The University Gallery is pleased to present *Bridges and Boundaries Revisited: African Americans and American Jews* from September 11 through October 22, 1999. The exhibition is based upon one that was organized in 1992 by The Jewish Museum, New York, in collaboration with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The current version has been revised and updated by The Jewish Museum.

The exhibition began with a desire to explore the historical relationships among African Americans and American Jews in order to understand the roots of the current tension between the two groups. What became particularly clear during the development of this exhibition was that even before the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the interaction between the two factions had been marked by periods of cooperation as well as conflict, the result of different groups within each community coming into contact with one another in socially and politically charged situations. *Bridges and Boundaries Revisited* presents seven historical “places” where the paths of African Americans and American Jews have crossed in meaningful and complex ways during the course of the 20th century. Through the presentation of over 100 artifacts, photographs, documents, and art works, the exhibition explores the themes of ethnic identity, shared cultural beliefs, experiences of marginality, and visions of social justice. It also examines the interaction of the two groups in union activities and progressive and radical politics during the 1930s and 1940s as they struggled for worker solidarity along racial lines, and the involvement of some African Americans and American Jews in the courtroom and freedom marches of the 1950s and 1960s. The ideological battles and difficult issues of community control, affirmative action, and ethnic succession as well as cooperative organizing for social change in more recent decades concludes the exhibition’s compelling account, one which continues to have an enduring impact on American life. Relaying a story of importance to all Americans, *Bridges and Boundaries Revisited* reminds viewers to contemplate society’s most enduring dilemmas about how, and to what extent, ethnic groups can successfully interact, share power, and prosper in a multi-cultural nation. At the same time, it celebrates the courage and tenacity required to test and expand the boundaries of our democratic system.

Following its presentation in Amherst, the exhibition will begin a national tour and will travel to the National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis; the Joseph and Margaret Muscarelle Museum of Art, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg; and the Atlanta History Center, Atlanta among other venues. The original *Bridges and Boundaries*, organized in 1992, was curated by Gretchen Sullivan Sorin, Adina Back, and Julie Reiss.
The current exhibition was organized by Molly McGarry in consultation with the American Social History Project. It has been made possible in part by generous support from Metropolitan Life Foundation.

An opening reception for the exhibition will be held on Friday, September 17 from 4 to 7 p.m. in the new atrium of the Fine Arts Center, and all are invited to attend. The University Gallery, located on the lower level of the Fine Arts Center, is open Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m. The Gallery is also open during evening performances held in the Concert Hall of the Fine Arts Center. For more information, please call (413) 545-3670.