

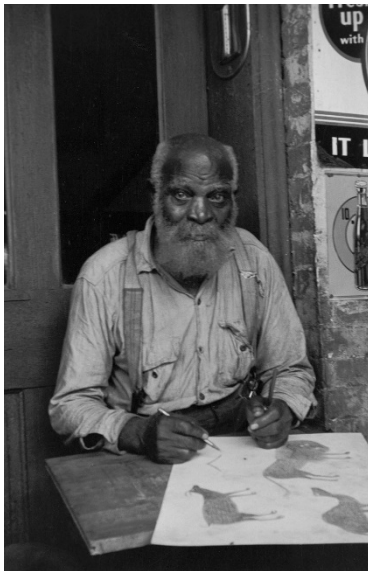
BILL TRAYLOR

[1853-1949]

January 19 – March 3, 2019

Opening: Saturday, January 19th, 4-6 PM

Bill Traylor, born a slave in 1853, is today revered as a major American artist and is currently the subject of an extensive solo exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, *Between Worlds: The Art of Bill Traylor* (up through March 17, 2019). Betty Cunningham Gallery, as exclusive representative of The Charles E. and Eugenia C. Shannon Trust, is pleased to present its second exhibition of the work of Bill Traylor, opening on Saturday, January 19th, 4 – 6 PM. On view will be approximately 20 works from the Shannon Trust.



Charles Shannon, *Bill Traylor (frontal)*
1939, Montgomery, Alabama. Charles
E. and Eugenia C. Shannon Trust

In 1939, Charles Shannon, a young artist, encountered the 85-year-old Bill Traylor, seated with a pencil in his hand, in front of a blacksmith shop in Montgomery, Alabama. Intrigued, Shannon provided Traylor with encouragement and art supplies. He purchased, for modest prices, approximately 1200 works from Traylor. The works that Shannon preserved and promoted for 60 years are the basis of Traylor's legacy today.

Fascinated by the endless inventiveness and aesthetic beauty of Bill Traylor's work, Charles Shannon organized Traylor's first exhibition in 1940 at New South – an arts center in Montgomery founded by Shannon and others. Traylor's next exhibition, and his first in New York, was at the Fieldston School in 1942. Bill Traylor's work would not be shown again until 1979-80 at R. H. Oosterom Gallery in New York. Since 1980 there have been numerous exhibitions. Particularly noteworthy in museums are 1994 – 95 - *Lively Times and Events: The Drawings of Bill Traylor*, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, AL (and travelling); 1998-99 - *Bill Traylor (1854 -1949) Deep Blue*, Kunstmuseum, Bern, Switzerland and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany (and travelling); 2013 - *Bill Traylor, Drawings from the Collections of the High Museum of Art and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts*, American Folk Art Museum, New York, NY (and travelling) and *Traylor in Motion, Wonders from New York Collections*, American Folk Art Museum, New York, NY; 2018 – *Outliers and American Vanguard Art*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C (and travelling); and currently *Between Worlds: The Art of Bill Traylor* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC. Today, Traylor's work can be found in museums

and public collections around the world.

The exhibition at Betty Cunningham Gallery will remain on view through Sunday, March 3rd, 2019.

Biography

Bill Traylor was born a slave in 1853, on the Traylor family plantation in Dallas County, AL.

Following Emancipation, Bill assumed the last name of Traylor and continued to live on the Traylor family's plantation working as a laborer and later as a tenant farmer.

In 1910, at 56, Traylor moved to Montgomery County, AL.

In 1928, at 74, Bill Traylor moved to Montgomery, where he worked in a shoe factory.

In 1939, Charles Shannon first encountered Bill Traylor, on Monroe Street in Montgomery, AL.

In 1949, Bill Traylor dies at the age of 96.

For further information, artist biography and/or images, please contact the Gallery.

Listing Information: Betty Cunningham Gallery is located at 15 Rivington Street, b/t Bowery and Chrystie Street, New York, NY 10002

T: 212-242-2772 **E:** info@bettycunninghamgallery.com **W:** www.bettycunninghamgallery.com

Public Transportation: F train to Second Ave, 6 Train to Spring Street, RW trains to Prince Street, JZ trains to Bowery

Gallery Hours: Wed – Sat, 10am – 6pm; Sun 12-6pm; Tues by appointment

Next Exhibition: William Bailey, March 7 – April 14, 2019

ADAA Art Show: Rackstraw Downes, February 28 – March 3, 2019