

# Carroll Simms *Jonah and the Whale*

Public Art  
University of  
Houston System

Carroll Simms (American, 1924-2010)  
*Jonah and the Whale*, 1973

Bronze; 70 x 35 x 10 inches

Location: Entrance at the University of Houston Police Department

- Carroll Simms' *Jonah and the Whale* was the first work by an African American artist acquired in 1973 by Public Art of the University of Houston System.
- Simms was the first African American to graduate from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, receiving his BFA and MFA.
- His work aided in defining the field of sculpture by bringing a Pan-African and spiritual perspective to the art scenes of Texas and all the United States.
- As a lover of great music, many of Simms' works were inspired by African American spirituals.
- In 1950, he moved to Houston to start a career as a professor of ceramics and sculpture at Texas Southern University where he helped John Biggers, one of the most prominent African American artists in Texas, build the art department from the ground up.
- Then in 1978 he coauthored *Black Art in Houston: The Texas Southern University Experience* with John Biggers. This book rewrote art history from the lens of African American artists and defined the role of art in community participation.



Check out our Facebook to get an inside look at conserving *Jonah and the Whale*.



Visit Texas Southern's Carroll Simms' collection and see their *Jonah and the Whale*.



Read through the Biblical story that inspired this work.