

# Gallery & Studio

## arts journal

galleryand.studio

Winter 2022

Vol. 3, No. 2



**Personal Essays**

**Interviews**

**Film & Photography**

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**Museums & Galleries**

# Gallery&Studio arts journal

## Valentine's Day

The origin of Valentine's Day is uncertain, but many credit St. Valentine of Rome, who was jailed for conducting marriage ceremonies in secret against Emperor Claudius II who banned weddings, thinking that unwed young men made better soldiers. A story is told that St. Valentine fell in love with the jailor's daughter and sent her a love letter before he was put to death, signing it "from your Valentine." St. Valentine's Day was established in 496 as February 14th.

Geoffrey Chaucer, the English poet and author best known for the *Canterbury Tales*, is credited with setting Valentine's Day as the day for lovers, in his poem Parliament of Fowles, in which he states that this is the time of year that birds go in search of mates. He also mentions red roses in this poem—sealing the fate of the flower to be forever linked with love. Interestingly Chaucer was an early proponent of human rights, women's rights and the freedom of choice which was not the prevailing ideology of the 1380s.

The heart shape has been used as a decorative design from ancient times, although perhaps more connected with ivy, fig leaves and water lily leaves. The earliest known occasion for the heart shape to be used to indicate love was in Le Roman de la poire, a French manuscript of the 1250s, where a young woman bites into a pear creating the heart shape, and gifts it to her young man kneeling at her feet.

The first Valentine's Day cards which were handmade were created in England in the 1700s with printed version appearing at the end of that century. In 1849 Elizabeth Howland started a line of hand made Valentine's Day cards, inspired by one that she received from England. She set up a company staffed by local women and became the biggest supplier of cards nationwide.

In the contemporary fine art world, Jim Dine has claimed the heart as one of his major motifs. He considers the act of creating art, a form of love, and the hearts have become part of his "vocabulary of feelings."

We send our best wishes to you our readers with this issue and our Valentine's heart.

—The Editors

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## Gallery&Studio arts journal

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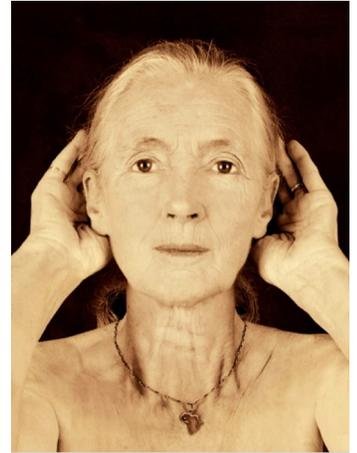


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# Richard Pitts: Rebel *With* a Cause

by Marina Hadley



*Richard Pitts with Sculptures*

Drive along the meandering roads of Connecticut, deep in the forested landscape, crest over a little hill, and you will find nestled in a dip a beautifully restored white clapboard colonial house bracketed by several statuesque metal sculptures in its grounds. This is amArtHouse, Artur Matuszewski's new contemporary art gallery, cleverly disguised within a historic building that has stood there since 1755.

The creator of the eye-catching sculptures is Richard Pitts and within the gallery is a portfolio collection of his artwork. This mini-retrospective of Pitts' work includes paintings, collages, print-work, sculptures, wall sculptures and three-dimensional paintings.

The art of Richard Pitts is an Experience. This is not the hyperbole of 'art-speak' but the genuine intent of the artist and for many viewers, how they encounter his work. Pitts

talks of the Energy of creation. "The creative process has an energy which is automatically contagious to anybody looking at it, which should in turn spur them onto their own energy".

It is why he is always encouraging people to see art 'in the flesh'. As a professor of Fine Art, at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) he would explain to his students that looking at a photograph of a girlfriend or boyfriend is not as satisfying as being with them in person. "Looking at a Rembrandt online is a bit like looking at pornography, it's a poor substitute for the real thing. Go look at the REAL paintings!"

Pitts was encouraged by Mrs. McBride, his 3rd grade teacher, to create art in an effort to positively harness his boundless energy. She also started to teach him to paint on the weekends, with the support of his parents. This led him to the Newark

School of Fine and Industrial Arts where he met Reuben Kadish, his first mentor and lifelong friend. He then went to New York City where he graduated from the Pratt Institute and started a successful career in figurative art, including landscapes, with solo shows in well-respected New York galleries and covered by art critics such as John Russell, the chief art critic of the *New York Times*. He also started the First Street Gallery on the Bowery, an artists' collective, which still exists today, replacing the void created by the demise of the 10th Street galleries. Pitts was in the thick of this exciting, percolating, 1960s' New York art scene, absorbing the creative energy of the time. "New York was inspiring—it offered a cultural osmosis—you felt immediately energized—you could be anything you wanted to be."

He took that energy and created paintings which were his response to



*First Street Gallery on the Bowery, started 1968.*

the Masters of the past. However, he began to understand that looking at the landscape was colored by his own experience. It was not possible to recreate a facsimile of reality. Instead, he looked for his own visual equivalent, an exaggeration that eventually led to abstraction and the creation of a different reality. He realized that there were endless possibilities that he could bring into existence.

Pitts has always taught art as well as creating his own: at the New York Studio, the Pratt Studio, the Kansas Art Institute as the rebel New York figurative painter, the Studio School Paris and from 1974 at FIT. He found that teaching was a process of learning for himself. “I tried not to teach but to open doors. I encouraged (my students) to think freely in visual terms and have their own experiences; not relying on second-hand pre-packaged experiences.”

At FIT he was a full professor of fine art and print making —the latter a link back to his mother and great aunt who ran the first Spanish newspaper in NJ, where Pitts spent his youth helping out. In his personal art he also spent some time developing his skills in print making.

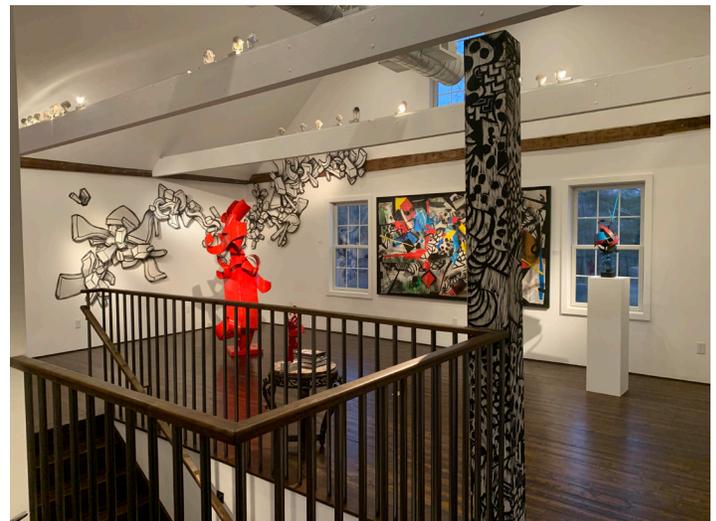
This evolved into wooden totems wrapped in his print work. Installations of these totems became a regiment of tall wooden posts, dressed in individual organic designs. The totems branched off to become wall sculptures. Wooden forms layered, some painted in bright colors, some in black and others covered in prints, all bubbling out from some eternal, internal source. Many of his sculptures have an unpolished finish which adds to the vibrancy and ‘in-progress’ feel to them without feeling unfinished.

Always looking to create anew and inspired by his previous creations, Pitts started working on steel and then aluminum sculptures, both small and large with brushed metal finishes or coated in black or vibrant colors. These static objects somehow convey movement and energy. They are in essence the visualization of verbs. The viewer does not just see his work, but experiences them, gaining inspiration and the energy to create their own.

Pitts talks about art being an “untranslatable” language “you work within that, speaking visually.” “Art is always trying to expand your reality and broaden your consciousness.” He was particularly struck by Jean Héliou, the modernist French painter who said to one of his students “only when you exhaust all your powers of reason, do you have a chance of entering the zone of art.” Pitts lives these words.

Recently he has started to create collages utilizing older works including visual journals that he used to draw in while he was stationed in Germany during the Vietnam War. The collages are intimate and warm, and despite being made up of fragmented memories and works, they have a cohesion that pulses with energy and storytelling.

The upper floor of the amArtHouse gallery is devoted to the work of Richard Pitts. The collection includes many examples of the different styles of work that he has created to date, showing the dynamically progressive nature of his work. Pitts continues to evolve his work, stating that “you are only as good as the challenge created by the last work.” He is always looking for new experiences and the growth achieved by meeting these new challenges. “Art is not made in a vacuum. It takes



*amArtHouse; Richard Pitts collection*

many people to make a culture —as an artist, it is your obligation to get in there and be a part of that.” Pitts more than fulfills this obligation, creating art that compassionately connects to the viewer, evoking positivity and hope —the expectation of good. Go take a look at the real artwork yourselves! G&S

richardpitts.com  
amarthouse.com

# Ron Scott: Writer and Witness

by Roger Parris

In his short story, *Sonny's Blues*, referring to musicians and their music, James Baldwin wrote "What we mainly hear are personal, private vanishing evocations but the man who creates the music is hearing something else, is dealing with the roar rising from the void and imposing order on it as it hits the air."

Ron Scott is a writer and dedicated witness to this musical phenomenon Baldwin describes. He reviews concerts, club performances and interviews musicians.

He was writer and editor for the Community Works exhibit, *Harlem Is...Music*, exhibited at the Lincoln Center for The Performing Arts and the Museum of New York. He has lectured at the City University of New York, Howard University and University School of the Arts in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is a member of the Jazz Journalists Association, Harlem Writers Guild and National Writers Union.

We met at a Harlem restaurant and concluded the interview on the phone. These are edited excerpts from our conversations:

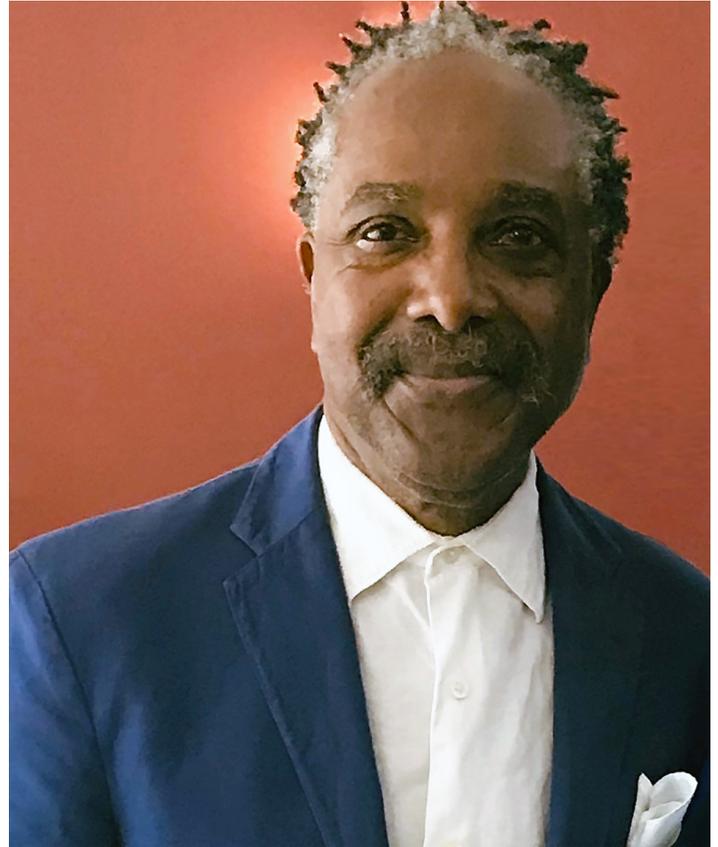
**Roger:** You've covered the New York jazz scene extensively over the years. Do you describe yourself as a jazz journalist?

**Ron:** A writer. I cover all the arts, Broadway, Off Broadway. I've interviewed Ismael Reed, Woodie King. During the pandemic I was writing social commentary in my column, *Jazz Notes*, in the *Amsterdam News*.

**Roger:** What attracts you to writing about jazz?

**Ron:** The music. My first records were Cozy Cole and Ahmad Jamal's *Poinciana*. Back then we listened to our parent's music which was Ella, Dakota, Errol Garner, then rock, Motown and jazz. I used to help musicians carry their equipment into the Filmore East and get into the concerts for free. I got deeper involved in jazz when I attended Florida A&M. The New York students were hip to jazz. One of the women I knew was going with Lee Morgan. I don't know what young folks listen to today.

**Roger:** Willard Jenkins, A. B. Spellman and Greg Tate who recently died come to mind when I think about African American writers who have covered



Ron Scott

the jazz scene. Who are some of the writers who have influenced you?

**Ron:** Amiri Baraka, Greg Tate, Stanley Crouch. I also was influenced by Wayne Robbins and Nat Hentoff. All of them wrote for the *Village Voice*.

**Roger:** Jenkins has conducted a series of conversations which he calls "Ain't But A Few Of Us." Why are there so few African American writers writing about jazz?

**Ron:** Like everything, we're not in charge. John Murph is the only African American writing for *Downbeat* and *JazzTimes*. Greg Tate wrote for various publications. He knew how to put it together.

**Roger:** You reviewed the extremely successful opera *Fire Shut Up in my Bones*. The music was composed by Terence Blanchard, an African American composer.

This was the Met's first opera by a Black composer. What did you come away with from that experience?

**Ron:** I think it was 138 years of non-inclusion. It was an opportunity to interview Terence. I watched him come up with Art Blakey and now progress to a world stage. Terence said openly, "He is the first Black but not the first qualified." The highlight for me is what it meant to America. Black people fight different battles due to racism including non-inclusion. Now with this opera it brings us to the party. The Met has committed to producing the Black operas, *Champion* and *X, the Life and Times of Malcolm X*.

**Roger:** Do you see young emerging writers interested in careers writing about jazz?

**Ron:** I do. Not a lot. There is a young Sister, Jordannah Elizabeth and another Sister, Shannon J. Effinger. What I like is they're covering jazz and other music. I mentioned Jordannah in my column last week.

**Roger:** Is it essential for writers covering the music scene to know the basic rudiments of music?

**Ron:** No. Very few writers know rudiments of music. They should know the history of Black music. Know folks like Thomas Dorsey, the call and response of the Black church. It's connected to what jazz musicians play today and often white writers don't make those connections. Thelonious Monk learned music in church.

**Roger:** Jazz Masters Jimmy Heath



*Ron Scott*

and Slide Hampton recently died. Do you find their musical legacies being carried on by younger musicians?

**Ron:** We also lost Barry Harris and Randy Weston. All the young Brothers are carrying on the tradition but trying to get their own sound. Donald Harrison was a mentor to Biggie Smalls.

**Roger:** You are a member of the Harlem Writers Guild founded by John Killens. They recently celebrated their 70th anniversary. How has being a member influenced your writing?

**Ron:** It's been incredible. The Guild is like a family. You read your work and the feedback is constructive. You don't feel like they're beating you up. Group of

Black writers honoring ancestors. It's a platform to make you feel comfortable.

**Roger:** You've interviewed so many musicians. What others would you like to interview?

**Ron:** Sonny Rollins, Benny Golson. If it wasn't for musicians I wouldn't have this job. I have a good relationship with them because I'm one of the few Black writers writing about jazz. I have to thank Mary Lopez who gave me my first writing gig at the New York Voice and LaVerne Terry Kennedy who gave me my first opportunity writing bio's and liner notes at Epic Records. *G&S*

# In The Making of a Painting

by Sharon Wybrants



*"Endangered Tigers," 9½ x 16 feet, oil on canvas, begun in November of 2019. In progress in December of 2021.*

About five years ago I became obsessed with a painting I had always loved, Théodore Géricault's *The Raft of the Medusa*. The painting is 16 by 23½ feet. The subject of the painting is a shipwreck where the survivors were brought to hopelessness and beyond by their ordeal of fighting for their lives on a raft in the Atlantic, until they spotted a ship and were eventually rescued. Only fifteen of them were still alive. I met this painting in 1967 when my first husband and I traveled in Europe, and it struck me to the core. You experience the painting as if it were a film because you walk along it... it is not moving, but you are moving. It is heart breaking and yet hopeful. Composed in two overlapping triangles, the one on the right is optimistic, the one on the left decimating. I never forgot this masterpiece. In 2006 when I had a fellowship to paint in Italy for six weeks, I made my pilgrimage again to Paris, to the Louvre, where this phenomenon

lives. It has changed my life.

That was a long time ago and I've never forgotten the impact of Géricault having used a current event, a newspaper story of his time, as inspiration to create a profoundly universal statement about suffering, and the overcoming of suffering with hope.

Many years later, when we were experiencing the horrors of the Syrian war in the media, I decided that I had to do something. Since I have no money to send and am too old to fight a war, I knew I had to paint about the war. With the help of two friends, I stretched a 9½ by 16 foot canvas on the wall of my studio. I Gessoed it three times, sanding it in between each layer. I was going to paint about the Syrian refugees, as an homage to *The Raft of the Medusa*. I researched images for a year and made many drawings for the painting, but it was going to involve a lot of blood and violence. I have three grandchildren who stay with me quite often, and at that time they were around five years old. I

talked about it with them, and they were going to pose for the children in the painting. I had a number of other people who promised to pose for the painting. But, in the end I couldn't do it. I couldn't have the children witness that slaughter up close.

After the decision, I was a bit lost. I had to ask myself, "what is most important to me?" I realized that it is our planet itself. If we continue to trash our world then we won't have any place to live, and nothing else is really going to matter too much.

I'm not a painter of planets. I paint people. I paint self-portraits because I'm really just trying to figure out what it means to be a human being, so staring into my own eyes in the mirror is a useful place to start. It keeps me on track and has helped me to understand who I am, and where I am in the greater scheme of things, and through that to better understand other people. But I do love to paint and draw other people, even though I often get a lot of

flak because I can only paint what I see, and sometimes that isn't how the other person sees themselves. For my whole life I have only painted from life. I've always said that painting from a photograph doesn't give me enough information. The magic of translating three-dimensional space onto a two-dimensional plane is what turns me on.

And, I really love tigers. I first fell in love with a Siberian tiger at the San Diego Zoo in the mid 1980's, and I drew him until they kicked me out. He was behind a very thick piece of glass, sleeping in his cave. His head was around eighteen inches wide, and his body stretched out to around twelve feet long. He was only a foot and a half away from me as I sat on the floor drawing, and he would wake up periodically and stare into my eyes. He was the most magnificent creature I have ever experienced, and I never forgot him. I've done a lot of self-portraits with tigers since then.

I became aware that this painting was going to be about the fact that the Sumatran tigers who live in the Sumatran Rainforest are so endangered that there are possibly only five hundred of them left in the wild, and their habitat is decreasing, being erased by the moment, to make toilet paper and palm oil for cookies and chips. So, I had to make a painting about the tigers. But, how do you get hope into this equation? Unlike in *The Raft of the Medusa*, there isn't going to be a ship appearing on the horizon!

My grandson had the idea. I was still planning for my three grandchildren to be in the painting. My grandson said that they should each be carrying a tiger cub. So that's what we did. They each got to choose the tiger cub they wanted to carry. I'm sitting in the middle, and I'm holding a paintbrush, and I'm painting the viewer, because this painting is really about you, the viewer. What are *you* going to do about this? What are *we* going to do about this? But, I'm trying to do something! And my grandchildren and I are all looking at the viewer, and I'm sitting with my arm around a big Siberian tiger. And, I had a roommate for the last couple of years, a good friend who is a magnificent specimen of a man, and he agreed to pose.

I've been working on this painting for a couple of years, since November of 2019, and it will take quite a few more months before it will be complete, but I have been envisioning that this spring, or at least by summer, hopefully the coronavirus will give us a break, and I can start to invite people to come and see the painting. A lot of people have been supporting me in this project, from near and far, as I've worked on it all through the pandemic. I've even sent images of it in all the stages of progress to a few select people who I can trust not to tell me how I can fix it!

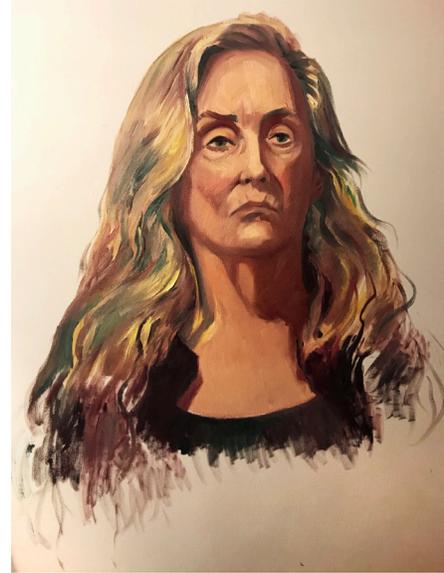
My process is spiritual, and it takes as much time as it takes. I've been a working artist for seventy-four years because I've known that I was an artist since I was four. I never wanted to do anything else. I was selling my paintings on our brownstone steps when I was five. And now I have seventy-eight years on the planet, so it's easy to think of myself

as a master, as I went through that stage. I think as a feminist it was very important to know that I wasn't a student anymore, especially a student of male teachers, that I had become a master. I have taught a lot of adults and mentored a lot of artists, but now in order to do this work, I needed to admit that I didn't know how to do it. It was very humbling.

As I said, I hate working from photographs. There just isn't anywhere nearly enough information. And, I'm working from a million photographs, from a hand, a wrist, an ear, a tiger cub, a leaf, a cloud. It's impossible, but I have to do it anyway! I became aware that it was a prayer state for me, a meditation. As the paint goes onto the canvas, one stroke at a time, I have to turn it entirely over to my higher power for guidance. That's been my experience of painting for a very long time. I believe you hone your craft, you study as hard as you can, you try to become as good in your field as possible, and then, when it's time to actually be involved in the creative miracle, you have to give it all up to a higher power, or at least that's what I have to do, and that's when the magic happens. That's when things surprise me and I can participate in a transcendent experience. Then when that happens, my viewer has a chance to experience something powerful, something way beyond anything I'm capable of. That's the way I have found painting to be for a long time, but this painting is different. Because I have to work from photographs and not living beings, I have to beg my higher power to breath life into this work. I have had to find a new level of humility. That has been a struggle. I cannot afford to be cocky for one second or the work begins to look cliché.

I've been very engaged in this project and I've become aware that, not only do the tigers have to come to life, but my grandchildren have to be specifically who they are, and of course they've changed a lot in the last two years, so I've had to try to keep up with that and it's challenging. But, it's coming along. I can't wait to share it, even as a work in progress. Wearing masks and trying to keep participation to a minimum at any one time, over time everyone can see it. It doesn't translate very well in digital images. Too much is lost in the change in scale. And cameras all distort. But that will be the only way most people will ever experience it, which makes me sad. Luckily, there has been interest in showing the painting in "the flesh" as soon as it is finished! G&S

©Sharon Wybrants, writing  
re: *Endangered Tigers painting*



*Self Portrait*

sharonwybrants.com

# DRIFT

## Basking in the Grace of Cinema

by Woody Sempliner



*Filmmaker & Bolex*

In DRIFT, filmmaker, Elizabeth Lowe, manages to envision a religion, people it with saints, perform its most primal ritual and lay at its altar visual offerings of her art. There is an irony here that may not be all that uncommon: the tribute she lays at the feet of her heroes, at least in the context of this film, outshines them. She is the blessed supplicant who, through worship, is beatified.

To watch DRIFT is to know that Lowe is an image maker. Her powerful electronic assemblages seduce the viewer, who is then drawn down an illuminative path of textual and visual commentary in homage to the art of,



*Eyes*

and belief in, Cinema. Like the great painters of the early Renaissance whose art had to serve a religious purpose, Lowe's work in DRIFT must serve an ulterior academic one: earning an MFA without compromising the film's value as art, at once viewable and informational. She succeeds by inventing a mode of devotional exposition that borrows from religious practice. While Fra. Angelico's masters were a god in a heaven and that god's earthly interlocutors, Lowe's, in DRIFT, are the cinema in its nascent, silent, intensely visual form and its earliest innovators, especially but not exclusively its women.

DRIFT is basically a silent film that has been technologically liberated. It is lushly soundtracked by Sound Designer, Calvert Cruz. Cruz's range of musical and practical sound supports with a graceful reserve the flow of Lowe's imagistic river. Into that river Lowe feeds a mélange of old and new media. She makes images with an assortment of film cameras, the kind that make pictures on the noble and fading medium of celluloid and processes these images with layerings of color and montage. The result is a form of technological homage to Lowe's pantheon of women who directed silent films in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For them, we may guess, the shapeshifting power in this 21st century woman's electronic toolbox would have been the stuff of



*Nun Guided Tryptic*

*LET MY SOUL DRIFT  
THROUGH PATTERNS AND  
PECULIARITIES.*

dreams. Meanwhile, Lowe seems to be reaching back in time in search of communion with her heroes from the primordial beginnings of cinema. And here, perhaps, in that tension between past and present, new and old lies the charm of this film: it is filmmaking's past, seen through, adorned and revered by youthful eyes.

To Antelope Island, that gem of Utah's off world beauty surrounded as it is by the mercury-like stillness of The Great Salt Lake, she brings a Bolex. This is the do-it-all camera through which passed much of the 16mm film that gave rise to the now ubiquitous term, "experimental." An art student with an idea for a film in 1961 was lucky to find the versatile Bolex and not an old WWII newsreel camera in the equipment closet next to the art department's dark room. Lowe uses it to make, in effect or in fact, a double exposure in which she chases down and beats herself to death with a baseball bat. It is arguable



*Roses & Head*

that the filmmaker performs this ritual act to illustrate her concept of death and resurrection through art or Cinema, the religion. By choosing to shoot it on film, with so many more modern tools available to her, Lowe extends the resurrective symbolism of her performance to the medium on which it is recorded.

An ornately framed, silent movie-style title card that reads, "DEATH ON CELLULOID," precedes the murder by self-cited above. Another furthers the life, death, resurrection analogy quoting film director, Robert Bresson, from his book, Notes on the Cinematograph,

"My movie is first born in my head, dies on paper; is resuscitated by the living persons and real objects I use, which

*AS I ENTER THE  
HOLIEST OF HOUSES,  
I SURRENDER ALL  
PRE-CONCEIVED NOTIONS  
OF CINEMA.*

are killed on film but, placed in a certain order and projected onto a screen, come to life again like flowers in water."

This textual thread — proclaiming, supplicating, provoking — weaves through the fabric of Lowe's visual tapestry in much the same way that title cards gave "voice" to actors and furthered story lines in the great silent movies, the great picture stories. DRIFT, by contrast, is more a travelogue. The place it invites you to explore is the mind of Elizabeth Lowe. G&S

DRIFT can be found online at: [www.framethink.org](http://www.framethink.org)

# Salon 94: A New Star for Museum Mile

by Bobbie Leigh





Steps away from the Guggenheim and minutes from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is Carnegie Hill's newest gallery. Salon 94 at 3 East 89th Street showcases contemporary cutting-edge art in a historic, landmarked setting. The building was constructed between 1913 and 1915 and designed by architect and designer Ogden Codman Jr, (1863-1951) for wealthy collector Archer M. Huntington (1870-1955).

Codman is best known today for co-authoring with Edith Wharton their influential *The Decoration of Houses* (1897). Huntington, a prominent philanthropist, established the Hispanic Society Museum & Library in New York City's Washington Heights. (Its current exhibition *Gilded Figures: Wood and Clay Made Flesh* has been universally admired.)

The Salon 94 Beaux-Arts building was owned by Huntington until 1940 when it was donated to the National Academy of Design. Gallerist Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn, who formerly had a gallery in her home on 94th Street, bought the landmarked

property in 2019 and restored it with an eye to historic accuracy. "Because Ogden Codman's architectural archives are preserved at Columbia University, our team was able to follow the original drawings," says Greenberg Rohatyn. "Working with architect Rafael Viñoly we celebrate that legacy while creating gallery spaces to feature boundary-pushing contemporary art."

At a time when cultural institutions are rethinking and reformulating their missions to take into account equity and inclusion, Rohatyn is a leader who has always looked at the margins. She has consistently been ahead of the curve showing the work of emerging female artists and artists of color. "It's my passion and my program," she says.

Salon 94 is diametrically the opposite to the more stark white box galleries that usually exhibit contemporary art. Here, expect the unexpected. Visitors enter the gallery through a marble and granite porte cochère with a restored herringbone brick paver floor. The second floor Stone Room is a stunning jewel with stately floor-to-ceiling windows,

Doric pilasters, stone walls and a magnificent checkerboard marble floor.

Restoring the Stone Room to its original glory was a painstaking process involving the removal of non-original paint, patching holes, and cleaning stone. "The only significant new gesture in this space are fluted sconces by Max Lamb along with contemporary art lighting," says Greenberg Rohatyn. The third floor Wood Room with its mahogany panels is another exciting space not-to-be missed along with the knockout bathroom on the first floor which boasts curvy cobalt-blue tiles from Japan.

A recent group exhibition featured Ruby Neri, Amani Lewis, Alexandre Diop, and Chioma Ebinama.

In the works are new shows featuring Shawanda Corbett, Daniel Hesidence and Celia Vasquez You (opens Jan 19, 2022). G&S

Salon 94 is open for in-person visits which can be arranged on the website [salon94.com](http://salon94.com).

# The Nabi Circle

by Dr. Bill Thierfelder

Pierre Bonnard



Maurice Denis



Félix Vallotton



Édouard Vuillard



Grandparents, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers-in-law, cousins, wives, children, patrons, friends, and pets: these are the constant cast of characters that inhabit the canvases and prints of a group of four artists who called themselves the Nabi Circle. Pierre Bonnard—arguably the most well-known of the four today—and his friends Maurice Denis, Félix Vallotton, and Édouard Vuillard adopted their name Nabi from the Hebrew word for “prophet”—Nebiiim—to reflect their intent to create a new school of art that made suggestion and sensation more important than the literal depiction of people, places, and things. They were ultimately part of the Symbolist Movement of the 1880s and 90s that also occurred in literature, music, and theater, a movement that sought to express a mystical and emotive understanding of the world around us.

Thanks to the Cleveland Museum of Art in conjunction with the Portland Art Museum, a current major retrospective—called *Private Lives*—reveals the complex nature of the Nabis’ work. (Several superb essays in the sumptuously illustrated exhibition catalogue focus on that complexity.) These four men used their own lives and family members as well as their homes and immediate surroundings as their subject matter; we get an autobiographical world that expresses universal depths of feeling, memory, nostalgia, joy, and melancholy.

The show is presented thematically,

with separate sections devoted to *The Intimate Interior*, *The Troubled Interior*, *Family Dining*, *Domestic Work*, *Landscapes*, and *Intimacies*, among others. As one moves through the nearly 190 prints, paintings, posters, and watercolors there is always a sense of closed-in spaces, but often to the point of suggesting claustrophobic confinement and rumbling tensions. We enter quiet interiors, watch families gathered around a dining room table, and smile at scenes of children with household pets in living rooms, gardens, and parks. What emerges as we promenade through the various exhibit rooms are works that evoke both joy and real-life strains, both the home-spun tragedies and the mysteries of day-to-day life.



Pierre Bonnard “*The Children’s Meal*” (1895) Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of David Allen Devrishian 1999.180.1

Pierre Bonnard’s *The Children’s Meal* from 1895—painted on cardboard and mounted on wood—is one of the

iconic pictures of the show. Measuring approximately 24 × 30 inches (59 × 74 cm), this work is similar in size to many other pieces—indeed, the intimacy of the Nabis’ world is reflected in the dimensions of their art. We are not given vast canvases or large posters; we are invited to enter confidential, personal spaces. This particular work shows Bonnard’s mother, daughter,



Pierre Bonnard “*The Lamp*” (1899) Collection of the Flint Institute of Arts, Flint Michigan Gift of the Whiting Foundation and Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Johnson 1977.25

and two grandsons all crowded around the dining room table, but it is the two children who dominate—one attempting to feed himself, the other regarding the viewer with a calm expression. The women’s faces are misty suggestions.

In *The Lamp*, Bonnard once again puts us around the family table, but this time with an ornate, suspended lamp dominating the picture. Bonnard adored animals, and cats were always



“Wallpaper”

welcome companions at —and on— his family table. In this 20 x 24 inch (54 x 61 cm) oil on board, a small tabby joins the artist’s mother, sister, and nephew under the golden light of the enormous brass chandelier, with the glass fuel reservoir reflecting the scene back to the viewer. The psychological familiarity of the scene is heightened by the dim lighting, with the food, the cat, the people, and the ornate lamp all crammed into a very small space.



Édouard Vuillard “Interior, Mother and Sister of the Artist” (1893) *The Museum of Modern Art, New York Gift of Saidie A. May 141.1934*

One of the other things that the curators of the show — Heather Brown (Cleveland Museum of Art) and Mary Chapin (Portland Art Museum)— also emphasize is the Nabi fascination with —obsession with?— the wallpaper designs of William Morris and others. To underscore that, many of the walls in the exhibit are covered with duplicates of the intricately patterned papers of the period that are also found

in Nabis’ paintings and prints.

One of the more unsettling uses of that wallpaper motif is found in Édouard Vuillard’s 1893 oil painting *Interior, Mother and Sister of the Artist*. This emotionally complex painting depicts the two women with whom he shared his home. Unlike the comfortable familiarity of Bonnard’s family groupings, this one suggests dis-ease and discord. Madame Vuillard dominates the scene, sitting imperiously, like a queen on a throne. His sister, Marie, barely fits in the canvas; she’s hunched and cowering against the wall, and the print of her dress and the pattern of the wallpaper seem to meld, giving the disquieting illusion that she’s melting into the wall itself, a victim of her mother’s dominance.

Not unlike Vuillard, Félix Vallotton also explored psychology and ambiguity within a close setting. In 1897, he produced a series of black and white woodcuts called *Intimacies* that presented extremely personal moments, usually between two people. One of those pieces is called *The Lie*; it’s only 7 x 9 inches (17 x 22 cm). The following year he created a similarly-sized oil version. Both depictions show a man and a woman sitting in an embrace on a couch. It appears that the woman —who wears a startling red dress in the painted rendering— is whispering something into the man’s



Félix Vallotton “The Lie” (1898) *The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Cone Collection, formed by Dr. Claribel Cone and Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore, Maryland. BMA 1950.298*



Maurice Denis “Little Girl in a Red Dress” (1897) *Private Collection*

ear. What’s “the lie” that she’s telling him? I’ll always love you... The child is yours... I promise to tell my husband... Like so many other Vallotton interiors, the nearly miniature woodcut and painting are awash in ambiguity and beg for the viewer’s interpretation.

There’s no ambiguity of mood in Maurice Denis’s *Little Girl in a Red Dress* (also known as *Child with Apron*). Here, Denis uses repetitive dashes of pink and red to describe both the flowers in the garden and the girl’s checkered dress. When the sister disappears into the wall in Vuillard’s *Interior*, it’s terrifying; in Denis’s portrait, when the little girl and her colorful dress seem to meld into the garden, it suggests a joyous, playful kinship between the child and Nature itself.

The four artists of the Nabi Circle created focused, personal images that weren’t intended to be realistic, recognizable portraits. Rather, the Nabis strove to capture feelings, including devotion, familial tension, and the transience of happiness and life itself. This exhibition allowed four talented friends to be in dialogue with one another. It was the great achievement of the curators who made it possible for us to be part of this deeply satisfying conversation. G&S

clevelandart.org  
portlandmuseum.org

# Joseph Shipley's Rockwood —A Suburban Villa

by Mary F. Holahan, Ph.D.

In 1850, Fanning's *Illustrated Gazetteer* of the United States, a popular compendium of American maps, statistics, and place descriptions, summarized Wilmington, Delaware:

...28 miles southwest of Philadelphia, and 70 miles northeast of Baltimore... The streets are broad and rectangular, and the houses, generally of brick, are many of them costly and beautiful. Wilmington has the usual number of public buildings, but the most interesting are the flour mills, to which it owes its celebrity... A large number of ships anchor at Wilmington, receiving and exporting the produce of the mills and manufactories in its vicinity...

About a year later, two miles from Wilmington's handsome homes, busy docks, and thriving industries, Joseph R. Shipley (1795-1867) began to oversee the construction of a mansion and gardens set in about 400 acres of gently-rolling parkland. Looking forward to retirement after a career abroad, he anticipated country-house leisure, exotic plants in his conservatory, and strolls among panoramic lawns and trees. Shipley imagined daily life in a home that harmonized with its



*Conservatory, Rockwood Park and Museum. 1851-1856. Wilmington, Delaware*

natural environment, and he chose a name that reflected the many native boulders on his sylvan estate: Rockwood. Shipley's aesthetic flair and meticulous planning ensured him a place in American architectural history. Rockwood is one of the earliest examples of the Rural Gothic Revival style and Gardenesque landscape design in the United States.

The Shipley family owned several lucrative flour mills along Delaware's Brandywine Creek. After an education that emphasized mathematics and commerce, Joseph spent three years mastering his own business skills in a cousin's firm. In 1819, he sailed to Liverpool as a merchant's agent. Six years later, he was a founding partner of Shipley, Welsh & Company, financiers of British-American trade, specializing in shipments of American cotton to the port of Liverpool. At the time, the United States supplied nearly 80% of the raw cotton, produced by slave labor, for England's textile industries. Shipley's career in trade and merchant banking prospered,

and in 1836, he became a partner in the firm known today as the London-based private bank Brown Shipley.

In the mid-1840s, wealthy British industrialists were building country houses—smaller than the ancestral castles of the aristocracy—close to the cities where they worked. Shipley rented such a home, called Wyncote, designed by architect George Williams, about four miles outside Liverpool. During a trip to Wilmington in 1847, and subsequently through written instructions to his nephew, Shipley purchased most of the acreage that would become Rockwood. He engaged Williams to design the 23-room mansion, its outbuildings, and the landscape using Wyncote as a model. In 1851, Shipley arrived in Wilmington with Williams' renderings. He hired local contractor Elisha Huxley to manage construction of the Rockwood estate, which was completed in 1857. Before he returned to Wilmington, Shipley toured France and Italy, where he collected fine and decorative works of art. Over a century of descendants



*Rockwood Park and Museum. 1851-1856. Wilmington, Delaware*



*South Facade, Rockwood Park and Museum. 1851-1856.  
Wilmington, Delaware*

enriched the interior of the home with their own collections.

Like Wyncote, Rockwood is a Gothic Revival mansion. Gothic architecture (originally called the “French” style) evolved in France in the early 12th century, appeared in England soon after, and became the predominant pan-European mediaeval style. Many of its defining characteristics, including pointed arches, steeply pitched roofs, slender columns and towers, and elaborate decorative patterns became more and more pronounced (especially in cathedrals) before architects turned to ancient Greco-Roman models during the Renaissance. In 1550, the Florentine artist and writer Giorgio Vasari condemned “French” buildings as “Gothic,” meaning barbaric.

The mid-18th century Romantic movement in Great Britain kindled nostalgia for the national past. The Middle Ages in particular was seen as a golden age, free from the rationalism and mechanization of the modern era. As architects began to draw inspiration from Gothic-era castles and abbeys, they also honored the Romantic love of artistic freedom and created imaginative variants rather than reproductions. Williams’ south façade of Rockwood is an ingenious example. Different shapes, patterns, textures, and colors keep the eye moving. Three pointed-arch gables define the main roof line. The gable walls of the outer two are decorated with shapes and horizontal lines in wooden trim. The larger middle one features a central lancet form reminiscent of mediaeval stained-glass windows. Carvings and ornate finials embellish the three painted balustrades and railing between them. Slender tri-colored supporting columns feature even more ornamentation. Triple diamond-

shaped red brick chimneys have lighter stone bases and tops. The wall’s rough dark gray granite contrasts with smoother light gray cut-stone sections. These inventive details offer a sudden visual delight as visitors approach from the surrounding woods and fields. The long porch and large windows create an inside-outside space for a sociable or solitary experience in all seasons. According to Shipley’s friends, he loved English Romantic poetry. It’s easy to imagine him at Rockwood, enjoying the poets who were so enthralled by the wonder of nature.

Since rural settings combined Romanticism’s affinity for natural beauty with dreams of the nation’s grandiose past, landscape designers developed the Gardenesque style, a blending of wilderness and cultivated scenery. At Rockwood, shrub-lined paths ramble through sweeping lawns and stands of native and imported trees, and overlook dramatic views as far as the Delaware River. Carefully-tended gardens were scattered throughout the property. As international horticulture trade made exotic plants more available, conservatories became popular for country houses. With new plate-glass and cast-iron technologies, additions provided a seamless transition from home to countryside. Rockwood’s conservatory mirrors the decorative designs of the mansion, and is the only mid-19th century Gothic Revival one still standing in the United States.

By the time Rockwood was complete, American architects and landscape designers were beginning to emulate the British Gothic Revival and Gardenesque styles. But the August 1861 *Gardener’s Monthly* recognized Shipley’s forward-thinking taste in comments that hold true today:

[T]he magnificent place constructed and occupied by Joseph Shipley, Esq.... is the most splendid specimen of the English park-like style of landscape work that we have ever seen... We feel quite sure that there is nothing of the kind equal to it...

Shipley died in 1867. He never married, and his last descendant left the estate to an unnamed charity in 1972. New Castle County subsequently took charge, and since then professional staff and volunteers have restored Rockwood to its 19th century magnificence. G&S

More information: Romantic Rockwood: Gilbert T. Vincent, *Romantic Rockwood* (Cedar Tree Books, 1998), and Timothy J. Mullin, “Rockwood: Joseph Shipley’s English Estate in Brandywine Hundred, Delaware,” *Delaware History* 31 (Spring/Summer 2017): [http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc\\_fac\\_pub/1](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_fac_pub/1)

In 2009, the University of Delaware acquired Rockwood’s archives as a gift from New Castle County: <https://sites.udel.edu/rockwoodarchives/>

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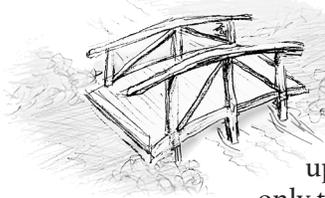
Rockwood Museum and Park: [rockwood.org](http://rockwood.org)

# Children of the Night

by Doug McKeown



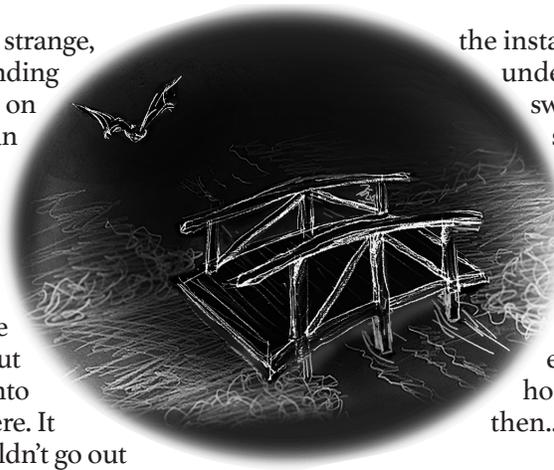
**M**ost summers when I was a kid we went to the Jersey Shore, and I always brought my makeup along because you never knew when a situation would present itself. But the summer I was eleven we took a trip instead to Glenora, near Watkins Glen by Lake Seneca in upstate New York. Glenora was a gothic place, wild, dark, rocky, and inhabited by a ragtag bunch of barefoot kids in calico and gingham—I swear, they were like nineteenth century farm kids. They didn't even have televisions. The house we stayed at was grand and old, set back in the trees, with a twenty-foot waterfall in the back yard. Decades later, after my mother died, I was on the phone with her friend, the lady of the house, elderly by then, and she said she'd never forget that summer. The day we arrived she went up to the guest room to unpack my little valise and found the only thing in it was an opera cape. Not even a bathing suit, she said. I guess she didn't notice the makeup kit.



That first morning I was sent by myself to the so-called beach by the lake. It wasn't sand, it was cold gray shale. As I sat shivering and skinny in a borrowed man's bathing suit that billowed around me like a parachute, some local kids came by, and we got to know each other. I remember they taught me to play spin-the-bottle, a game I had only heard about. Every time I spun it, it pointed at Steve, Nicky Peal's handsome boyfriend who was thirteen, and they all shouted, "Spin it again! Spin it again!" When it started to get dark and I had to go back to the house for supper, Nicky said to come out later, they'd be down by the creek. But I said no. I told her I was never allowed out...after sunset...

Beginning that night the kids in Glenora began to see things as soon as the

sun went down. One kid saw a strange, pale-faced person in black standing stock still in a clearing high up on the ridge above the lake. He ran to get another kid but when they came back, the clearing was empty. Nicky saw a cloaked form run behind the boathouse, and she chased after it—she was a tomboy, the only girl who wore denim—but when she turned the corner onto the dock there was nobody there. It got so the kids of Glenora wouldn't go out alone after dark anymore.



The last evening I was there, just before sunset, a bunch of them were standing together in the middle of the little wooden creek bridge, staring up the road toward a shadowy figure that had broken off from the larger shadows cast by enormous old growth trees that blocked out the sky.

It was dark at twilight in Glenora, heck, it was dark in Glenora at noon, and the gloom was getting gloomier by the minute. What the kids on the bridge saw coming down the road was a figure clad all in black with a white face and no eyebrows, and staring eyes limned black. No hair, maybe? Or just plastered down? Hard to tell. No lips! A thin red trickle at the corner of the mouth. Floating, gliding down the narrow road toward them. Drifting. (You see, the cape I kept closed, and it was just long enough to cover my sneakers but no longer, and I found if I didn't walk normally, bouncing, but kept on my toes, I could appear to be hovering just inches above the surface of the ground.)

As I came down, they began backing up together, up the road on the other side of the creek, up the hill to the top where the road wound around a rock face and disappeared from view. We moved steadily and silently in tandem, I coming down, they backing up, as if there were an invisible thread between us, like some Martha Graham ballet. And as I came slowly down to a stop in the middle of the little creek bridge, they came slowly up to a stop at the crest of the hill. And there we stood. For what seemed like minutes. It was so dark you almost couldn't see, but almost wasn't good enough. There was no fadeout, no blackout, no curtain to ring down. Nothing was happening. This wasn't any good, I had to do something fast—all the drama was seeping out of the situation.

So I reached down, grabbed the hem of my cape and jerked it up fast, with a FLAP!—my arms up, my fingers curled out like talons. And ... now, I would love to tell you how they reacted to this, if they jumped or if they gasped, but I never knew, I never saw. At that moment, on

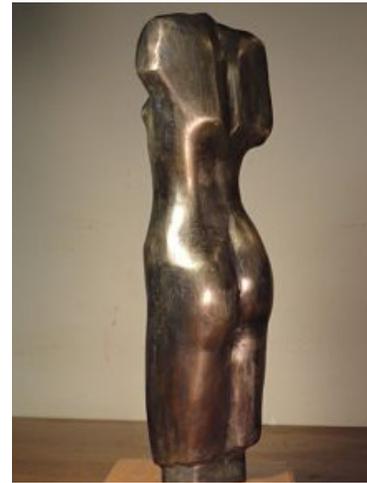
the instant following my sudden FLAP, out from under the bridge came bats—dozens of bats—swooping and flitting and filling the air. I just stood there staring at them in the dim light, staring in disbelief, as they swirled thick all around me. When I finally thought to look back up the hill, there was no one there. Not a soul. Whhhhist, all gone, out of there. So, I stood alone in the gathering dark because Glenora was very suddenly empty and silent. All the children had gone home except for me—well, except for us. And then...night fell. G&S

N.B. Adapted from a longer version of the story in the collection *Queer Stories for Boys: True Stories from the Gay Men's Storytelling Workshop*, Published by Thunder's Mouth Press © 2004 Douglas McKeown. G&S

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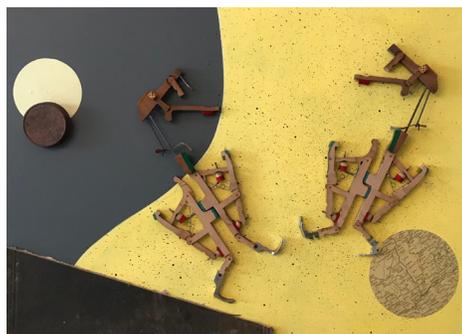
# Discovering Fragments, Uncovering Meaning

## The Art of Kiffi Diamond

by Mary F. Holahan, Ph.D.

**K**iffi Diamond is a visual storyteller. Her assemblages, rarely over 16 x 20 x 2", are witty, challenging, and unnerving, sometimes in the same piece. She distills the innovative principles described by Marcel Duchamp in his definition of the found object as an art form: selecting objects is a creative act, objects separated from their everyday use may become art, and a title imparts a new meaning or symbolism.

In choosing what she calls "old, authentic stuff"—manmade and natural—ranging from bits of machinery to magazine cut-outs to glass shards, Diamond relies on her intuition and designer's eye. She arranges scenarios, adjusts proportions (sometimes quirkily), and harmonizes colors. When combined with her own drawing and painting, the disparate pieces are transformed into self-contained worlds that hover between two- and three-dimensionality. But these are not just inventive small environments. Their artistry and moods spring from Diamond's initial response to each element. Diamond is driven by "a curiosity to uncover meaning." She depends on "the encompassing richness" of an object's "character, patina, history, and personality." From her titles, we feel the emotive connections



"Dancing by the Light of Three Moons," wood, paper, leather and acrylic on wood panel. 20 x 16 x 2

that turn a random assortment into an expressive whole. Her word "patina" is key: there are layers—straightforward or mysterious—below the surface. Each work captures a moment in time and offers clues to a longer story. The scene may trigger a memory or a train of thought from one's own life or a recognition of historical realities or uncertainties. We may be amused as Diamond's eccentric objects enact a jaunty scenario or feel anxious at their sinister implications.

*Dancing by the Light of Three Moons* features a lively couple, kicking up their metallic heels. Diamond has a long-time fascination with Victorian ephemera. These characters conjure up the gears, springs, and inner workings of machines from steam engines to automata that enthralled the industrial age. Although at first glance assembly-line identical, small asymmetries make each one unique. Beneath their rusty heads, the calligraphic dancers feature blue, red, and green highlights and connecting wires with little circles. A map cut-out makes the earth seem unmoored in the firmament. Because—as Henry Moore noted—"a hole can itself have as much shape-meaning as a solid mass," the white circle may be a moon or a breakthrough to another galaxy. A black new moon floats below. Scientific analysis has its limits, and the artist is not teaching astronomy but enticing us with an interplanetary fantasy. In the presence of *Dancing by the Light of Three Moons*, it's easy to imagine cheerful clinking from these energetic high-steppers illuminated by magic moons.

A more sedate duo stroll away from each other in *Metazoic Tic Tok*. Their clockwork-like innards suggest the specialized organs of



"Metazoic Tic Tok," metal, acrylic and graphite on wood panel. 16 x 20 x 1"

the metazoic animal kingdom. With their freeze-frame xrays on display, the birds look more subdued than the usual Tik Tok performer. Despite the whimsical social media reference, the scene calls to mind ecological dangers: scavenging birds' ingestion of metals, signals industrial poisons. The undulating land and sky in ochre and gray tones hint at a sunny mountainous background or perhaps a landscape dulled by pollution. The spiky plates on the birds' backs remind us that many of these resilient dinosaur descendants now face extinction from modern environmental blight.

Evidence of human destruction dominates *Predator* and *Rage Hands*.

The predator is a figure composed of male genitals and gaping mechanical jaws, leaning menacingly toward a woman. She is mostly hidden—or perhaps thinks she is safely concealed—behind ragged edges of barbed wire and a gray fog. Spare and startling, the assemblage pairs brutality and near-invisibility.

In *Rage Hands*, a woman in a shirtwaist dress typical of the 1950s stands gracefully posed as if on a pedestal. Her head is a pressure gauge. Her hook-like hands are metal scraps that resemble voracious monster mouths about



*"Predator," metal and paper on wood panel. 16 x 12 x 2*

to bite. A jagged section of barbed wire presses down on a bit of ripped fabric next to her. She stands on a chaotic mass of overturned furniture, razor wire, and knife-sharp blades. The wood panel bears harsh graphite scribbles. Needle-like lines fill the background. The woman's gesture is a sign of anger



*"Rage Hands," plastic, metal, paper, fiber and graphite on wood panel. 20 x 16 x 2"*

Winter 2022

but also a traditional appeal for help. The objects and artist's drawn lines create an image of fury and despair in a dignified, unruffled dress. Has this woman suffered domestic violence or have her baleful hands repulsed it?

*Predator* and *Rage Hands* are portrayals of psychological states that speak to historical and contemporary issues. Social and political commentary have been integral to assemblage since the early 20th century. Diamond notes that "I arrange objects to permit an inner dialogue to unfold." While this refers to her creative process, it also allows viewers to explore various narratives from their own experience and worldview.

Assemblage and collage have always fostered the intersection of popular and fine art. Diamond's adroit compositions reflect on how we value our culture, raising the question of what is worth admiration and preservation. The remnants of modern life—abandoned or artfully recycled—will be as important to historians as our works of art and architecture. Future archaeologists who unearth Diamond's work may laugh knowingly or puzzle over its conundrums. Like the artist, they will have to rely on intuition as much as knowledge.

*Center Stage* may confound cultural investigators and detectives as they ponder what at first glance seems a dream-like gallery of the arts. In this 12-inch square image, colorful, vigorous brushstrokes snake across the floor. At right, torn paper in the shape of a Brâncuși-like fish with graphic markings seems to spring from a newly-painted hasp-like piece. At left, two faded and crumpled smiley-faces tumble downward and upside down. Carpenter squares hover in space, and a partial print of a brick



*"Center Stage," metal, plastic, paper, acrylic on wood panel. 12 x 12*

wall and window rests against a background decorated with an arch of black dots. Painting, architecture, printmaking, and design come together in a floating world of spatial ambiguity and strange proportions. At the center, a woman framed by a white expanse takes in the scene. Is she a stand-in for us on this stage? Or does art itself have centrality?

Diamond's assemblages can give us an immediate and pleasing "I get it" moment, or an invitation to explore the fluid meanings and open-ended ideas of fragments re-made into wholeness. We may imagine a plot, yield to a fantasy, or discern an allusion. Or, we may delight in surrendering to André Breton's belief that the best assemblage art "must not hesitate to bewilder sensation." *G&S*

© Mary F. Holahan 2021

The Art of Kiffi Diamond  
Recently seen at [viridianartists.com](http://viridianartists.com)  
[kiffidiamondassemblage.com](http://kiffidiamondassemblage.com)

# Art Basel Miami Beach 2021

by Melchor Moore

While the rest of America watches leaves change color and go dormant for winter, Miami in December comes to life. After a tumultuous 2020, the Miami Beach art scene flourished in 2021 with Art Basel Miami Beach (ABMB).

The 2019 discussion of “inclusion” at ABMB seems no longer an issue. Conrad Eqyir’s *700 Cycles of Somatic Renditioning* was featured as the largest installation in the Meridians section, which touch on the urgency of our time.

The relevance of this fair is not lost on Zimbabwean artist Troy Makaza, who says ABMB “is the best platform for me to engage my audience and the world. Coming from a country suffering from being disengaged from the rest of the world through sanctions and power struggles, this is an opportunity for my work, fresh and rich in its nativity, to be seen as part of a global conversation and not coming from a secluded place.”

It is difficult for Marcus Gora and Valerie Kabov, who represent Makaza at First Floor Gallery Harare, to expand the local market that they have created together since 2009 without such global fairs as ABMB. They were able to report that their first attendance at the convention was truly a success.

ABMB’s influence goes beyond the walls of the Miami Beach Convention Center. Artists and gallerists that cannot afford to spend some \$100,000 for an ABMB booth benefit from the whirlwind of activity that is Art Miami Week. Satellite fairs are created in Wynwood warehouses and makeshift beach tents on South Beach. I was lucky enough to catch the hotel pop-up hosted by Maxence Doytier of Twenty6North Productions, and also a show of King Redd’s Pop Art (Instagram: @reddrunit).



*Jeffrey Gibson at Art Basel Miami Conversations*

Under the supervision of Frost Professor, David Chang, Florida International University hosted a student-curated show of 18 silver gelatin prints by Christopher Makos portraits of Andy Warhol during his trip to China 40 years ago.

Miami art critic, Elisa Turner, 21-year veteran reporter for the Miami Herald, who now writes for other publications, has reported on Art Basel since prior to its commencement in 1999, when the Swiss exhibitors first approached the city of Miami to collaborate. She points out how vastly different Miami has become since its inception by saying,

“The surrounding art community has made leaps forward in size, sophistication and financial support in the nearly two decades since the mega fair arrived. Miami is an art community once wrongly dismissed as a backwater before Basel that has now matured considerably to add four art museums [and also art colleges] since the first Art Basel Miami Beach.”

Turner further identifies

growing attention to Miami-based artists, non-profits like Locust Projects, and venues like Little Haiti Cultural Complex and the Bakehouse Art Complex (providing affordable housing for artists in conjunction with the Margulies Collection).

The expansion of Miami’s cultural landscape owes much to private collector and donor philanthropy. Dennis Scholl, CEO of Oolite Arts and a leader in the South Florida contemporary art scene, says prior to the advent of ABMB. “We had been showing our personal collection in our home to museum groups, the arrival of Art Basel put that into high gear. In the 20 years of Art Basel we have had close to 25,000 collectors, curators and gallerists visit our home to see the collection.”

In lieu of creating public exhibition spaces in other cities, Scholl has opted to travel with his exhibitions and catalogues to venues across America, such as the sixteen museum venues which showed his collection of contemporary Aboriginal Australian art.



Marcus Gora and Valerie Kabov at Troy Makaza's Exhibition First Floor Gallery Harare



Lilly Daychief, Canadian Sunchild First Nation artist with her NFT at a satellite fair during Art Basel Miami Beach

The artwork of Indigenous American artists saw a lot of success at ABMB this year as well. Broadway Gallery of New York has seen private and institutional success with the sales of Sky Hopinka's work, a favorite of the convention. A three-channel HD video on three screens sold before I had a chance to watch the preview link, but I congratulate him on bringing awareness to languages being lost and nations being displaced amidst contemporary and historic growth along the Hudson River area.

Jeffrey Gibson, an Indigenous Native American artist, shed light on First Nations contemporary art while exhibiting with Sikkema Jenkins & Co. During a public conversation we learned, although he can identify with his ethnic background, bringing attention to any specific tribe when talking about his artwork denies contemporary construct as to what family and culture

means. He prefers to think of his family as grandmother, brother, or friend, before labeling them as Native American. *People Like Us*, from his multimedia technique involving beading, sold as soon as the convention opened for \$95,000 to an, as of yet, undisclosed institution, and was replaced immediately by *Eye of the Storm*, with an asking price of \$230,000.

The success of these artists encourages 19-year-old Canadian Sunchild First Nation artist, Lilly Daychief, who travelled from Alberta, Canada to showcase her NFT artwork at a satellite art fair. She says she is grateful for the experience and to help add Indigenous representation to the week of art in Miami.

Kevin Doyle, former vice president at Sotheby's and current director of the Jackson Hole Art Auction, says: "As the art market has seen a considerable uptick in sales for African American artists over the past few years, I

see there being the same potential for Indigenous American artists. This market is of interest to the Jackson Hole Art Auction as we look to develop new auctions in categories other than traditional American fine art. Art collectors are naturally curious and seek to learn about other cultures and how they approach art."

If curiosity is what collectors like, South Beach in December had all the diverse international galleries and artists they were looking for, from the expensive high-end to punk. Art Basel Miami Beach is a contemporary art world hub, and don't skimp on the four day pass.

See you there in 2022. G&S

Recently seen  
Art Basel Miami Beach 2021  
Miami Beach Convention Center

# Hear Me Roar: Women Photographers at Lehigh

by Linda Ganus

**I**nterview with Mark Wonsidler, Curator, Exhibitions and Collections at Lehigh University Art Galleries and Linda Ganus Albulescu, Adjunct Faculty at Lehigh University, on Dec. 22, 2022.

**LGA:** Hi, Mark! Thanks so much for sharing your process of curating these four interconnected exhibits currently at Lehigh University right now. I know that LUAG (Lehigh University Art Galleries), along with other departments at Lehigh, celebrates 50 years of co-education at Lehigh this year. I liked how you tied this show in with another exhibit of women photographers at Lehigh, held ten years ago. Did you have specific perspectives that you were thinking about to celebrate this year? Or did you decide to highlight artists that hadn't been as prominently featured in the last exhibit?

**MW:** We tried to focus on works that weren't included in the 40th year exhibition, so that there would be a fresh view. Growth in our collection has definitely happened. You're probably aware of the large photography gifts that we've received from people like George Stephanopoulos over the years. At the same time, there are also amazing voices, like Lydia Panas, for example: an artist whom we have collected intentionally who is doing work that is current, but also, local in the sense that she's drawing on the community. We often recognize folks in her photographs. She is also plugged into some really far-reaching dialogues in contemporary photography in terms of conceptual strategies, different kinds of effect/storytelling, or what the relationship is between the author and the subject. What's being revealed through the photograph—how much it is an opaque medium, versus a transparent medium.

**LGA:** One of the other things that I found really welcome is the student input, as far as authorship, such as research and writing for the exhibit, and the forward-facing undergraduate scholarship that they were able to bring to the project. What were some of the different ways in which they were able to be involved?

**MW:** We've really been trying to grow our capacity to work with students in the last several years, and we see them as a resource. They are also our reason for being here at the university; they are so interested, curious, and passionate about finding things out. We've been cultivating a growing team of work-study students, interns, and people who want to volunteer for us: students who are taking classes that are either related to the museum, or directly connected to it, and that's been wonderful to see. It's one of our advantages as a university art museum, to be able to use the exhibitions



*Mark Wonsidler, Lehigh University Art Galleries*

to highlight the educational role of the museum within the university and the ways that students are participating.

**LGA:** The four exhibits on different parts of the campus serve as a place for activism, making visible women's creative voices. From highlighting ecofeminism, to creating fictional narratives that can be read in a more symbolic way, to critiquing and chronicling the terrible domestic abuse of women, and more. It's important for women's activism, to make tangible how people can get involved in a positive way, visibly highlighting stories that may have been suppressed. How did the galleries and the students approach explaining these stories via wall texts for the public?

**MW:** I think the approach was largely the same across the ten artists; the student researchers were trying to gather combinations of biographical information and ideas that were in circulation with each of the artists' works and tried to weave that together in the very



Jane Goodall, Joyce Tenneson (2000)

succinct format of a wall label. It's such a great exercise, and I love bringing successive generations of students into the ritual and tradition of writing a museum label! Like, "what is the kernel of information that we have the opportunity to draw forward in this very concise form?" Because there are so many different strategies for tackling these kinds of central issues, right? For example, I think about Joyce Tenneson's work, and her activism, which I feel manifests in terms of body image, and in terms of an anti-ageist perspective.

**LGA:** I love that Tenneson's work in this show celebrates the visibility of older women: their experiences, that part of their lives. The title is so evocative – "Wise Women."

**MW:** It's a way of honoring cultures that celebrate older women especially, as well as older people in general; they're honoring their lived experience: what perspectives have they gained. And I think that the students seem to really respond to that particular aspect, unanimously, which I was encouraged to see.



Brenna, from *Sleeping Beauty*, Lydia Panas (2017)

That didn't require any prompting.

**LGA:** That's wonderful. She envelops her subjects in a kind of special light, like tangible reverence. Some of it's coming from the outside, and some coming from the inside... a kind of glow. I also really admire that some of the subjects are celebrities, and others are someone she met at a wedding, or in an elevator and was just struck by the integrity of their presence. So there's a kind of leveling going on.

**MW:** Yes, yes. A democracy of just being in somebody's body.

**LGA:** Mark, thank you so much. This is really a pleasure as always to talk to you. I'm optimistic about the future of photography heralded by the brilliant women photographers in these shows!

**MW:** Anytime, Linda, have a great New Year! G&S

Lehigh University Art Galleries  
Bethlehem, PA. 18015  
A four-part exhibit showing through May 27, 2022  
luag.org

# Ruins

by Norman A. Ross

Civilizations come and go. Ours may also succumb one day. Theodore Bikel long ago recorded a whimsical piece, written by Robert Nathan, *Digging the Weans*, purportedly a future archaeologist's tour of an ancient city called "Pound Laundry," or perhaps "Washing Ton." I myself published a vaguely similar piece online, *3000-Year-Old Sacrificial Remains Found in Far Western Regions of China*. The story, which I translated from Chinese, takes place in the Fifth Millennium, long after Global Warming caused "The Great Flood." The narrator is looking across the Mao Zedong Strait, which separates the Normandy area of China from the Churchill Islands that were formerly inhabited by tea drinkers in a land with no tea. [http://rosspub.com/bin\\_fung.htm](http://rosspub.com/bin_fung.htm)

Most tourists have little interest in visiting dilapidated neighborhoods, but we love to visit the detritus of past civilizations. Although we can't describe future changes, we definitely can look backward and try to reconstruct past societies. Many of the pieces of those puzzles, such as The Parthenon [Elgin] Marbles and The Temple of Dendur, are in the great museums of the world, but many are still *in situ* in sites we call "Ruins." The list is long. There are Greek and Roman ruins in at least 20 countries; Mayan ruins in five; Khmer ruins in Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. I think the experience of visiting these sites is the equivalent of visiting a museum, and I think it's reasonable to think of ruins as a type of museum. Most visitors to Rome put a higher priority on seeing the Colosseum and the Roman Forum than on the many art museums.

What do these ruins tell us? My first observation is that all of the ruins we have visited included temples: Greek, Roman, Buddhist,



Roman Forum

Mayan, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, etc. Religion, anthropologists tell us, apparently served an important and almost ubiquitous function of keeping groups of people together for their mutual benefit, even if religions also stratified those societies and helped to divide the local inhabitants into haves and have-nots. For instance, in Thailand and other Buddhist societies it is common even today for monks to be supported and fed by the general population, which has always been an essential aspect of priests' relationship with their flocks.

Second, I think that cross-cultural ruins are especially informative. During one trip we visited Roman ruins in Spain, Portugal and Morocco, and in all three countries there were also the remnants of Islamic culture, for example the Alhambra in Granada and the Giralda in Seville, and the influence of Islamic architecture on buildings in both Spain and



Roman Ruins at Volubilis Morocco

Portugal. Balancing that was the "Portuguese City" in El Jadida, Morocco. In India the ruins of the minority Muslim population sit in contrast to the Hindu and Jain ruins, informing us about all three cultures in ways we can't fully discern from books, because by seeing them *in situ*, the overlay of culture and geography comes to life.

Some ruins are vastly better known and more popular than others. Ayutthaya is about an hour's drive from Bangkok but is hardly visited by tourists. The lack of crowds enhances the experience, especially compared to frenetic Bangkok. Angkor Wat, in Cambodia, an hour from there by plane, attracts so many tourists that the ruins are being damaged and the government has had to restrict the number of daily visitors and



Agrigento

vehicles. One needs a few hours to see Ayutthaya, but three days to take in all of the ruins surrounding Angkor, the main wat (temple) in Siem Reap.

Roman and Greek ruins abound in Sicily. The most complete Greek temple extant anywhere is at Segesta. The Greek Temple della Concordia at Agrigento is magnificent to behold, while the Greek temples at Selinunte look more like ruins.

In Jerusalem we can visit sites thousands of years old that are still revered. On Crete, Arthur Evans

tried to preserve the buildings he found in the ruins at Knossos by reconstructing a few, even going so far as to repaint some of them, thereby destroying their history. He detected the remains of ancient paint and decided to 'upgrade.' In the eyes of professional archaeologists he managed to ruin the ruins.

The locations of these sites tell us a great deal about the societies that built them. Most



*Selinunte*



*Selinunte*

appear to have been constructed with great attention to fear of attack, with walls and moats, or high on hills or mountains. Most have been attacked and damaged by invaders, although some have simply succumbed to the weather, earthquakes and time. Some reveal the mistakes of the past, for instance using the Parthenon on Athens' Acropolis for storing explosives, while many, including the Parthenon, have suffered from



*The Parthenon*



*Angkor Wat*



*Angkor Wat*

the ravages of archaeologists and illicit dealers in stolen artifacts, for instance at Angkor Wat.

Finally, I think that visiting ruins around the world opens us to a far better understanding of ancient cultures than seeing remnants in our museums, even when archaeologists and curators have gone to enormous lengths to reconstruct what they have torn down someplace else.

At the magnificent Pergamon

Museum in Berlin, the Greek temple (removed from Turkey, which wants it returned) is nearly ten stories high inside the museum and is overwhelming. On the other hand, I found meandering through the ancient city of Ephesus, still in Turkey, far more enlightening and emotionally rewarding. (However, the Pergamon also houses ruins of the ancient entrance to Babylon, which probably would not exist today if it hadn't been removed decades ago. Pieces of it can also be found in other museums in the U.S. and Europe.)

We tend to marvel at the beauty of the ruins and we find ourselves in awe of the accomplishments of ancient peoples. On one hand, it is mind-boggling to try to contemplate how such enormous temples, palaces and pyramids could have been assembled thousands of years ago without a watt of electricity or a single motor (although the treatment of the enslaved workers cannot be overlooked). But perhaps more thrilling is seeing the artistic sensibilities and capabilities of ancient peoples, some of them prehistoric.

During a conversation I had years ago at the Art Institute of Chicago with two teenage boys who had wandered inside to get out of the rain and had obviously never looked at works of art before, both were very interested in the short history of art they were treated to. One of them said, "I didn't know people could paint 300 years ago." I wonder what he would say about the frescoes at Pompeii or the paintings at Lascaux. G&S

All photos by Norman A. Ross

# I Sit and Sew: Tracing Alice Dunbar-Nelson

## Portraits by Charles Edward Williams

by Mary F. Holahan

**“Alice Dunbar-Nelson sought after the truth of the human spirit and the vast wonders of togetherness...Each day, we must have the inner strength to learn to become part of a more significant cause for others and, more importantly, for ourselves. Her significance portrayed an incredible equalizer in us all...”**

**Charles Edward Williams**

Charles Edward Williams’ paintings, commissioned by the Delaware Art Museum, invite us to experience the creative life and political activism of Alice Dunbar-Nelson. His mixed-media portraits capture the likeness and character of the poet, teacher, ground-breaking champion of human rights, and woman of wit and generosity.

Born Alice Ruth Moore in New Orleans in 1875, her mother was a former slave of Black and Native American heritage and her father was a white seaman who abandoned the family. Dunbar-Nelson resisted strict racial categories and preferred to identify with the Creole community, free people of color with mixed European and Black ancestry. After graduating as Class Poet from Straight (now Dillard) University, an African American institution in New Orleans, she became a teacher in the city’s public schools. She was determined to become a professional writer.

Dunbar-Nelson soon took over the “Woman’s Column” on a local magazine and changed its emphasis from beauty and homemaking to education, anti-lynching advocacy, and women’s suffrage. She contributed articles to Boston’s monthly newspaper, *The Woman’s Era*, the first such publication for and by African American women. In 1895, her *Violets and Other Tales*, a collection of short stories and poems, appeared in the *Boston Monthly Review*. During the two years she lived in New York City, she continued to write, and she joined African-American women’s clubs dedicated to racial advancement in the face of Jim Crow laws and Black Codes.

When she was 23, Dunbar-Nelson married nationally-recognized poet Paul Laurence Dunbar. He became violently abusive, and they separated four years later. In 1902, Dunbar-Nelson moved to Wilmington and became head of the English department at Delaware’s only high school for African Americans, where she added Black writers to the standard curriculum of European and American literature. Her essays appeared in *The Crisis* and leading journals of the Harlem Renaissance. In her fiction, she often explored the experience and emotions of interracial characters. She spoke to audiences across the country about topics such as equal access to voting,

medical care, education, and worker’s rights, especially for women and Blacks, but encompassing all Americans. She tirelessly supported unsuccessful efforts to pass a Congressional anti-lynching law. In 1916, she married Robert Nelson, with whom she published the African-American Wilmington Advocate (1920-22).

Dunbar-Nelson was fired by Howard High School in 1920 for taking leave to attend a racial justice conference. Concentrating on newspaper columns, she continued to cover politics, women’s issues, art and music criticism (she was a cellist and pianist), fashion, and personality profiles. She was active on the American Friends Inter-Racial Peace Committee. In 1932, Dunbar-Nelson moved to Philadelphia, where she died from a heart ailment in 1935.

Williams drew on historical photographs for his portraits. His painting *I AM (Queen)* is an interpretation of R. P. Bellsmith’s portrait, taken at the end of the 1890s. The photograph depicts Dunbar-Nelson’s patterned collar, necklaces, and elaborate puffed sleeves. Williams’ brushstrokes simplify these details, but preserve the filigreed hair ornament. He intensifies the sleeves’ transition from dark to light to evoke the dilemmas Dunbar-Nelson encountered with rigid racial barriers. The face is a remarkably faithful recreation of the photograph. Dunbar-Nelson looks slightly away from us, her expression contemplative and vulnerable. On the glass over the image, Williams’ etched her verses *I Am An American!*, which she described as a “completion” of Elias Lieberman’s poem of the same name, which first appeared in *Everybody’s Magazine* in 1916 and presents two types of Americans. One set of ancestors—embracing many ethnic groups—fought the American Revolution; others’ forebears—like his—fled terrors abroad. Both speakers proclaim “I Am an American.” By 1928, when the poem had become a classroom standard, its publication as a Collier’s editorial under the heading “Americans All” prompted Dunbar-Nelson’s verses in her syndicated column for the Associated Negro Press. “He ignores the Indian and forgets the Negro,” she wrote, asking “how would it do to add a verse to the poem that the Negro child might recite?” Her ancestors, she writes, were brought here and labored to build the new country. They, too, “shed their blood” to preserve its “ideal of

Democracy.” Her verses conclude: “I am proud of my past. I hold faith in my future. I am a Negro. I am an American.” The poem is a declaration of self-respect and a plea for justice from a woman in her early fifties who has battled racism for decades. Its pairing with the image of a youthful and still-untested Dunbar-Nelson crystallizes Williams’ conviction that she “remained faithful to self-discovery and shared those tender truths for helping us humans to find our way.”

For *I Sit and Sew #3*, from a series of seven portraits, Williams chose a 1915 studio photograph by Addison Scurlock, a preeminent Black photographer in Washington, D. C. On the glass, he etched verses from Dunbar-Nelson’s 1918 poem *I Sit and Sew*, a soliloquy lamenting the United States Armed Forces’ exclusion of Black women from wartime overseas nursing. Bitterly frustrated, the speaker condemns this waste of patriotism and talent even at the expense of suffering soldiers:

**Why dream I here beneath my homely thatch,  
When there they lie in sodden mud and rain,  
Pitifully calling me, the quick ones and the slain?**

**You need me, Christ! It is no roseate dream  
That beckons me —this pretty futile seam,  
It stifles me—God, must I sit and sew?**

A lifelong seeker of interracial harmony, the poet must again confront insistence on segregation over justice and compassion. Williams stitched the poem’s title on each portrait’s star-patterned fabric as if to emphasize sewing’s tedious repetition, but he used gold thread—perhaps to symbolize the value of the gifts rejected by the nation. While the poem’s words are harsh, Dunbar-Nelson looks directly at us with a calm gaze, as if to challenge our own values, or perhaps to appeal for our understanding.

Throughout her career, Dunbar-Nelson often won over audiences with her conversational style and approachable manner. Williams selected casual, undated images to show her carefree side. In *Wish You Were Here #1*, she wears a bucket hat for a fishing expedition, one of her favorite activities. Williams stitched the meandering shape of the Mississippi in blue fishing line alongside the figure.

The word tracing aptly captures the spirit of Williams’ commission. He unveils clues to Alice Dunbar-Nelson’s visionary life that photographs cannot reveal. And the allusion to translucent drawings on fragile paper reminds us that our own vision must help complete the picture. Such traces lead us to Alice Dunbar-Nelson’s faith in “the truth of the human spirit and the vast wonders of togetherness.” G&S

*The University of Delaware holds The Alice Dunbar-Nelson Papers, a comprehensive collection of over 2,500 literary, professional, and personal manuscripts, and related materials: <https://udspace.udel.edu/handle/19716/24346>*

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delart.org  
charlesedwardwilliams.com



“Wish You Were Here #1,” 2021 Charles Edward Williams (born 1984). Oil, fishing line on watercolor paper, 5 x 7 inches. Commissioned by the Delaware Art Museum. Courtesy of the artist. © Charles Edward Williams.



“I AM (Queen),” 2021 Charles Edward Williams (born 1984). Oil on mylar, 36½ x 25¾ inches. Commissioned by the Delaware Art Museum. Courtesy of the artist. © Charles Edward Williams.



“I Sit and Sew #3,” 2021 Charles Edward Williams (born 1984). Oil and yarn on fabric, 8 x 8 inches. Commissioned by the Delaware Art Museum. Courtesy of the artist. © Charles Edward Williams.

# In Memory of Marguerite “Margot” Palmer-Poroner (néé Sylvestre)

(1925-2021)



## At Trieste's Walls

The Hidden Garden petals,  
fragrant earth blankets,  
freely flowing from the blooms  
'round a people freed.

Pill-diluted confines  
Turn to love and dignity,  
The darkened spider falling  
through peach blossomed light.

A blue tint shading  
Blossoms of  
ranunculus,  
before the freedom chances  
in struggles for control.

Arachnid weaves a small snare  
for prey among the flowers.  
Beauty and terror  
entwined within the web.

Anne Rudder 1/16/22

**M**argot Palmer Poroner has been a dear friend and an essential part of *Gallery&Studio* for many years, so it was with great sadness to learn about her passing.

She was born in Quebec, Canada in 1925, to a family that was descended from the first French settlers who immigrated in the 1700s. She grew up in Quebec and attended McGill University, after which she worked as a translator for a local labor union. She made frequent trips to New York where she finally settled, married to Bruno her husband and brought up her twin boys Michael and Daniel.

New York was where she amassed the vast knowledge about the art world. She was a director at both the Camino Gallery and Tanager Gallery, both a part of the famed 10th Street Galleries of the 1950s and 1960. Margo and Bruno also owned their own East Hampton Gallery (1961-1975).

In 1978, Margo and Bruno set up the monthly international arts magazine *ARTspeak*. She was one of the pioneers using the internet to promote artists and their works. Ed McCormack, my husband met Margot in the 1980s when he started writing art reviews for her and continued until 1997 when they closed the magazine. She in turn guided us through the complicated details of starting and publishing an arts magazine when *Gallery&Studio* began.

In 2019 Margo became a member of the board of directors for *Gallery&Studio Arts Journal* when the magazine became a non-profit organization, offering us sage advice. She also continued into her 90s, to edit and proofread the magazine, often catching errors that everybody else missed and offering depth and history to our articles.

Over the years Margot, Ed, Karen Mullen, our layout designer, and I spent many weekends checking final proofs for the next issue. We would



always take a break from the tedium of scrutinizing the pages for errors. Ed and Margot would engage in lively conversations about artists they knew and the art world, with Margo often telling stories about artists from the 10th Street days, such as Elaine de Kooning, Jackson Pollack and others. This was always a fun time. One such lunch break, we had some lively 60s music on the radio and Ed got up from the table and started doing a very silly dance which made us all laugh. Margo who was at the time in her late 80s got up from her chair, sandwich half finished, and danced with Ed like a 20-year-old Go Go dancer. Karen and I were stunned!

We miss Margot's lively presence and intelligence. We can only hope that her wisdom, artistic sensibility and spirit will continue to guide us in every issue of *Gallery&Studio*. I hope she and Ed are still dancing!

Margot is survived by her sons Daniel and Michael, daughters-in-law Frances and Julie, and five granddaughters — Nicole, Cleo, Samantha, Tiana, and Olivia. *G&S*

# Remembering Peter G. Pereira

(1962-2021)

Our friend Peter was born in Queens and passed away in Delray Beach Florida after a long illness.

We first became acquainted with Peter G. Pereira in 2008 during his exhibition at the Logos Book Store on York Avenue in New York City, of his paintings inspired by the gardens in the nearby Carl Schurz Park. My husband, Ed McCormack referred to his earlier drawings and paintings as “featuring sensually contoured figures formed from linear swirls that hark back to Art Nouveau, the Psychedelic art of the 1960s, and most particularly the biomorphic, often erotic surrealism of Hans Bellmer.”

Over the years we would see Peter and his wife, Kay Hallny around the neighborhood, either on the street or in Starbucks and he was constantly taking pictures —not posed— he would always seem to be interested in unremarkable moments. We wondered at the time, “Why is he taking all of these pictures? Why does he want them? And what is he going to do with them?”

Later Peter sent us pictures that he had taken of us, but now they were stylized and made to look like comic book characters. We still didn't understand the point until he sent us whole pages of different people in the neighborhood, sitting on benches, drinking coffee, walking in the street. There were cartoon

speech balloons added and the text was casual. There was no narrative, just nondescript casual moments with simple everyday dialogue. And then we realized that the point he was making is that



we don't live in Narratives: we live in Moments. In this new form he developed, he was drawing on the form of comic strip as a starting point and produced strong digitalized images from casual photography of people he knew, giving significance to the moments in life that mostly go unnoticed. Our local newspaper, *Our*

*Town* published his comic graphics.

In 2014 Peter told us about a show he was having on Governor's Island which he called Trees of Life Sculpture/Multimedia Installation with Figment Arts which later went on tour. It involved trees wrapped in a fabric in which he added hand painted names of people's pets or significant others. Peter was an expansive artist, always surprising us with something new. Like Joseph Beuys, Peter was not locked into a single approach in his creative process. His art was a challenging and philosophical commentary on life. He explored his art through varied perspectives including Multimedia, Theater, Ecology and Landscaping, etc.

Alex Hadley who interviewed Peter and



wrote the last article about him said: “Peter captured everyday moments and shared them, hoping to encourage us to ponder and appreciate them for ourselves.”

A few years ago, Peter and Kate moved to Florida where Peter had a teaching assignment.

In his lifetime he taught a very important and powerful lesson through his art.

We live in Moments, not Narratives. Moments are sacred.

Thank you, Peter. G&S



## Gallery & Studio arts journal

### Third Juried Arts Competition

Our next juried arts competition is for visual artists of all media.

- Theme: **“Freedom!”**
- Submission: Up to 3 images per entry. Images must be of artist's own original work.
- Prize: A review of the winning artist's work will be published in the Spring 2022 print issue. Images of runners up will also be published.
- Deadline: **Sunday April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022.**
- Entry Fee: **\$20** for 3 images.

For further information, guidelines and to submit entries please go to: [galleryand.studio/competitions](http://galleryand.studio/competitions)



# LOUIS COMFORT TIFFANY

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Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection was organized by the Richard H. Driehaus Museum and is toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC. This exhibition is made possible through the generosity of Sewell C. Biggs and foundations including the Choptank Foundation. This exhibition is sponsored by M&T Bank and made possible in Delaware by the Hallie Tybout Exhibition Fund for American Art and the Johannes R. and Betty P. Krahrmer American Art Exhibition Fund. This exhibition is supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on [www.DelawareScene.com](http://www.DelawareScene.com). | Image: Tiffany Studios, Jack-in-the-Pulpit Vase, 1907–1910. Blown glass. Photograph by John Faier. © 2013 The Richard H. Driehaus Museum.