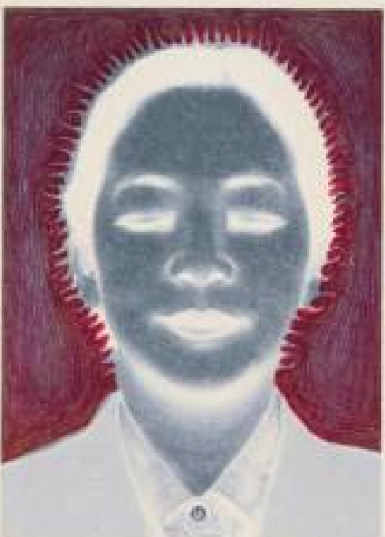




Metaphor + Metaphysics



Prints from the Brandywine Workshop and Archives, 1984–2007



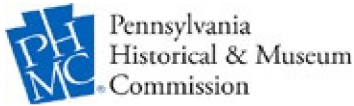
“Curiosity
about the unknown
has no boundaries.
Symbols, images, place, and cultures merge.
Time slips away.
The stars, the cards, the mystic vigil
may hold the answers.
By shifting the point of view
an inner spirit is released.
Free to create.”

—Betye Saar

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Cover image: Gayle Tanaka, *Face-Off*, 2000, offset lithograph, 30 x 22 inches.

An exhibition of prints from the Permanent Collection of Brandywine Workshop and Archives, 1984–2007. This exhibition was curated by Elena Pippolo and Liz Ramos.

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From the Curators

Metaphor + Metaphysics is an exhibition that explores how artists communicate meaning through the use of iconography as metaphor—conveying similar themes through differing imagery or, vice versa: using identical imagery to convey differing themes. The association to metaphysics lies in the artists' explorations of that which exists outside of objective experience.

Assembling objects and shapes—including body parts such as faces and limbs—into strange compositions, these artists attempt to communicate ubiquitous experiences in expressionistic ways:

Expressionism [is an] artistic style in which the artist seeks to depict not objective reality but rather the subjective emotions and responses that objects and events arouse within a person. The artist accomplishes this aim through distortion, exaggeration, primitivism, and fantasy and through the vivid, jarring, violent, or dynamic application of formal elements.¹

Metaphor + Metaphysics features ten prints, by ten artists, that present figures and objects that seem to have little to no structure or connection with physical reality. Similarly, the artists' senses of self seem to be explored and conveyed with a disregard of physical boundaries—each is abstracted into seeming chaos or confusion. Yet there is control as well, evidenced in the superb execution of each work, which testifies to the artists' and the printers' mastery of their visions and talents.

Exploring socially defined gender roles, Margo Humphrey's *Sunday Afternoon* (1990, figure 1) features a woman and a man—presumably two lovers—facing each other and surrounded by stereotypical imagery of what women and men would each want out of life and from one another. On the woman's hat, traditional matriarchal values such as love and nurturing are depicted through red roses representing romance; the figures of two children are placed within one flower's petals. Images of a house and fruit on the man's hat evoke traditional, patriarchal values and expectations: providing their families with food and shelter. The lightning bolt connecting their lips suggests the spark suggests the spark of romance and the power of communication. The lively *Sunday Afternoon* appears hopeful, perhaps even celebratory, in its depiction of an encounter between a woman and man.

Vuyile Voyiya's *Blissful Swing IV* (2007, figure 2) shares similarities to *Sunday Afternoon* in its representation of a relationship. Although a still image, Voyiya's rendering imparts an unmistakable sense of two people in movement—perhaps even defying gravity. *Blissful Swing IV* is installed opposite *Sunday Afternoon*, encouraging viewers to observe the strong craftsmanship evident in both works, as well as compare and contrast the stylistic and compositional choices. Notably, *Blissful Swing IV* presents an entirely black background containing black figures made legible only by small white dash-like markings. The print's complete absence of color is all the more obvious when contrasted with the highly polychromatic *Sunday Afternoon*.

In contrast: James Dupree's *Man, Mannequin, Manure* (1984, figure 3) depicts three disembodied heads on pikes, similar to the warlike imagery of decapitated heads skewered by pikes and displayed as warnings. Each head illustrates different roles that men occupy in society. Each figure appears contemptuous, with the facial expressions of the first figure (Man) and the third figure (Manure) appearing apathetic. The inclusion of headphones on Man and sunglasses on Manure communicates modernity. The middle figure (Mannequin), who appears "primitive" in comparison with the "modern" Man and Manure, is the only one to express strong emotion—his face appears akin to a snarling warrior who is screaming at the viewer. Although all three heads represent roles imposed upon men, the way the two "modern" men are depicted implies that the contemporary ideals of manhood are emotionally repressive and stringent.

Betye Saar's *Mystic Sky with Self-Portrait* (1992, figure 6) depicts a space disconnected from physical boundaries. Sharing iconography with *Sunday Afternoon* are symbols of hearts, hands, lightning bolts, and stars. A star, pair of lips, and die push against the physical boundaries of the paper—indeed, they are three-dimensional objects literally sprung forward from the printed image. The distended star, lips, and die floating offset above the page add depth, creating shadows on the surface below. Saar's inclusion of a stylized and partially visible self-portrait moves the focus of the piece away from the scattered symbols, instead associating them and their metaphorical meanings with the artist herself. While the lightning bolt in *Sunday Afternoon* evokes romance and communication, its counterpart in *Mystic Sky with Self-Portrait* suggests the power of creativity and fantasy.

There are three hands in *Metaphor + Metaphysics*: one in *Mystic Sky with Self-*

Portrait and two in Wayne Kimball's *A Right Hand...Having No Idea What the Left is Doing* (1995, figure 8). *Mystic Sky with Self-Portrait* suggests a search for understanding of the self, perhaps achieved by delving into the past and anticipating the future of one's life, with palm reading providing a visual representation of this desire. In *A Right Hand...*, the hands relate to a humorous memory held by the artist: Kimball printed images of gloves he found in a chemist magazine and spurred him to consider that, if he may on occasion mismatch his clothing, then a chemist may be just as likely to mismatch volatile chemicals. His print's title alludes to the biblical phrase, "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing."²

Vandorn Hinnant's diptych, *Duet for Carmen and Dizzy* (1995, figure 9), uses geometric shapes as representations of the titled musicians—Carmen McRae and John "Dizzy" Gillespie—to which it pays homage:

The left half refers to Dizzy Gillespie, horn player. The rectangular form and various lines represent "Dizzy" and the circle with spiraling lines represent the source and emanations of his musical talent.

The right half refers to Carmen McRae, vocalist. The open triangular shape represents Carmen singing, and the spiraling shape which meets the illuminated circle represents both the emanations and source of her talent. The spiraling pattern above the triangle speaks of the ecstasy experienced when one is in touch with, and living in, one's life's calling.³

Gayle Tanaka's *Face-Off* (2000, figure 10) presents repetition—and/or reiteration—in understanding and representing the self. Tanaka's nine repeated self-portraits display unique values and colors, some opaque and some transparent. Tanaka spent her residency at Brandywine Workshop and Archives exploring her identity as a Japanese American woman growing up in the Midwest and how so much of that identity is defined by her appearance. She has embellished her portrait as a reaction to being reduced to her looks in her life experiences. Breaking down the color values of her skin, Tanaka uses unnatural color to prove that the presentation and pigment of the individual does not add to or reduce one's value as a human being.

How can this superficial layer have acquired such importance and meaning, such profound and often tragic social and historical consequences? Red people, black people, brown people, yellow people, white people—find a person who is actually red, brown,

yellow, black, or white—most are shades of pink and brown. Yet, the flagrant inaccuracy of these classifications can in no way mitigate or lessen past and present pain and suffering caused by the hierarchical imposition of social structures based upon them.³

Evident in the works chosen are facets of universal human experiences—themes of strength and suffering, love and death, and the tension between one’s own internal concept of their identity and the roles and expectations imposed upon them by society. These themes—experienced ubiquitously, even universally, yet in such extremely varying ways—are communicated visually by the artists using metaphoric symbols, and with a sense of the metaphysical, to explore and share with viewers experiences and insights drawn from the artists’ lives, from what they observe in the world, and the glimmerings of what may exist beyond.

1. Encyclopedia Britannica, "Expressionism," <https://www.britannica.com/art/Expressionism>, accessed 9-30-2022.

2. Matthew 6:3

3. Brandywine Workshop and Archives, *Duet for Carmen and Dizzy*, <https://artura.org/Detail/title/16181>, accessed 9-29-2022.

4. Brandywine Workshop and Archives, *Face-Off*, <https://artura.org/Detail/title/16163>, accessed 9-29-2022.

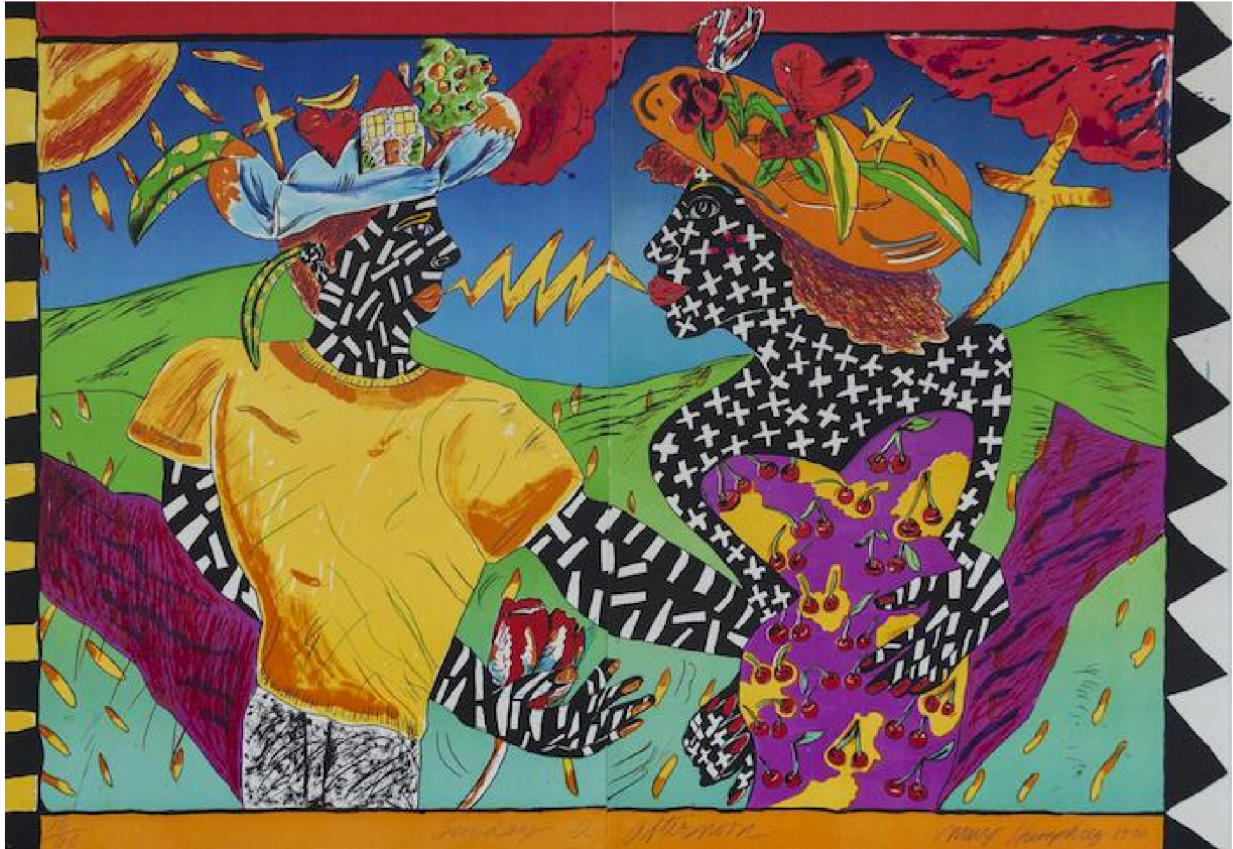


Figure 1 : Margo Humphrey, *Sunday Afternoon*, 1990, offset lithograph,
28 3/4 x 42 inches



Figure 2 : Vuyile Voyiya, *Blissful Swing IV*, 2007, offset lithograph, 30 x 34 inches



Figure 3 : James Dupree, *Man, Mannequin, Manure*, 1984, offset lithograph, 22 1/4 x 30 inches



Figure 4 : Hughie Lee-Smith, *Actress*, 1993, offset lithograph, 29 x 22 inches

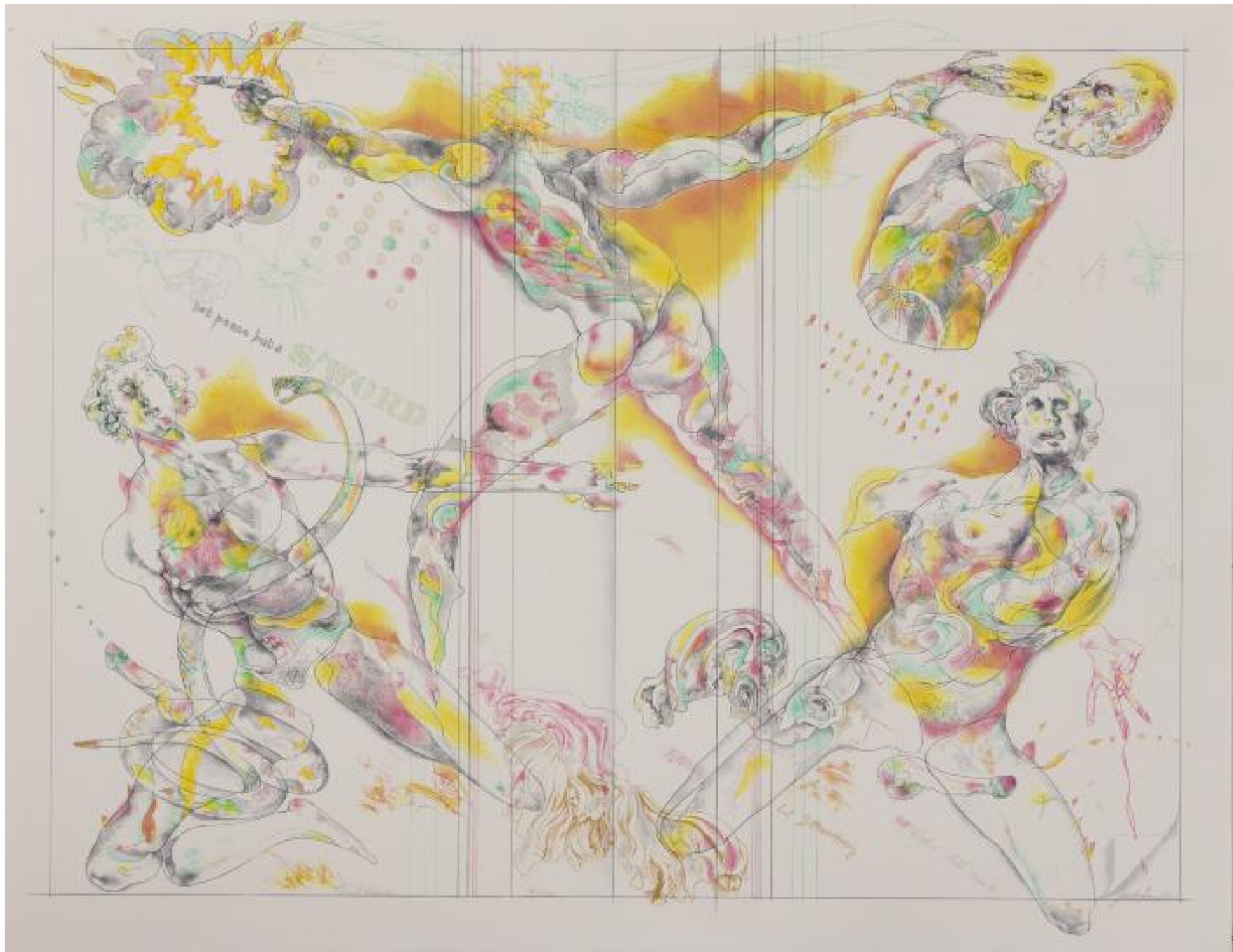


Figure 5 : Jacob Landau, *Third Vision*, 1985, offset lithograph,
22 1/2 x 28 1/2 inches



Figure 6 : Betye Saar, *Mystic Sky with Self-Portrait*, 1992, offset lithograph, 21 1/2 x 23 1/4 inches



Figure 7 : Fred Wessel, *Aquarium Renaissance*, 1984, offset lithograph,
22 1/2 x 30 inches



Figure 8 : Wayne Kimball, *A Right Hand...Having No Idea What the Left is Doing*, 1995, offset lithograph, 16 x 25 inches

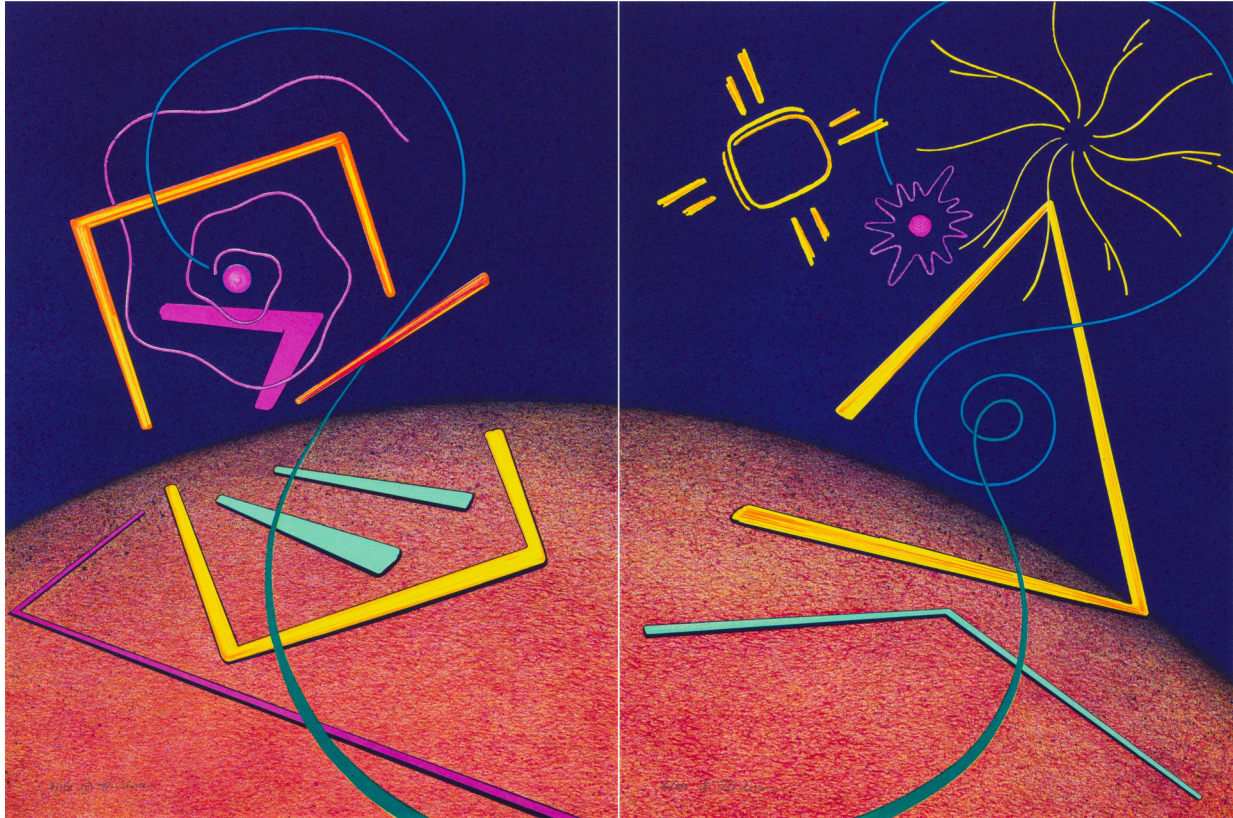


Figure 9 : Vandorn Hinnant, *Duet for Carmen and Dizzy*, 1995, offset lithograph, 19 1/2 x 14 1/2 inches

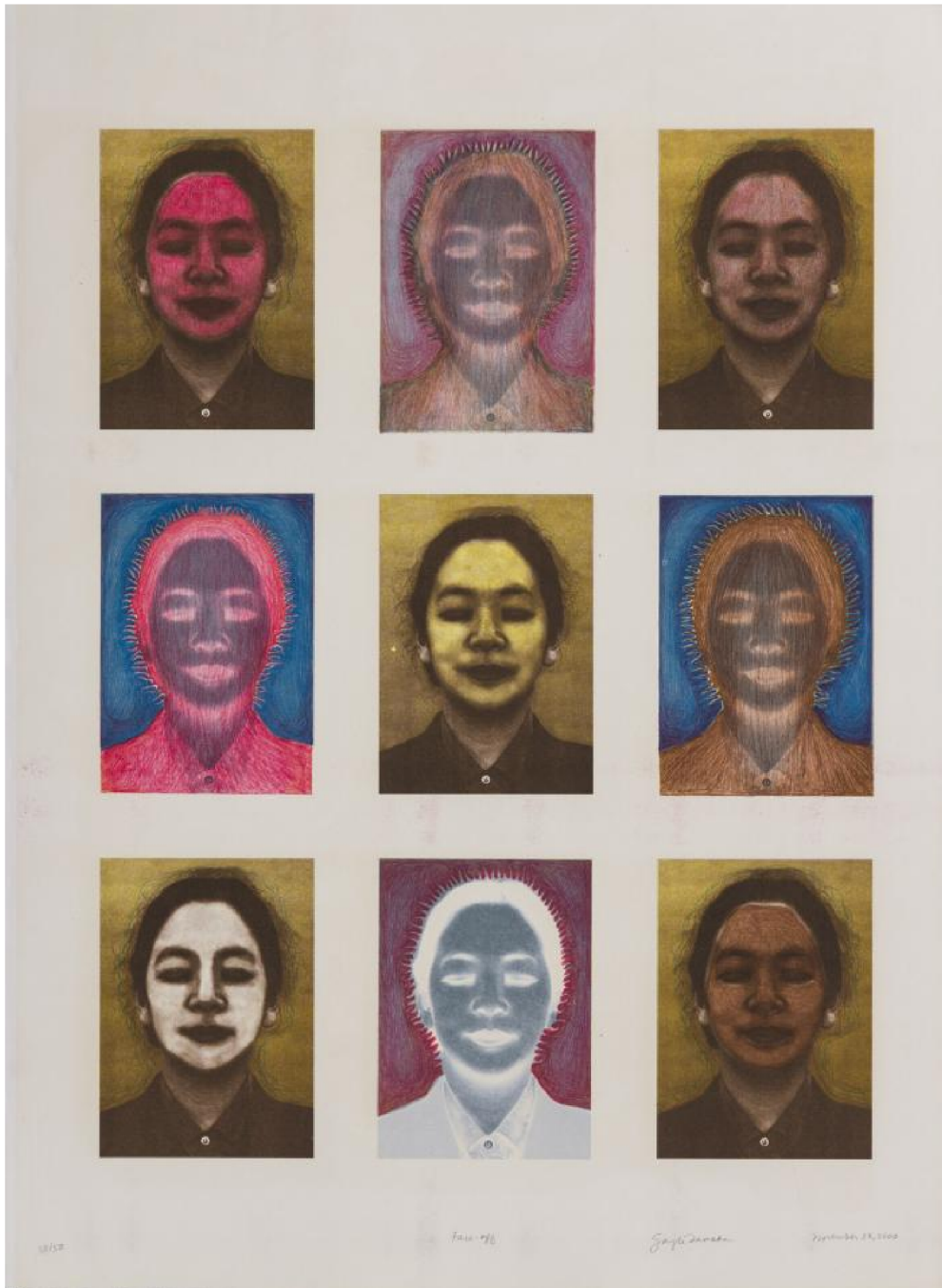


Figure 10 : Gayle Tanaka, *Face-Off*, 2000, offset lithograph, 30 x 22 inches

Checklist

James Dupree
Man, Mannequin, Manure, 1984
Offset lithograph
22 1/4 x 30 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Vandorn Hinnant
Duet for Carmen and Dizzy, 1995
Offset lithograph
19 1/2 x 14 1/2 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Margo Humphrey
Sunday Afternoon, 1990
Offset lithograph, color pencil drawing, serigraph
28 3/4 x 42 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Wayne Kimball
A Right Hand...Having No Idea What the Left is Doing, 1995
Offset lithograph
16 x 25 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Jacob Landau
Third Vision, 1985
Offset lithograph
22 x 28 1/2 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Hughie Lee-Smith
Actress, 1993
Offset lithograph
29 x 22 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Betye Saar
Mystic Sky with Self-Portrait, 1992
Offset lithograph, collage, construction paper
21 1/2 x 23 1/4 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Gayle Tanaka
Face-Off, 2000
Offset lithograph
30 x 22 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Vuyile Voyiya
Blissful Swing IV, 2007
Offset lithograph
30 x 34 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Fred Wessel
Aquarium Renaissance, 1984
Offset lithograph
22 1/2 x 30 inches
Printed by Brandywine Workshop and Archives

Artist Biographies

James Dupree

African American, b. 1950

Born in Pittsburgh, PA, painter, muralist, and printmaker James Dupree earned his BFA from Columbus College of Art + Design, Ohio; attended Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA), Philadelphia; and in 1977 he was one of the first African American graduates of the University of Pennsylvania's MFA program. His work can be found in the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and PAFA. He has a studio in West Philadelphia and directs the Dupree Gallery in South Philadelphia.

Vandorn Hinnant

African American, b. 1953

Vandorn Hinnant has a 40-plus year history of public exhibitions; he continues to develop work within the mainstream parameters of modernist abstraction. Drawing is at the heart of his practice. Since 2000, his work has become more reliant upon the principles of Sacred Geometry, which ascribes symbolic and sacred meanings to certain geometric shapes and proportions. By focusing on nonrepresentational subject matter and harmoniously balanced shapes and colors, Hinnant creates works that hold a conceptual meaning at the convergence of science and studies in consciousness. As he has written, his two-dimensional work can be described as "a refined synthesis of Abstract Expressionist painting and Sacred Geometry drawings."

Hinnant grew up in Greensboro, NC. He earned his BA at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, and studied visual art University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

Margo Humphrey

African American, b. 1942

Margo Humphrey is a painter, printmaker, and arts educator from Oakland, CA. She received a BFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts (now California College of the Arts), Oakland, in printmaking and an MFA from Stanford University, CA, in 1974. She creates lithographs, monoprints, woodcuts, etchings, and drawings that are known for their contemporary style, expressive forms, vibrant colors, layering, and unbound composition.

Wayne Kimball

American, b. 1943

Born in Salt Lake City, UT, Wayne Kimball Jr. holds a BA from the College of Southern Utah, Cedar City, and an MFA from the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Kimball is certified as a master printer from the Tamarind Institute at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. He has had more than 40 solo exhibitions at various galleries, museums, and educational institutions. He has also exhibited at more than 250 regional, national, and international juried and invitational shows. His work can be found in more than 55 permanent institutional collections.

Jacob Landau

American, 1917–2001

Printmaker, painter, humanist, and teacher Jacob Landau was born in Philadelphia. His art explores essential themes—human existence and morality—with insight, passion and, sometimes, indignance. Landau attended Philadelphia College of Art (now University of the Arts); The New School for Social Research, New York City; and Académie Julian and Académie de la Grande Chaumière, Paris.

Landau received numerous awards and grants from organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ford Foundation, as well as fellowships from the Tamarind Institute and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. His work has been exhibited extensively in Europe, Mexico, South America, and throughout the United States in more than 30 solo and 200 regional and national group shows.

Landau taught at the Philadelphia College of Art and later served as a professor at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, for 20 years. In 1974 he was elected into the National Academy of Design as an associate member and became a full National Academician in 1979. Landau lived and practiced his art in Roosevelt, New Jersey.

Hughie Lee-Smith

African American, 1915–1999

Born in Eustis, FL, painter, printmaker, and dancer Hughie Lee-Smith attended classes at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Institute of Art, and John Huntington Polytechnic Institute, Cleveland, OH; and the Art School of the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts (now the College for Creatives Studies), Detroit, MI. He earned a BA from Wayne State University, Detroit.

In 1963, Lee-Smith became an associate member of the National Academy of Design, the academy's second Black member after Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859–1937). His works can be found in public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York City; Smithsonian American Art Museum and Howard University, Washington, DC; Detroit Institute of Arts, MI; San Diego Museum of Art, CA; and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.

Betye Saar

African American, b. 1926

Betye Saar is a printmaker, sculptor, and collage and assemblage artist born in Los Angeles, CA. She earned a BA from the University of California, Los Angeles, and

pursued graduate studies at California State University, Long Beach; California State University, Northridge; and the American Film Institute, Los Angeles. Saar lives and works in Los Angeles. The Getty Museum's Getty Research Initiative has acquired Saar's career archives as part of a major initiative to collect, study, and disseminate African American art history.

Gayle Tanaka

Asian American, b. 1953

Artist and printmaker Gayle Tanaka earned her BFA in painting from the University of Hawaii and an MFA in printmaking from San Francisco State University. Her awards and residencies include a BCAT/Rotunda Gallery Artists' Residency in Brooklyn, New York City; Knight Foundation Visiting Artist Fellowship at Brandywine Workshop and Archives, Philadelphia; Anchor Graphics artist residency, Chicago; Puffin Foundation Grant Award; and a Kala Fellowship Award, Berkeley, CA.

Vuyile Voyiya

South African, b. 1961

Vuyile Voyiya is a printmaker born in Langa, a township near Cape Town, South Africa. He earned his BFA from the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town. Voyiya has won awards including Grassroots Year of the Youth Art Award in Cape Town and the Matt Andersson Art Award in Sweden, and an international Visiting Artist Residency at Brandywine Workshop and Archives, Philadelphia.

Fred Wessel

Italian American, b. 1946

Fred Wessel was born in New York City. He earned his BFA from Syracuse University, NY; his MFA from University of Massachusetts, Amherst; and studied at Pratt Graphic Art Center, New York City. He is professor emeritus at the Hartford Art School of the University of Hartford, CT.

About the Curators

Elena Pippolo, Content and Collections Management Assistant, aids with the preservation of the collection. From large-scale tasks such as rehousing to the meticulous work of condition reporting, she assists with assessing the needs of the collection, providing archival standards of care and documentation, and researches and records data within the institution's Digital Asset Management System (DAMS).

Elena is an art history student at Drexel University, recently relocated to Philadelphia from Houston, TX. In studying art history, she hopes to examine works of art through the lenses of their historical and cultural context. Elena joined BWA as part of the Drexel co-op program in March 2022.

ELENA PIPPOLO



ELENA PIPPOLO

LIZ RAMOS



LIZ RAMOS

Liz Ramos, Collections and Social Media Intern, assists with inventorying the collection, researching and updating artist records in the Artura.org research database, designing and writing social media posts for featured events, and assisting with curatorial tasks. She recently took up the role of BWA's Social Media Coordinator.

Prior to moving to Philadelphia three years ago, Liz had minimal exposure to the art world. Having relocated to attend the University of Arts, Liz is now a full-time fine arts student with a painting emphasis; a part-time intern at BWA through the Studio Institute's Art Intern partnership; and a practiced muralist, currently working with Hagopian Arts in Philadelphia and, previously, with Promise Neighborhoods in creating a large-scale mural in Allentown, PA.