



Greenville County **Museum of Art**

420 College Street Greenville, SC 29601  
864.271.7570  
gcma.org

# News Release

CONTACT: Paula Angermeier 864.271.7570, ext.1028 pangermeier@gcma.org

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Greenville, SC (February 25, 2013)— From John C. Calhoun to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., state history, slavery, economics, the Civil War, and the Civil Rights movement come to life in the exhibition *The Content of Our Character: From States Rights to Civil Rights*, now on view at the Greenville County Museum of Art.

This powerful exhibition drawn from the GCMA permanent collection looks at the role of South Carolinians and the South as a whole from the mid 19th century to the mid 20th century. Organized thematically, the exhibition features eleven pottery vessels created by enslaved artisan David Drake along with accompanying illustrations from Bryan Collier's award-winning children's book *Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave*. Also known as "Dave the Potter" or "Dave the Slave," Drake stands out as one of the 19th century's most remarkable artisans. Born a slave, Drake set himself apart by learning to read and write. He frequently inscribed his own words, in the form of short poems, onto many of the utilitarian pots he made. His body of work stands in testimony to his life, his talent and his spirit.

Antebellum portraits of *John C. Calhoun* and South Carolina governors *William Henry Gist* and *Benjamin Franklin Perry* are juxtaposed with images depicting the Underground Railroad and slave transport along the Natchez Trace. Another group of paintings captures strategic encampments as well as land and sea engagements of the Civil War.

Three remarkable portraits by Elizabeth Boott Duveneck depict two freed slaves and a young man, who was born into freedom following the Emancipation Proclamation. Several paintings explore the role the church played in the struggle for Civil Rights in the first half of the 20th century, while contemporaneous photographs and paintings capture the March on Washington and growing unrest and violence. Images created by African-American artists working in the second half of the 20th century reflect on the Civil Rights and Black Power movements as well as contemporary struggles faced by all.

*The Content of Our Character* will be on view at the Greenville County Museum of Art through September 21, 2014. The Greenville County Museum of Art is located in the center of downtown Greenville's cultural campus, Heritage Green, at 420 College Street. The GCMA is open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 am until 6 pm and on Sundays from 1 pm until 5 pm. Admission is free.

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