

Second Look, Twice

Curated by Essence Harden, Emily Kuhlmann and Soleil Summer

September 19th- December 16th, 2019

Louisiana Bendolph

Louisiana Bendolph is among the younger generation of quilt makers whose work was included in the national touring exhibition *Gee's Bend: The Architecture of the Quilt*. She starts her process with a sketch and then moves into improvisation and innovation using bright, new fabrics. The resulting quilts are stunning abstractions. She has exhibited at the Addison Ripley Gallery in Washington D.C. and Greg Kucera Gallery in Seattle, Washington. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the U.S. Department of State, and the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies. The artist is represented by the Elizabeth Leach Gallery in Portland, Oregon.

<https://www.thebottcollection.com/gees-bend-quilter-louisiana-bendolph/>

Loretta Bennett

"I came to realize that my mother, her mother, my aunts, and all the others from *Gee's Bend* had sewn the foundation, and all I had to do now was thread my own needle and piece a quilt together." —Loretta P. Bennett

Loretta P. Bennett is the great-great-granddaughter of Dinah Miller, a woman who was brought to Alabama from Africa as a slave in 1859. As a child, Bennett picked cotton and other crops. She attended school in *Gee's Bend* until seventh grade, when she was bussed to high schools that were a two-hour drive away. Bennett was introduced to sewing around age five by her mother, Qunnie, who worked at the [Freedom Quilting Bee](#), a sewing cooperative established in 1966 in the nearby neighborhood of Rehoboth. She married Lovett Bennett in 1979. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and for the next twenty years they lived in numerous places including Germany and Texas. However, she always returned to *Gee's Bend* to reconnect with family and quilt with her mother. The 2002 exhibition of quilts from *Gee's Bend* inspired her to reinvigorate her own work.

http://www.philamuseum.org/booklets/8_47_100_1.html

Robert Blackburn

Robert Hamilton Blackburn was known as a "printmaker's printmaker"; if you wanted to make prints you made your way to his workshop in Chelsea [New York City]...

Blackburn was born in Summit, New Jersey, on December 12, 1920, and he passed away on April 21, 2003, in New York City. In between, he quietly but doggedly influenced the course of American art with his own graphic work. His legendary generosity and the effortless diversity of the workshop have been frequently acknowledged, as well as the impressive fact that he was the first master printer at Universal Limited Art Editions (ULAE). There he produced the initial seventy-nine editions for artists including Helen Frankenthaler, Grace Hartigan, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Larry Rivers. Blackburn's own experimental color lithography before

the "print boom" of the early 1960s was crucial. After twenty years of single-minded commitment to lithography, his talents and predilections shaped the forms of printmaking adopted by these better-known artists.

Growing up in Harlem, Blackburn was influenced by the intellectual and artistic legacies of the Harlem Renaissance, American social realism, Mexican modernism, and European abstraction. In middle school, he studied with poet Countee Cullen and sculptor William Artis. At age thirteen, he enrolled in Charles Alston's Harlem Arts Workshop classes, where he met artist and teacher Ronald Joseph. When Alston initiated his historic "306" salon, Blackburn was one of the youngest participants. From 1934 to 1935 he attended art classes at the Harlem YMCA, and around 1936 became friendly with artists Jacob Lawrence and Gwendolyn Knight. With Joseph, they attended Augusta Savage's Uptown Art Laboratory. At DeWitt-Clinton High School from 1936 to 1940, Blackburn published his work in the fabled *Magpie*. He also attended the Harlem Community Art Center, the WPA's largest New York community center, where he learned lithography with Riva Helfond. From 1940 to 1943 he honed his skills at the Art Student's League with mentor Will Barnet. After graduating from the league, and scrambling for arts-related freelance work, Blackburn opened the Printmaking Workshop in 1948.

With the exception of a European hiatus on a John Hay Whitney Traveling Fellowship (1953–54) and a fairly full-time stint at ULAE (1957–63), Blackburn spent the rest of his life heading up his workshop. His own artistic production suffered as a result of this fifty-four year commitment. But when his graphic oeuvre is assessed, we can see why he quickly developed a reputation for complex, multi-stone color lithographic experimentation and technical excellence. His key works shift between cubistic arrangements and color abstractions. In contrast to many African American artists of his generation, Blackburn chose to sidestep the weighty issues brought to the fore by figurative work. He placed his viewers before a window and plane simultaneously, at times conjuring three dimensions but always playfully insisting on the conventions of picturing, and always referring to the sheet, the stone, and the block.

Concerned with the idea of the printmaking process itself, Blackburn treated his stones with tremendous fluidity, reworking images from all sides, reorienting the image as he progressed and at times signing both the top and bottom. His thinking was horizontal, across the surface of the stone as he moved around on the press bed, calling to mind critic Leo Steinberg's description of Rauschenberg and his reorientation of the viewer down toward the work surface of the artist's table.

Blackburn also challenged the idea of lithography as a high craft process in his own work as well as in the democracy of his studio. His widely disparate proofs often did not arrive at an edition at all, evacuating the notion of rigidly identical reproduction. His playfulness and continual variations luxuriate in process, not finish. While his prints were exhibited internationally, a lack of documentation, coupled with his extreme personal modesty, contributed to a lack of appreciation of his achievements.

Deborah Cullen "Appreciation: Robert Blackburn (1920–2003): A Printmaker's Printmaker." *American Art Journal* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2003), pp. 92–94
<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/bob-blackburn-5698>

Leonardo Drew

Leonardo Drew is known for his dynamic large-scale sculptural installations.

On the one hand, Drew's sculptures can be seen as exercises in formalism rooted in the very experience of looking. On the other hand, these works explore memory by employing a wide range of material to evoke common elements of the human experience and of our diverse histories.

Drew has been making artwork since childhood, and first exhibited his work at the age of 13. He went on to attend the Parsons School of Design and received his BFA from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in 1985. Since then he has shown in a variety of institutions such as The Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, the Royal Hibernian Academy in Dublin, Ireland, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Miami Art Museum, and the St. Louis Art Museum. He has also collaborated with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, and has participated in artist residencies at ArtPace, San Antonio and The Studio Museum of Harlem in New York City, among others. Drew's mid-career survey exhibition, *Existed: Leonardo Drew*, debuted in 2009 at the Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston and traveled to the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro, NC and the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, MA. A monograph of his work was published in conjunction with the survey by Giles, Ltd., London. Drew lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

<http://leonardodrew.com/biography>

Ellen Gallagher

From the outset of her career, Ellen Gallagher has brought together non-representational formal concerns and charged figuration in paintings, drawings, collages, and films that reveal themselves slowly, first as intricate abstractions, then later as unnerving stories. The tension sustained between minimalist abstraction and image-based narratives deriving from her use of found materials gives rise to a dynamic that posits the historical constructions of the "New Negro"—a central development of the Harlem Renaissance—with concurrent developments in modernist abstraction. In doing so, she points to the artificiality of the perceived schism between figuration and abstraction in art. Selecting from a wealth of popular ephemera—lined penmanship paper, magazine pages, journals, and advertising—as support for her paintings and drawings, Gallagher subjects the original elements and motifs to intense and laborious processes of transformation: accumulation, erasure, interruption, and interference. Like forensic evidence, only traces of their original state remain, veiled by inky saturation, smudges, staining, perforations, punctures, spills, abrasions, printed lettering and marking—all potent evocations and emanations of time and its materiality. This attained state of "un-knowing" fascinates Gallagher and is one of the primary themes in her work.

Ellen Gallagher was born in 1965 in Providence, Rhode Island. She attended Oberlin College, Ohio (1982–84); Studio 70, Fort Thomas, Kentucky (1989); School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts (1992); and Skowhegan School of Art, Maine (1993). Recent solo exhibitions include "Watery Ecstatic," Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2001, traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, through 2002); "Preserve," Des Moines Art Center, Iowa (2001, traveled to Yerba Buena Arts Center, San Francisco; and The Drawing Center, New York, through 2002); "POMP–BANG," Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri (2003); "Murmur and

DeLuxe," Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami (2005); "Ichthyosaurus (inc. films with Edgar Cleijne)," Freud Museum (in collaboration with Hauser & Wirth, London), London (2005); "DeLuxe," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2005); "Coral Cities," Tate Liverpool, England (2007, traveled to Dublin City Gallery, Dublin; and The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin); "An Experiment of Unusual Opportunity," South London Gallery, London (2009); "AxME," Tate Modern, London (2013, traveled to Sara Hildén Art Museum, Finland; and Haus der Kunst, Munich, through 2014); "Don't Axe Me," New Museum, New York (2013); "Ice or Salt," SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah (2013); "AxME," Haus der Kunst, Munich (2014); "Nu-Nile," CAPRI, Düsseldorf (2018); "Better Dimension," Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm (2018); and "Nu-Nile," The Power Plant, Toronto (2018). Gallagher participated in the Biennale di Venezia in 2003 and 2015, and was awarded the American Academy Award in Art in 2000.

Gallagher currently lives and works in New York and Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

<https://www.gagosian.com/artists/ellen-gallagher>

Sam Gilliam

"I am a better artist today in that I am obviously a better teacher. Whether I am teaching or making art, the process is fundamentally the same: I am creating." — Sam Gilliam quoted in Curtia James, "Working With His Seven League Boots On," *American Visions* 4:1 (Feb. 1989): 27. Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, in 1933, Gilliam was the seventh of eight children of Sam and Estery Gilliam. Shortly after his birth, the Gilliams moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where the artist spent his childhood. Gilliam's father worked on the railroad, and his mother was a homemaker for the large family. Gilliam began painting by the time he was in elementary school, and recalls important encouragement from his fifth grade art teacher and a special art program at Louisville's Madison Junior High School. In 1951 Gilliam graduated from Central High School in Louisville. He attended the University of Louisville and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in fine arts in 1955. During that same year he enrolled in graduate school at the University of Louisville, and also had his first solo exhibition at the same institution. Gilliam served in the United States Army from 1956 to 1958. He returned to Louisville following his discharge, and completed his master of arts degree in fine arts at the University of Louisville in 1961. Gilliam initially taught art for a year in the Louisville public schools. In 1962 he married Dorothy Butler, a Louisville native and a well known journalist. That same year, Gilliam moved to Washington, D.C., where he has lived ever since.

The background for Gilliam's art was the 1950s, which witnessed the emergence of abstract expressionism and the New York School followed by Field Painting. Although these developments were later to play major roles in Gilliam's style, he had no direct exposure to these movements during his years at the University of Louisville. His teachers in Louisville were influenced more by the emotionally charged art of the German Expressionists of the first half of this century. Gilliam's paintings and drawings from graduate school in the late 1950s until his first one man exhibition in Washington in 1963 were primarily figural abstractions employing bold, dark colors of a brooding nature reminiscent of the works of German Expressionist Emil Nolde. An important contemporary influence whom Gilliam acknowledges during that period was Nathan Oliveira, a California figurative expressionist who held an exhibition in Louisville.

Two other early influences were the fluidly luminous watercolors of Paul Klee, and the works of the German Expressionist group Die Brücke (The Bridge).

Although not an organized or self-conscious movement, one of the most important developments in abstract art to emerge following abstract expressionism occurred in Washington, D.C., and is most often designated the Washington Color School. Artists identified with this movement include Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Thomas Downing, Paul Reed, Anne Truitt, and Gene Davis. The general course of this style developed from the more painterly abstractions of the 1950s to totally nonrepresentational, expansive, simplified works of clear bright colors through the 1960s. Morris Louis had died and Kenneth Noland had moved to New York by the time Gilliam arrived in Washington in 1962. Their works were well known in Washington, however, and in 1963 Gilliam met Thomas Downing who introduced him to Washington's realm of color art. At that point Gilliam decided to relinquish his earlier, brooding style in favor of nonrepresentational art. His earliest Washington works were large, clean-edged paintings with flatly applied areas of color within the stylistic idiom of Washington Color Field Painting. Following that phase, Gilliam created early abstractions of diagonal stripes on square fields. During this time Gilliam experimented by taping and pouring colors, folding and staining canvases, and literally folding a still wet canvas against itself to imprint vertical, angular, and axial forms.

Around 1965 Gilliam became the first painter to introduce the idea of the unsupported canvas. Partially inspired by women hanging laundry on clotheslines he observed from the window of his Washington studio, Gilliam abandoned the frame and stretcher, and began to drape and suspend large areas of paint-stained canvas. This innovative and improvisational technique was phenomenally successful and of widespread influence. Gilliam received numerous public and private commissions for his draped canvases, earning him the title "father of the draped canvas." These paintings were sometimes suspended from ceilings, arranged on walls, or on floors. They represent a third dimension in painting, and impart a sculptural quality. Though installed by the artist, Gilliam's draped canvases could be rearranged at will, and he has frequently embellished these works with metal, rocks, and wooden beams. One of the largest and final works of Gilliam's "draped" series was *Seahorses* of 1975 for the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This six-part work involved several hundred feet of paint-stained canvas, and was commissioned for the exterior walls of two adjacent wings of the museum.

While at the height of his popularity as the creator of draped canvases, in 1975, Gilliam suddenly discontinued producing them and began creating dynamic geometric collages influenced by musicians Miles Davis and John Coltrane. By 1977 Gilliam was producing "Black Paintings", similar in technique to the collage paintings, but in predominantly black hues. In 1979 Gilliam's *Wild Goose Chase* series was inaugurated and featured slanted edges and designs reminiscent of quilt patterns.

Gilliam's method of paint application changed dramatically during the 1980s. His former technique of staining and saturating wet canvases was replaced by a method in which multiple layers of thick acrylic paint and gels are scumbled, spattered, and built up on the canvas in a rich impasto. Gilliam's "quilted" paintings of the 1980s involved cutting geometric shapes from his thickly encrusted canvas surfaces, and rearranging them on nylon or canvas backgrounds in patterns reminiscent of African American patchwork quilts the artist remembered from his childhood.

Gilliam's most recent works are textured paintings that incorporate or are juxtaposed with metal forms. A noted series of this type was the D series that appeared in a one man exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1983 and employed a metal D shaped form at the bottom of each painting. Gilliam continues to produce new series, employs enamel as well as acrylic paints, and uses canvas, nylon, and awning materials in conjunction with aluminum and other metals. Gilliam's ability to move beyond the aesthetic of Washington Color Field Painting has assured his prominence as an exciting and innovative contemporary painter.

An outstanding creator of public art, Gilliam frequently works on a monumental scale and has received numerous major public commissions around the country. He is also one of the few successful, self supporting African American artists who views the teaching of art as a mission. His love of teaching developed during the one year he spent in the Louisville public schools. He taught for nearly a decade in the Washington public schools, and then at the Maryland Institute, College of Art and the University of Maryland, and for several years at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. In addition, Gilliam still devotes time to conducting workshops, participating in panels, and delivering lectures in this country and abroad. He is an eloquent and articulate spokesman for his work. Gilliam has received two National Endowment for the Arts awards, fellowships from the Washington Gallery of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Foundation, and an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from his alma mater, the University of Louisville, in 1980.

Regenia A. Perry *Free within Ourselves: African American Artists in the Collection of the National Museum of American Art* (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American Art in Association with Pomegranate Art Books, 1992)

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/sam-gilliam-1811>

Glenn Ligon

Glenn Ligon (b. 1960) lives and works in New York. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Wesleyan University in 1982 and attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in 1985. A mid-career retrospective of Ligon's work, *Glenn Ligon: America*, organized by Scott Rothkopf, opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in March 2011 and traveled to Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA and Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, TX. Ligon has also been the subject of solo museum exhibitions at the Camden Arts Centre in London, the Power Plant in Toronto, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, and the Studio Museum in Harlem, among others. His work has been included in major international exhibitions, most recently in *All the World's Futures* at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) and *Glenn Ligon: Encounters and Collisions* (2015), a curatorial project that opened at Nottingham Contemporary and traveled to Tate Liverpool. Ligon's work is held in the permanent collections of museums worldwide including Tate Modern, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Art Institute of Chicago; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. His awards and honors include a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship and the Studio Museum's Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize. His work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Art

Institute of Chicago, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and many more in the United States and abroad.

<http://www.glennlignonstudio.com/biography/>

Julie Mehretu

Julie Mehretu is a world renowned painter, born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1970 who lives and works in New York City and Berlin. She received a Master's of Fine Art with honors from The Rhode Island School of Design in 1997. Mehretu is a recipient of many awards, including the The MacArthur Award (2005) and the US Department of State Medal of Arts Award (2015). She is best known for her large-scale paintings that take the abstract energy, topography, and sensibility of global urban landscapes and political unrest as a source of inspiration. She has shown her work extensively in international and national solo and group exhibitions and is represented in public and private collections around the world. Recent projects include completing two large-scale paintings for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Atrium in September 2017, entitled HOWL eon (I, II). She is represented by Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and is a member of The American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Bio via Julie Mehretu Studio

Martin Puryear

Over the last thirty years, Martin Puryear has created a body of work that defies categorization, creating sculpture and works on paper that examines identity, culture, and history. Puryear's sculpture combines modernist abstraction with traditions of crafts and woodworking, in shapes informed by the natural world and by ordinary objects and made with materials such as wood, stone, tar, bronze, and wire. As a student, the artist studied ornithology, falconry, and archery, and in the 1960s he volunteered with the Peace Corps in West Africa, where he schooled himself in the region's indigenous crafts; these are only a few of the influences that have embedded themselves in his work. "I think there are a number of levels at which my work can be dealt with and appreciated," Puryear has said. "It gives me pleasure to feel there's a level that doesn't require knowledge of or immersion in the aesthetic of a given time or place."

Martin Puryear was born in 1941 in Washington, D.C., and was educated at Catholic University, the Royal Swedish Academy of Arts in Stockholm, and Yale University. His first one-person exhibition opened in 1968, and since that time he has exhibited his work through out the world, with public commissions in Europe, Asia, and the United States. He represented the United States at the 1989 Bienal de São Paulo, where he was awarded the festival's Grand Prize, and his work was included in the 1992 Documenta. In 2007 The Museum of Modern Art, New York, organized a retrospective exhibition of his work which traveled to the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. In 2015 the Art Institute of Chicago organized an exhibition of his works on paper, the first to explore this aspect of the artist's oeuvre, which opened at the Morgan Library & Museum and traveled to the Art Institute of Chicago and the Smithsonian American Art

Museum. Puryear received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1982, a MacArthur Foundation award in 1989, the Gold Medal in Sculpture by the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2007, and the National Medal of Arts in 2011.

<http://www.matthewmarks.com/new-york/artists/martin-puryear/>

Gary Simmons

Gary Simmons (b. 1964) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Simmons received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1988 from the School of Visual Arts in New York, NY and received a Masters of Fine Art degree in 1990 from The California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, CA. Simmons is the recipient of the 1991 Penny McCall Foundation Grant, New York, NY and the 1990 National Endowment for the Arts, Interarts Grant, Washington, DC. Simmons has had domestic and international exhibitions at 262 Bowery, New York, NY; Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco, CA; Baldwin Gallery, Aspen, CO; The Bohlen Foundation, New York, NY; CAIS Gallery, Seoul/Hong Kong; The Contemporary, New York, NY; The Dia Center, New York, NY; The Fabric Workshop/Museum, Philadelphia, PA; Galeri Charlotte Lund, Stockholm, Sweden; Galerie Philippe Rizzo, Paris, France; The Gallery of the Department of Art & Art History, Dana Arts Center, Colgate University, Hamilton, NY; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.; Ikkan Art Gallery, Singapore; Jan Weiner Gallery, Kansas City, MO; Jason Rubell Gallery, Miami, FL; Kunsthaus, Zurich, Switzerland; Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Metro Pictures, New York, NY; Montgomery Glasoe Fine Art, Minneapolis, MN; Musée D'Art Americain, Giverny, France; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Chicago, IL; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit in collaboration with Culture Lab Detroit, Detroit, MI; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; The Museum of Modern Art, Fort Worth, TX; Perez Art Museum, Miami, FL; Roy Boyd Gallery, Santa Monica, CA; The Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, MO; SAKS, Geneva, Switzerland; Simon Lee Gallery, London, UK; Simon Watson Gallery, New York, NY; SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; Video Gallery, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; White Columns, New York, NY; and Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, New York, NY.

Selected public collections include Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Judith Rothschild Foundation, New York, NY; Jumex Collection, Mexico City, Mexico; The Miami Art Museum, Miami, FL; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Peter Norton Family Foundation, Santa Monica, CA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; The Rubell Collection, Miami, FL; The Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO; San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; Studio Museum Harlem, New York, NY; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

<http://www.anthonymeierfinearts.com/artists/gary-simmons>

Lorna Simpson

Lorna Simpson was born in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1960. In the late 1970s she traveled throughout Europe, Africa, and the United States, taking documentary photographs—an experience that would have a significant impact on her later work. In 1982 she graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York with a BFA in painting. She continued her studies at the University of California, San Diego, receiving an MFA in visual arts in 1985. While in graduate school, she began to seriously question the objectivity and implied truth of documentary photography. As a result, her approach to photography became more conceptual. She began to juxtapose a deadpan photographic perspective with simple, declarative text in the manner of artists such as [Jenny Holzer](#) and Martha Rosler.

Using African American women as her models, and sometimes African American men, Simpson creates tableaux that utilize repetition and pictorial framing to challenge cultural and historical conceptions of gender and race. Often the figures are shown from behind or in fragments, with their hands or heads cropped from the frame of the photograph. In effect, this fragmentation draws attention to the historical depersonalization and sexualization of black bodies. In the 1990s Simpson took the themes of sexuality and desire a step further by representing the sites of (unseen) public sexual encounters in works such as *The Rock* (1995). She printed these large-scale photographic tableaux on felt instead of photographic paper, and by doing so, not only lent the images a tactility that serves to enhance their illicit and voyeuristic subject matter, but also challenged viewers' assumptions regarding the medium of photography itself.

In addition to her work in photography, Simpson has explored the themes of desire and identity in drawings, video, and film. She has exhibited widely, and in 1990 was the first African American woman to have her work shown at the Venice Biennale. Also in 1990 the Museum of Modern Art in New York mounted a solo exhibition of her work. In 2006 a mid-career survey was presented at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and subsequently traveled to the Miami Art Museum; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, Michigan; and Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston, South Carolina. Simpson has received numerous awards, including the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award (1991) and the International Center of Photography's Infinity Award (2010). She was also a finalist for the Hugo Boss Prize in 1998. Simpson lives and works in Brooklyn.

<https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/artist/lorna-simpson>

Mickalene Thomas

Mickalene Thomas (lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) makes paintings, collages, photography, video, and installations that draw on art history and popular culture to create a contemporary vision of female sexuality, beauty, and power. Blurring the distinction between object and subject, concrete and abstract, real and imaginary, Thomas constructs complex portraits, landscapes, and interiors in order to examine how identity, gender, and sense-of-self are informed by the ways women (and “feminine” spaces) are represented in art and popular culture.

Thomas received a B.F.A. from the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY in 2000 and an M.F.A. from Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT in 2002. Solo exhibitions of her work have been organized at the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA (forthcoming 2019); Baldwin

Gallery, Aspen, CO (forthcoming, 2018); Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, ON (forthcoming, 2018); The Dayton Art Institute, OH (forthcoming, 2018); Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH (forthcoming, 2018); Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA (forthcoming, 2018); Pomona College Museum of Art, Claremont, CA (2017); Georgia Museum of Art, Athens, GA (2017); Newcomb Art Museum, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA (2017); Spelman College Museum of Fine Arts, Atlanta, GA (2017); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2016); Aspen Art Museum, CO (2016); Aperture Foundation, New York (2016); George Eastman House, Rochester, NY (2014); Brooklyn Museum, New York (2012-13); Santa Monica Museum of Art (2012); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2012); Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (2011); and La Conservera Contemporary Art Centre, Ceuti, Spain (2009). Select group exhibitions featuring her work include You Are Here: Light, Color, and Sound Experience, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC (2018); Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA (2018); The Color Line: African American Artists and the Civil Rights in the United States, Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France (2016); SHE: International Women Artists, Long Museum, Shanghai (2016); No Man's Land: Women Artists from the Rubell Family Collection, Rubell Family Collection, Miami, traveled to the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C. (2015); 30 Americans, Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C. (2011), which has traveled extensively around the United States (2011-2017, ongoing); and Americans Now, National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C. (2010). Thomas's work is in numerous international public and private collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Art Institute of Chicago; MoMA PS1, New York; Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Yale University Art Collection, New Haven, CT; and Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo. Thomas has been awarded multiple prizes and grants, including the USA Francie Bishop Good & David Horvitz Fellow (2015); Anonymous Was A Woman Award (2013); Brooklyn Museum Asher B. Durand Award (2012); and the Timerhi Award for Leadership in the Arts (2010). <https://www.mickalenethomas.com/about>

Willie Cole

"Finding beauty in the commonplace — some may even say banal — is one of artist Willie Cole's strengths. His ability to rejigger the consumer world around us into something more fantastic creates the illusion that his art springs from the mystical intersection of folk culture, utility, design, contemporary art, and mythology." — Hrag Vartanian, HYPERALLERGIC

Willie Cole's work has been the subject of several one-person museum exhibitions: Montclair Art Museum (2006), University of Wyoming Art Museum (2006), the Tampa Museum of Art (2004), Miami Art Museum (2001), Bronx Museum of the Arts (2001) and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1998). Several of his sculptures were included in "Reconfiguring an African Icon: Odes to the Mask by Modern and Contemporary Artists from Three Continents," which opened in March 2011 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. In 2010, a survey exhibition of his work on paper (1975-2010) took place at the James Gallery of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and later travelled to the Memphis Brooks Museum of

Art, the Sarah Moody Gallery of Art at the University of Alabama and the Rowan University Art Gallery in Glassboro, NJ. In January 2013, *Complex Conversations: Willie Cole Sculptures and Wall Works* opened at Albertine Monroe-Brown Gallery at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. The exhibition will then travel to the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro.

Kara Walker

New York-based artist Kara Walker is best known for her candid investigation of race, gender, sexuality, and violence through silhouetted figures that have appeared in numerous exhibitions worldwide.

Born in Stockton, California in 1969, Walker was raised in Atlanta, Georgia from the age of 13. She studied at the Atlanta College of Art (BFA, 1991) and the Rhode Island School of Design (MFA, 1994). She is the recipient of many awards, notably the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Achievement Award in 1997 and the United States Artists, Eileen Harris Norton Fellowship in 2008. In 2012, Walker became a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Her work can be found in museums and public collections throughout the United States and Europe including The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Tate Gallery, London; the Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo (MAXXI), Rome; and Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt.

Walker's major survey exhibition, *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, was organized by The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis where it premiered in February 2007 before traveling to ARC/ Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris; The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; The Hammer Museum in Los Angeles; and the Museum of Modern Art in Fort Worth. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the Art Institute of Chicago; Camden Arts Centre in London; and Metropolitan Arts Center (MAC) in Belfast. During the spring of 2014, Walker's first large scale public project, a monumental installation entitled *A Subtlety: Or... the Marvelous Sugar Baby an Homage to the unpaid and overworked Artisans who have refined our Sweet tastes from the cane fields to the Kitchens of the New World on the Occasion of the demolition of the Domino Sugar Refining Plant*, was on view at the abandoned Domino Sugar refinery in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Commissioned and presented by Creative Time, the project – a massive sugar covered sphinx-like sculpture – responded to and reflected on troubled history of sugar.

As a special project of the 2015 Venice Biennale, Walker was selected as director, set and costume designer for the production of Vincenzo Bellini's *Norma* at Teatro La Fenice, Venice, Italy.

<http://www.karawalkerstudio.com/biography/>

Mark Bradford

Mark Bradford was born in 1961 in Los Angeles, where he lives and works. He received a BFA (1995) and MFA (1997) from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia. Best known for his large-scale abstract paintings that examine the class-, race-, and gender-based economies that

structure urban society in the United States, Bradford's richly layered and collaged canvases represent a connection to the social world through materials. Bradford uses fragments of found posters, billboards, newsprint, and custom-printed paper to simultaneously engage with and advance the formal traditions of abstract painting.

Solo exhibitions include *Scorched Earth* at the Hammer Museum (2015), *Sea Monsters* at the Rose Art Museum (2014), *Aspen Art Museum* (2011), *Maps and Manifests* at Cincinnati Art Museum (2008), and *Neither New Nor Correct* at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2007). In 2009, Mark Bradford was the recipient of the MacArthur Foundation 'Genius' Award. In 2010, Mark Bradford, a large-scale survey of his work, was organized by Christopher Bedford and presented at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, before traveling to the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Dallas Museum of Art; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Beginning November 2017, the artist will present *Pickett's Charge*, a monumental commissioned cyclorama of paintings at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C.

His work has been widely exhibited and has been included in group shows at LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2014), Whitney Museum of American Art (2013), the 12th Istanbul Biennial (2011), Seoul Biennial (2010), the Carnegie International (2008), São Paulo Biennial (2006), and Whitney Biennial (2006).

Mark Bradford is represented worldwide by Hauser & Wirth.

<http://www.markbradfordvenice2017.org/about/>