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**For Immediate Release**

## **JoAnne McFarland**

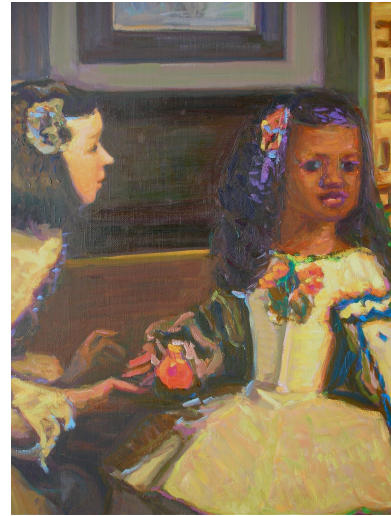
### *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Girl*

March 30 – April 23, 2011

Reception: Thursday, March 31, from 6 – 8pm

BROOKLYN, NY. FEBRUARY 2011. A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Girl*, a solo exhibition of work by A.I.R. Gallery artist, **JoAnne McFarland**. The exhibition will be on view from March 30 through April 23, with a reception on March 31 from 6pm to 8pm.

Through her mixed media exhibition *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Girl* artist JoAnne McFarland re-envisions. By placing a black girl at the heart of Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, one of the most beloved paintings in Western art, the artist claims center stage. The title of the exhibition is a play on a much-lauded literary work by poet Wallace Stevens, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird". McFarland is in fact a poet too. She uses these two treasured cultural benchmarks to craft a future in which those ordinarily sidelined play a central role. Every piece in *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Girl* shows the artist's agency. Stroke by stroke McFarland builds visceral evidence of her desire to contribute to the modern record.



In addition to the large scale oil painting 'Mis Meninas', *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Girl* includes a set of small oils—black flowers—hellebore, larkspur, pansy, and sunflower; a 'liberation portal' painting of the herb Rosemary that opens to reveal passages from the Declaration of Independence; and a set of collages called Lottery Tickets, made from tea-stained rice paper, that explore dichotomous female roles. Also on view are two videos shorts, 'How to Paint Your Bedroom' and 'How to Iron a Shirt', in which the artist acts out these simple tasks in juxtaposition to allusions of gorging and sexual mutilation.

As part of the exhibition the Brooklyn Historical Society will hold a poetry reading— "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Girl"—on Friday, April 1, at 7PM in its stunning Othmer Library. Poets E.J. Antonio, Rachel Eliza Griffiths, Aracelis Girmay, Robin Coste Lewis, and Kamilah Aisha Moon will read from their work. This event is free and open to the public. The Brooklyn Historical Society is located at 128 Pierrepont Street in Brooklyn Heights.

A.I.R. Gallery is located at 111 Front Street, #228, in the DUMBO section of Brooklyn. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11am to 6pm. For directions, please see [www.airgallery.org](http://www.airgallery.org). For additional information please contact the gallery director, Kat Griefen, at 212-255-6651 or [kgriefen@airgallery.org](mailto:kgriefen@airgallery.org)