

Contact:

Yaminah Ahmad, 404-861-0497  
missyaminah@gmail.com

## ***MY AUTHENTIC SELF* MAKES ITS NATIONAL DEBUT**



### **A COFFEE TABLE BOOK RELEASE BY LEROY CAMPBELL HARLEM, NY NOVEMBER 19, 2015 6:00-9:00 PM**

HARLEM, NY (October 1, 2015) – Celebrated visual artist and Gullah cultural ambassador Leroy Campbell embraces his African roots and the journey to self discovery with the debut of his first coffee table book, *My Authentic Self*, during the holiday pop-up gallery at The Sol Studio (located at 2073 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., between 123<sup>rd</sup> St. and 124<sup>th</sup> St., New York, NY, 10027) November 19, 2015, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The gallery will also feature works from Campbell's artist friends April Harrison, Charly Palmer, Maurice Evans, Najee Dorsey, Phyllis Stephens and Sara Bunn. For Campbell, this book release is a celebration of life and purpose.

A colorful, thought-provoking collage of literary and artistic mediums, *My Authentic Self*, strips Campbell of any pretenses to uncover the soul's truth. With over 90 pages, the uniquely designed hardback travels through pivotal moments of his life utilizing the themes of family, education, love, music and the discovery of artistry. Artwork is accompanied by short prose, mantras and poems to give insight into personal challenges like witnessing domestic violence and then being protected by a traditionally-involved community comprised of neighbors, loved ones and acquaintances. Other illustrations include his trek from being a Charleston, South Carolina native ashamed of his roots to a proud Gullah cultural educator and prosperous visual artist living in New York City, and acquiring celebrity clients Samuel L. Jackson, Tom Joyner and Terry McMillian.

"I was born in Charleston, South Carolina during a time period when no one wanted to be Gullah, Geechee, Black or African," says Campbell. "I was born with a birth defect and my parents were uneducated. They had struggles and, therefore, I had struggles that I'm still working to heal. But I'm a work in progress. I'm always working on myself. And I just love where I am now." For readers, *My Authentic Self* is not only inspiration from one man's journey, but also a challenge to reflect on their lives and see the infinite potential to be whole.

In addition to the open book release, there will be a limited edition offering an exclusive image from the Family Collection. "Family has always been the foundation of my work. I always champion family before individualism, and then community, the nation and the world," he explains. The exclusive image will be in a specially designed box filled with decorative linen, and a certificate of authentication.

*My Authentic Self* pop-up gallery will run November 19, 2015 to December 20, 2015 at Harlem's The Sol Studio. Mondays are by appointment only. "Families can read this book together," he says. "It can be a bedtime children's book. Its creative design and narrations of the human experiences make it a book for everyone."

For more information about *My Authentic Self* pop-up gallery, please visit: [www.thesolstudio.com](http://www.thesolstudio.com)

For more information about Leroy Campbell, please visit: [www.leroycampbelloriginals.com](http://www.leroycampbelloriginals.com)

**\* The above image is titled "Joe Neckbone and Joe Neckbone Jr."**

### **About Leroy Campbell**

Through nostalgic scenes and universal themes, he illustrates the art of storytelling using mélanges of acrylic, paper, tapestries and organic materials. His work is a fusion of art and history, which celebrates family, community and culture, ultimately the pure essence that connects all people. Through these archetypes, Leroy Campbell finds his creative voice and visually tells his stories. Stylized coal black figures with elongated necks and no visible eyes, silhouettes "looking inward to the soul" and full lips that, "...speak for the soul even in their silence." Amalgamated with newspaper collages as a backdrop, the images speak volumes to observers.

Uninhibited and unconfined, and with an impetus to ignite spiritual and emotional sparks in the world, Campbell premiered with expressive yet single dimensional pastel smudges. He then evolves, through his patient discovery of using light and shadow, and with layers of text and texture that implicate the multilayered essences of life. His art is meant to socialize with people and provide a dialogue of inspiration. The words and imagery Leroy Campbell conveys a unified message, which elucidates the commonalities in all of us.