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Media Contact:
Erica Bogese
Communications Manager
(202) 749-8978
bogese@doaks.org

New Special Exhibition:
Outside/IN: Martha Jackson Jarvis at Dumbarton Oaks

WASHINGTON – Dumbarton Oaks announces a new exhibition, *Outside/IN: Martha Jackson Jarvis at Dumbarton Oaks*, an installation of sculpture and works on paper inspired by natural forms and materials by noted DC artist Martha Jackson Jarvis. The installation is open in two phases: inside the museum from February 20 to the end of August, and outside, in the garden, from March 20 to the end of December. This installation spans the historic garden and museum of Dumbarton Oaks, and the title, *Outside/IN*, refers not only to this mode of display, but also to the fact that the materials and images of the artist’s works are often initially encountered and collected outdoors.

The work of Martha Jackson Jarvis is infused with the belief that everything animate and inanimate possesses a life force. Her work resonates with Dumbarton Oaks in many ways: on the material level; in its imagery, which is often derived from organic forms like seed pods, nests, and plant forms; and in its allusions to natural processes and narratives of natural and cultural history. Inspired by the artistic expressions of Jackson Jarvis, the curators of the Pre-Columbian and Byzantine Collections selected objects to enter a dialogue with the selected contemporary works.

Abstract mixed-medium ink drawings and watercolor collages, from the series *Path of Healing* and *Earth and Sea*, provide an activating matrix for the juxtaposed ancient objects related to rituals and myths. The sculpture *Umbilicus* - a giant version of a spherical seed pod made of volcanic stone and glass, attached by a wooden vine to a long, narrow pod shape, and the wall mounted *Sound of Earth* sculptures find reflections in the ancient objects on display and reference Jackson Jarvis's use of symbols of life and living.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Martha Jackson Jarvis grew up in Lynchburg and Philadelphia, studied at Howard University, and received a BFA from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University and an MFA from Antioch University. She taught for many years at Maryland Institute College of Art and was the visual artist consultant to Julie Dash’s 1991 film “Daughters of the Dust,” about an African American family on one of Georgia’s Sea Islands preparing to migrate to the mainland in the early twentieth century. Jackson Jarvis’s own experience as an African American child growing up in the segregated South has continued to inform her work, especially her early attachment to

rural life and her experience of nature, as well as her understanding of the distinctive patterns of African and African American culture.

ABOUT DUMBARTON OAKS

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection is the legacy of Robert and Mildred Woods Bliss, collectors and patrons of art and scholarship in the humanities. The multiple aspects of the Blisses' gift include the historic garden and buildings, world-class collections for researchers and the public to enjoy, and generous support for fellowships and scholarly endeavors on the local, national, and international levels. Dumbarton Oaks is a research institute of Harvard University that exists to further and publish research in the three areas of study: Byzantine Studies, Pre-Columbian Studies, and Garden and Landscape Studies. Residential fellowships for an academic year, semester, or summer are awarded in all three areas of study to scholars from around the world. In addition, Dumbarton Oaks offers one-month non-residential awards to researchers, and short-term pre-doctoral residencies to advanced graduate students. Each of the three programs of study supports and disseminates research in its relevant fields through an annual symposium; a program of public lectures, informal talks, and colloquia; and publications. The Dumbarton Oaks Museum contains the Byzantine Collection, one of the finest collections of artifacts from the Byzantine Empire with more than twelve hundred objects from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries. The Robert Woods Bliss Collection of Pre-Columbian Art is housed in the Pre-Columbian Pavilion, designed by architect Philip Johnson. This collection comprises objects from the ancient cultures of Mesoamerica, the Intermediate Area, and the Andes. The House Collection consists primarily of the historic interiors, Asian, European and American artworks, and interior furnishings. The ten-acre formal garden surrounds the 1801 Federal-style house. Mildred Barnes Bliss worked closely with renowned landscape designer Beatrix Farrand to transform the land surrounding the house into terraces and vistas. The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library has extensive holdings in our three dedicated areas of study and the Rare Book Collection is strong on works of landscape architecture, botany, and horticulture, while also reflecting the research focus of Dumbarton Oaks. The Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives (ICFA) documents and preserves material from fieldwork and the Dumbarton Oaks Archives inventories, conserves, stores, and makes accessible the institute's past, current, and future records and artifacts.