

Tuesday - Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday: Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays and major holidays.



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