

Smith, Hughie-Lee (1915-1999)  
Eustis, Florida

#### EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- Cleveland School of Arts, BA-Wayne State University
- Influenced by Surrealist artist-De Chirico, tonal values and chiaroscuro of Renaissance artists.

#### BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Texture, intensity, introspection, loneliness. Sets up juxtapositions-light/dark, images of decay/optimism, motion/stillness, etc. 1-3 figures in open space but seem to be unaware of surroundings or other's presence.
- Called a Social Realist-Interested in showing social concerns especially urban decay-with precision of a surrealist. Quiet, powerful and often mysterious- leaves interpretation open to the viewer. Challenges viewer to examine the relationship between man and environment.
- Existentialist- we are alone and it is our responsibility to make hard personal choices about our existence.

**KIA/MI CONNECTION:** Lived in Detroit, off and on, between 1939-1958. Used decay of city in his paintings. Gave private art lessons and did portraits for the rich and famous in Detroit, including many in the Ford family.

**KIA WORK-***The Spectators*, oil on masonite, 1957

- Four young men in a group but isolated. Gazes are fixed outward, not towards each other. Strong lighting creates unreadable expressions. African-American youth further separated from the group by space, skin color and book. Books are important symbols for African Americans-education as a means to gain power, strength and "uplift" their race. Background color is subdued, bringing the young men forward.

