



Shifting Perspectives

Stephanie Hanor, Simone Gage, Sage Gaspar, Sydney Pearce, Melika Sebihi, and Taya Wyatt

Shifting Perspectives

Shifting Perspectives

MILLS COLLEGE ART MUSEUM, OAKLAND, CA

Contents

Introduction: Shifting Perspectives — <i>Stephanie Hanor</i>	1
Catalogue	
I. Faith Ringgold's French Collection: Jo Baker's Birthday — <i>Simone Gage</i>	3
II. Latina Working Women's Radical Resilience — <i>Sage Gaspar</i>	7
III. Percenda: An Exploration of Strength and Power — <i>Sydney Pearce</i>	11
IV. Mona Hatoum's Measures of Distance — <i>Melika Sebihi</i>	14
V. Rupert García: Art for the Chicano Movement — <i>Taya Wyatt</i>	17
ADRIANNA ADAMS	21
KIM ANNO	23
THE BRUCE HIGH QUALITY FOUNDATION	25
GUILLERMO GALINDO	27
RUPERT GARCÍA	29
GUERRILLA GIRLS	31
GUERRILLA GIRLS	32
MONA HATOUM	33
PIRKLE JONES	34
BETTY KANO	36
RUSSELL LEE	38
HUNG LIU	40
YOLANDA M. LÓPEZ	42
RUTH MORGAN	44

YÉTUNDÉ OLAGBAJU	46
JOSÉ GUADALUPE POSADA	48
FAITH RINGGOLD	50
SHAHZIA SIKANDER	52
DANIEL VALENCIA	54
CARRIE MAE WEEMS	56



Introduction: Shifting Perspectives

Stephanie Hanor, Director, Mills College Art Museum

Featuring works from Mills College Art Museum's permanent collection, *Shifting Perspectives* is a digital exhibition examining contemporary artists' critiques of traditional visual representations of race, culture, and gender. Using subversion, resistance, and satire, the artists in the exhibition confront systemic sexism and racism to bring attention to power dynamics and socio-political issues.

The works in the exhibition reflect the subjective experiences of the artists themselves and the identities they embody. A lynchpin of the exhibition is work by the Guerrilla Girls, an activist group of women artists who target tokenism and sexism within the artworld. Their interest in the underrepresentation and objectification of women—in particular, women of color—is echoed in the works of Faith Ringgold, Shahzia Sikander, and Mona Hatoum, which reclaim the female body while subverting cultural stereotypes.

While the exhibition includes biting political satire by The Bruce High Quality Foundation and early 20th-century Mexican printmaker José Guadalupe Posada, many of the works in *Shifting Perspectives* express empathy and agency. Yolanda López's print celebrates the important role of Chicana women in labor unions, while the documentary photography of Pirkle Jones and Russell Lee reveals economic realities and disparities for Mexican immigrants in the United States. Many of the works have a timeless quality, such as Carrie Mae Weems' plate commemorating every black man who lives to see twenty-one, which is as relevant today as it was when it was made in 1992.

Shifting Perspectives also features brand new acquisitions, including prints by local artists Adrianna Adams, Yétundé Olagbaju, and Daniel Valencia, and Guillermo Galindo's graphic score based on the movements of a lost child which are embroidered onto a flag used along the U.S./Mexico border to indicate the location of water tanks for migrants. The recent additions are the result of a newly launched student acquisition project to identify, research, and justify specific artworks that help diversify MCAM's permanent collection.

The exhibition showcases pieces from MCAM's holdings, including works by Adrianna Adams, Kim Anno, The Bruce High Quality Foundation, Guillermo Galindo, Rupert García, the Guerrilla Girls, Mona Hatoum, Pirkle Jones, Betty Kano, Russell Lee, Hung Liu, Yolanda López, Ruth Morgan, Yétundé Olagbaju, José Guadalupe Posada, Faith Ringgold, Shahzia Sikander, Daniel Valencia, and Carrie Mae Weems.

Shifting Perspectives is curated by Simone Gage, Sage Gaspar, Sydney Pearce, Melika Sebihi, and Taya Wyatt, students in the Mills College Fall 2020 Museum Studies Workshop. This digital catalogue features original scholarship by the students.

Faith Ringgold's French Collection: Jo Baker's Birthday

Simone Gage

You asked me once why I wanted to become an artist. It is because it's the only way I know of feeling free. My art is my freedom to say what I please.

— Willia Marie Simone, in *The French Collection*, Part I¹

Jo Baker's Birthday (1995) is not only a testament to such French icons as Josephine Baker, Édouard Manet, and Henri Matisse, but a reimagined version of art history which is centered around the experience of Black women. Faith Ringgold's *French Collection* encompasses Ringgold's own reflection on what it means to be a Black American, a woman, and mother of two who aspires to be an artist. Ringgold illustrates the complexities of her multifaceted identity in this series of quilts while both critically confronting and paying homage to the lasting impact of eighteenth and nineteenth century white male European artists. She does so through the fictitious life of her heroine Willia Marie Simone, living vicariously through Willia's many encounters with iconic European painters. Initially these pieces can be perceived as a celebration of the contributions of such visual artists—which in addition to Manet and Matisse include Picasso and Van Gogh—and French monuments such as the Louvre. And yet pieces from the collection, such as *Jo Baker's Birthday*, transparently convey Ringgold's desire to shift the perspective away from the achievements of male European painters and quite literally bring the experience

of Black women into the foreground. In conversation with the selected pieces from the Mills College Art Museum featured in the exhibition *Shifting Perspectives, Jo Baker's Birthday* carries a powerful and continually relevant message conveying the often overlooked but extremely significant roles of Black women in art history.

Born in Harlem in 1930, Faith Ringgold came from a close family whose love of storytelling was an important early influence. By her senior year of high school, Ringgold had decided that she wanted to become an artist. In the seven years she spent earning a Bachelor's degree in Art Education at New York's City College, Ringgold had married, divorced, and had given birth to two daughters within a year of each other.² Her artistic career began in the early 1960s after the completion of her Masters of Fine Arts degree in 1959. Inspired by the artwork she was exposed to in her college courses, Ringgold took her mother and two young daughters on a trip to France to view the masterpieces she had studied in person. Her time in Europe had greatly impacted her artistic practice; upon her return home, Ringgold felt compelled to transform what was formerly her dining room into an art studio. She strove to create images of Black people—drawing upon the experiences of everyday people by producing portraits of her family and members of her community—whose images had otherwise been absent in her formal art education.

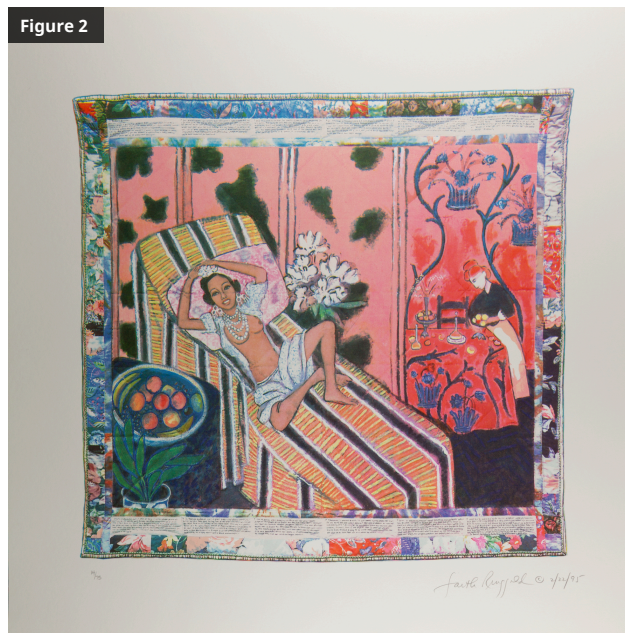
With twelve quilts in total, *The French Collection* is her most complex work to date: an artistic narrative in textile form in which Ringgold inserts an African-American presence into the tradition of Parisian modernism in which she was trained. Her protagonist is a young African-American woman, Willia Marie Simone, who goes to Paris to study art in the 1920s.³ Willia Marie is not only the heroine of Ringgold's narrative quilts but also her alter-ego. The handwritten text on the borders of each quilt reveals that, like Ringgold, Willia Marie confronts her struggles of being an aspiring artist and mother of two young children, seeing her time in France as an attempt to find meaning in both her own life and in her art. Throughout her time in Paris, Willia Marie addresses issues of racism and colonization in both America and France and the complexities of her own identity in relation to the Eurocentric study of art history that has prevailed in Western education. Through Willia, Ringgold asserts that, rather than being models and muses, women can be the speaking subjects of their lives. While posing in *Picasso's Studio* (1991) (fig. 1), Willia is fondly encouraged by the African masks in his masterpiece *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1907) to pursue a career as an artist, insisting that she doesn't have to give up anything to make her dream a reality. As a series, the quilts are a strong affirmation of the creative authority of Black women and their unacknowledged contributions to art history.⁴

Figure 1



Faith Ringgold, *Picasso's Studio* from *The French Collection, Part I*, 1991. Acrylic on canvas; printed and tie-dyed fabric. 73 x 68 in. Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts

Figure 2



Faith Ringgold, *Jo Baker's Birthday* from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, 1995. Eleven color silkscreen print on paper. 22 x 22 in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Jo Baker's Birthday provides an alternative to the Eurocentric tradition of art while still acknowledging the undeniable influence of artists such as Matisse and Manet (fig. 2). Ringgold sets a recognizable scene with combined elements from Manet's *Olympia* (1863) and Matisse's *The Dessert: Harmony in Red* (1908). In the left foreground is the reclining, partially nude figure of Josephine Baker, a Black American expatriate in France working as a dancer and entertainer. Her body is ornamented with jewels, luxurious fabrics, and on the crown of her head sits a large white flower. Her serene expression and relaxed pose further add to her aura of opulence. Along the borders of this quilt is text meant to be read in the voice of Willia Marie, whose words reflect on the attitudes toward Black women in America and France. Willia explains that the "reality is that Josephine is Black, and they would never have let her seek fame and fortune in the States. There her talent would be no talent at all. Her dance would be no dance at all. Her voice would be no voice at all. Her greatness would be no greatness at all ... Her life would be no life—no beauty."⁵ This quote sheds light on Ringgold's own consideration of what it means to be a Black female artist in America—a sentiment that she perhaps felt was still relevant in the time she created this piece. In the bottom left corner sits a basket of assorted tropical fruit, which Ringgold likely includes as a reference to Dutch still life painting and the demonstration of individual wealth embodied by one's imperialist possession of exotic fruits. Additionally, the decision to include bananas in this assortment may also be

intentional. The history of the banana is intrinsically linked to European imperialism and the enslavement of those forced to work on banana plantations, namely in the Caribbean. Furthermore, the phallic shape of the banana has transfigured the tropical fruit into a symbol of sexual desire or deviance; in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, proper fruit-eating etiquette was expected of esteemed European women to avoid such implications. Conversely, in the 1920s Baker became famous for performing her signature *Danse Sauvage* in Paris while wearing a costume consisting of only a beaded necklace and a skirt made from artificial bananas. And so her portrayal in *Jo Baker's Birthday* serves as a tribute to her complex social identity and bold sexuality, as she is depicted as being unbothered—and even empowered—by her nudity.



Édouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863. Oil on canvas. 51.4 x 74.8 in.. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

The arrangement of the two figures—Baker and her anonymous maid—in this space recall that of Manet's *Olympia*, especially when considering the reversal of social roles (fig. 3). *Olympia* presents Olympia, a white courtesan, in the foreground. She is laying on a bed topped with what appears to be a silk sheet, her upper half propped up with two large pillows. Her nudity is emphasized by her sparsely-clad accessories, including a pair of heels, a thin black choker necklace, a gold bracelet on her wrist, and a large pink flower tucked behind her ear. Her right hand covers her genitalia, calling further attention to her nudity. Set into the middleground, her Black maid presents Olympia with a large bouquet of fresh flowers. Her eyes settle on the face of Olympia as she leans forward, lips parted as if she were about to speak, and yet Olympia's gaze is fixed on us, the viewer. *Jo Baker's Birthday* borrows these figural elements, positioning Baker as Olympia and the white female figure in the background as the

equivalent to Olympia's maid. Ringgold has quite literally replaced the prominence of Olympia with that of a Black female icon, being doted upon by her white maid who is of secondary importance. The figure of the maid and her immediate environment are derived from Matisse's painting *The Dessert: Harmony in Red* in which a woman is shown leaning over a table and arranging fruit in a crystal bowl (fig. 4). She stands in a red room adorned with vases, flowers, and ornately designed tablecloth and wallpaper. Ringgold has appropriated this imagery, setting it into the background of *Jo Baker's Birthday*.



Henri Matisse, *The Dessert: Harmony in Red (The Red Room)*, 1908. Oil on canvas. 70.9 x 86.6 in. Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia

Her reference to Manet's *Olympia* is integral to our understanding of Matisse's figure as being Baker's maid; her social role in the painting is framed by the implication that she is preparing the house for Baker's birthday celebration. This is reinforced by the large arrangement of flowers to the right of Baker that we might assume were presented to her by this background figure in the same fashion that Olympia's maid offered her a bouquet. This social reversal forces us to readdress the maid in *Olympia*, a figure long dismissed in art history as merely serving the function of creating a racial juxtaposition between herself and Olympia, and whose presence is meant to reinforce that nefarious behavior is in tandem with overt female sexuality. Through her use of a Black female icon such as Baker whose nudity was a form of self-empowerment, Ringgold emancipates Olympia's maid from these previous notions and elevates the role of Black women in art history to that of celebrated liberation.

Figure 5



Carrie Mae Weems, *Commemorating Every Black Man Who Lives to See Twenty-One*, 1992. Glaze and gold paint on Lenox porcelain plate. $\frac{3}{4} \times 10 \frac{5}{8} \times 10 \frac{5}{8}$ in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

The works featured in *Shifting Perspectives* asks us as viewers to consider this deviation from those which historically have been most prominently featured in the art world, and instead take some time to redirect our attention to the achievements of those who have spent their artistic career shedding light on socio political issues of inequity, disenfranchisement, or who simply strive to celebrate the accomplishments of marginalized communities. In addition to *Jo Baker's Birthday*, presented in the form of a silkscreen print from the series *Ten Women/Ten Prints*, Carrie Mae Weems' piece *Commemorating Every Black Man Who Lives to See Twenty-One* (1992) provides a similar sentiment (fig. 5). This piece is one in a series of plates which Weems commissioned the American china producer Lenox—known for their production of customized dinner

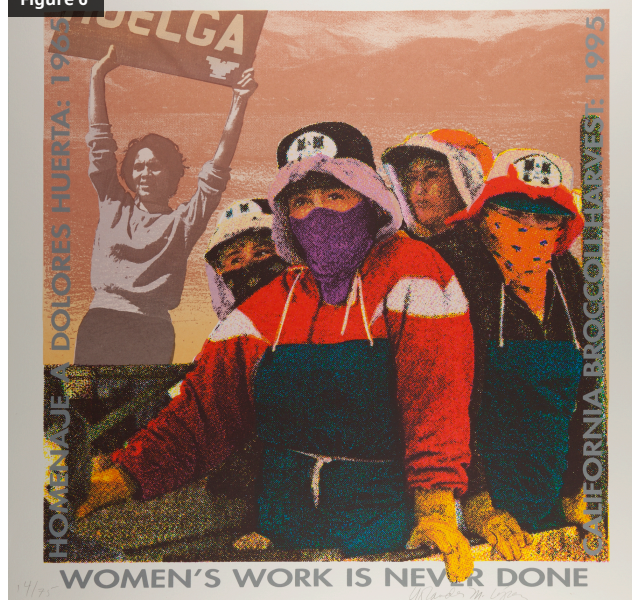
plates and tableware for the White House, U.S. Embassies, and governors' mansions—to produce commemorative plates honoring the achievements and cultural contributions in Black American history, both grandiose and tragically simple. Traditionally these porcelain plates are used to acknowledge the political accomplishments of the wealthy elite; Weems transforms this material representation of disproportionate wealth and power into a recognition of the significant contributions of Black Americans to U.S. history, including *Commemorating Blues, Jazz, Collard Greens & Thelonious Monk* and *Commemorating Jo Ann Robinson, Claudette Colvin, Rosa Parks for Not Getting Up*. Given the 2020 resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in protest of police brutality and systemic racism in the United States, Weems' reminds us that the grim message inscribed on this plate is just as relevant now as it was when she created it in 1992. Both Ringgold and Weems compel us as viewers to acknowledge those whose contributions to history have been rendered invisible within the bastion of white patriarchal hegemony and the sociopolitical structures that have concealed them, and transmogry symbols of this anachronistic authority into celebrations of resistance, revitalization, and diversity.

1. Melody Graulich and Mara Witzling, "The Freedom to Say What She Pleases: A Conversation with Faith Ringgold," *NWSA journal* 6, no. 1 (1994): 1.
2. Graulich and Witzling, "The Freedom to Say What She Pleases," 1.
3. Graulich and Witzling, "The Freedom to Say What She Pleases," 4.
4. Graulich and Witzling, "The Freedom to Say What She Pleases," 4-5.
5. Faith Ringgold, *Dancing at the Louvre: Faith Ringgold's French Collection and Other Story Quilts*, University of California Press (1998): 141.

Latina Working Women's Radical Resilience

Sage Gaspar

Figure 6



Yolanda López, *Women's Work Is Never Done* from the portfolio *10x10 Ten Women/Ten Prints*, 1995. Silkscreen on paper. 22 x 22 in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Women's Work is Never Done (1995), a silkscreen print compiled from multiple images, captures Latina women's resilience bursting through as they reclaim the square frame (fig. 6). In this print Yolanda M. López challenges the

gendered stereotypes of Latina women, specifically working class women. By reworking two found images, she creates a hybrid perspective of intergenerational female strength that celebrates the iconography of social activist Dolores Huerta, while simultaneously highlighting the tenacity of women laborers from California.

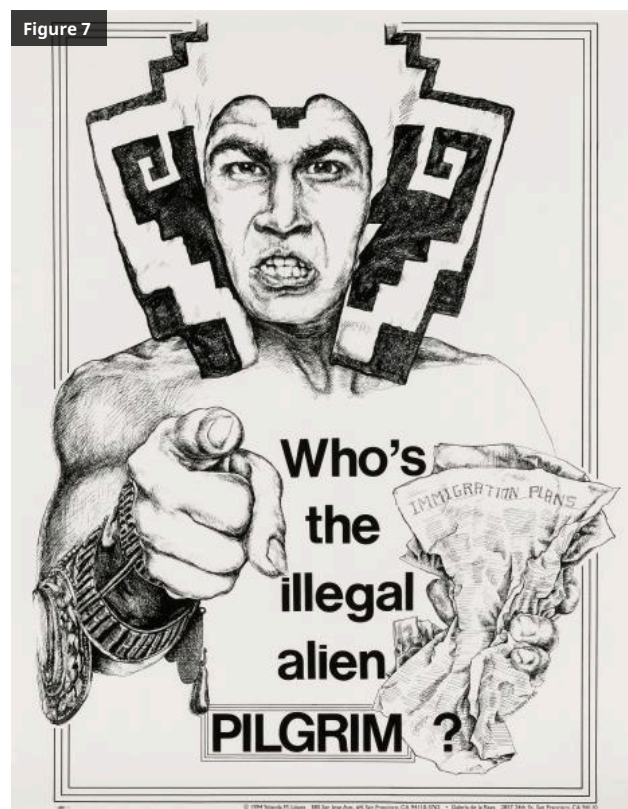
A photograph of a young Dolores Huerta holding a protest sign taken in 1965 hangs in the top left corner of the print. Huerta was the co-founder of the United Farm Workers agricultural labor union which organized historical activism advocating for the rights of predominantly Latinx and Filipino agricultural workers. She got into activism because she was an agricultural labor worker herself, as well as a young mother who was struggling to support her family through the unjust conditions of agricultural work at the time. She has dedicated her life to fighting not only for the rights of labor workers but also specifically for the gendered rights of women and mothers. In the print, Huerta is grey and faded, representing a spirit looking over the women workers in front of her. Her protest sign is cut off by the white frame but the word *HUELGA*, which is Spanish for strike, can still be read along with the logo for the United Farm Workers Union logo. *HUELGA* became the slogan for the UFW movement because organizing large nation-wide strikes was one of their main modes of activism.

A second image layered on top of the Huerta photograph features women workers from a broccoli farm in California taken 30 years after the Dolores Huerta image in 1995. In contrast to the monotone of the Huerta image, the women are printed in bright, popping colors. Three of the four women's mouths are covered with bandanas. Besides being a necessary method of protection during work, it also embodies the way that immigrant women workers are expected to be silent and tend to their labor. Despite this attempt to silence, the women stand strong, firmly gripping the white frame that encases the print, affirming their agency.

Agricultural workers are exposed to many dangers and are forced to work under harsh conditions. This print shifts the narrative that women stick to domestic work while their partners provide the financial resources. On the contrary, in households that depend on agricultural work as their main source of income not only do the women work but often the entire family, including children, work to provide for their families. Women are the matriarchs of their family who have to be their own advocates for equal rights while also working hard to support their families. The two images, taken thirty years apart, show that Huerta's efforts during the UFW movement helped offset more than three decades worth of space for women workers to thrive. Huerta also created spaces for more just working and living conditions. However, that is not to say that total equity and justice for labor workers has been achieved. Extensive organizing and social activism through labor unions has brought justice a long way but there is still much more progress to be made in the efforts of providing living wages, healthy working conditions, and protective benefits for families to live safely.

The gaze of the woman worker at the forefront of the print is strong and she stares directly at the viewer. Her eyes project power and resilience. On the left text reads "homenaje a Dolores Huerta: 1965" which means "homage to Dolores Huerta" in Spanish. On the right there is another complementary line of text that reads "California Broccoli Harvest: 1995." These lines of text offer an invitation to approach the print in a more didactic method while also physically naming the subjects of the print. To label the specific harvest and year signifies that these women might have been traveling workers who migrate throughout the year to follow available work. This would mean that they often have no permanent place of residence and survive by moving from one temporary space to another following the seasonal crops. The use of both English and Spanish is another example of juxtaposition found within that illustrates the concept of duality.

Duality is a Mesoamerican indigenous theoretical concept that honors the idea of balance such as the sun and moon, life and death, etc. It has been adapted as one of the main pillars in the foundation of Chicano identity. Duality can be seen many times throughout the composition of the print; the first instance being the duality of Dolores Huerta in contrast to the later generation of women workers represented through the contrast of color versus monotone.



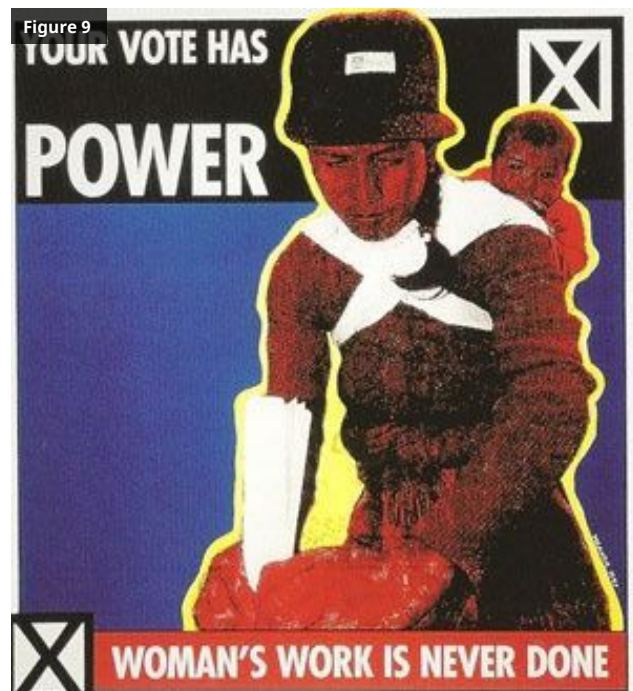
Yolanda López, *Who's the Illegal Alien, Pilgrim?*, 1978. Offset lithograph. 22 x 17 1/2 in.

This print was created by Yolanda M. López in 1978 and it was part of a portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints* which was originally published by the Berkeley Art Center in 1995 to commemorate that year's International Women's Day (March 8th) and the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the 19th amendment, which gave women in the U.S. the right to vote.¹ Apart from being a multimedia artist, López is also an activist and scholar who has deeply connected her activist and academic work to her art practice. She grew up in San Diego, then moved up to the Bay Area where she participated in activism like the student strike at San Francisco State University in 1968, which influenced her to take up a conceptual art practice. López's work focuses on domestic labor and the preponderance of racial and gender stereotypes in the media, and the realities of

everyday life among Latina women.² She analyzes influential iconography and offers a counter hegemonic standpoint. One of her most famous political posters was *Who's the Illegal Alien, Pilgrim?* (1994) where an Aztec god is holding crumpled immigration papers and pointing his finger, in a version of the U.S. Army's Uncle Sam icon (fig. 7).



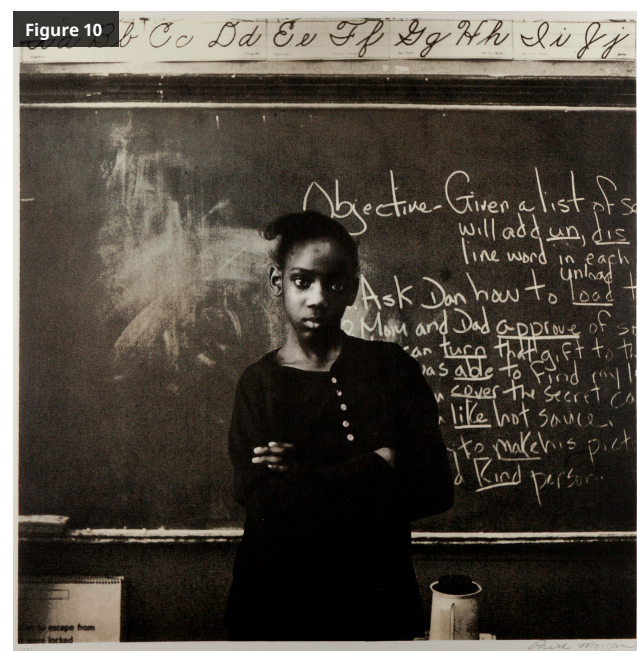
Yolanda López, *The Nanny* from the *Women's Work Is Never Done* series, 1994. Mixed media installation.



Yolanda López, *Your Vote Has Power* from the *Women's Work Is Never Done* series, 1997. Silkscreen. 20 x 24 in.

In 2008, the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts in San Francisco held a retrospective exhibition featuring an overview of her work under the same name of this print,

Women's Work is Never Done. *Women's Work is Never Done* is also the title of a larger series she created that includes *The Nanny* (1994), a mixed media installation that confronts the exploitation of female Latinx domestic workers, and *Your Vote Has Power* (1997), a silkscreen print that declares the power that mothers hold when engaging in voting (figs. 8 and 9). *Your Vote Has Power* and *Women's Work is Never Done* are complementary prints that commemorate the change that Latinx women have accomplished by engaging their agency. López created many prints with the intent of creating accessible art that could be distributed widely to serve as socio-political didactic tools. I also wanted to add that upon my research I discovered that this print has a second title, *Homenaje a Dolores Huerta*, which is in relation to the original portfolio series that it belongs to.



Ruth Morgan, *Percenda* from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, 1995. Three color silkscreen on paper. 21 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 21 $\frac{11}{16}$ in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Another print from the *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints* portfolio that is also featured in the *Shifting Perspectives* exhibition is a photograph titled *Percenda* taken by Ruth Morgan (fig. 10). This image comes from a series Ruth Morgan made of homeless children in New York City.³ In *Percenda*, Morgan looks at racism, femininity and power through the subject of a young black girl named Percenda standing in a classroom, a place of learning and confinement. The eyes of the young girl hold the strength and agency of women similar to the woman in the foreground of *Women's Work is Never Done*. They also share confident yet confrontational postures that show they are

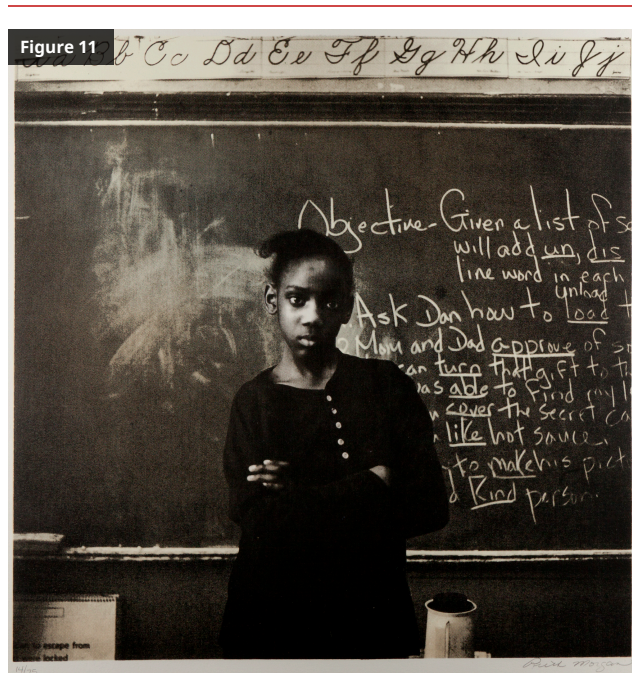
overcoming their obstacles as women in societies that value them as vulnerable. The labor of women of color has always been exploited. Women have the power to change the world and fight hegemonic social standards that might oppress them, all we have to do is ignite our agency and challenge these oppressive systems.

1. "10x10: Ten Women / Ten Prints," Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University. Accessed November 09, 2020. https://ulrich.wichita.edu/ulrich_exhibition/10-x-10-ten-women-ten-prints/.
2. "Yolanda López," Hammer Museum. Accessed November 09, 2020. <https://hammer.ucla.edu/radical-women/artists/yolanda-lopez>.
3. "Percenda," Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University. Accessed November 09, 2020. https://ulrich.wichita.edu/ulrich_art_item/percenda/?collection_type=exhibition.

III

Percenda: An Exploration of Strength and Power

Sydney Pearce

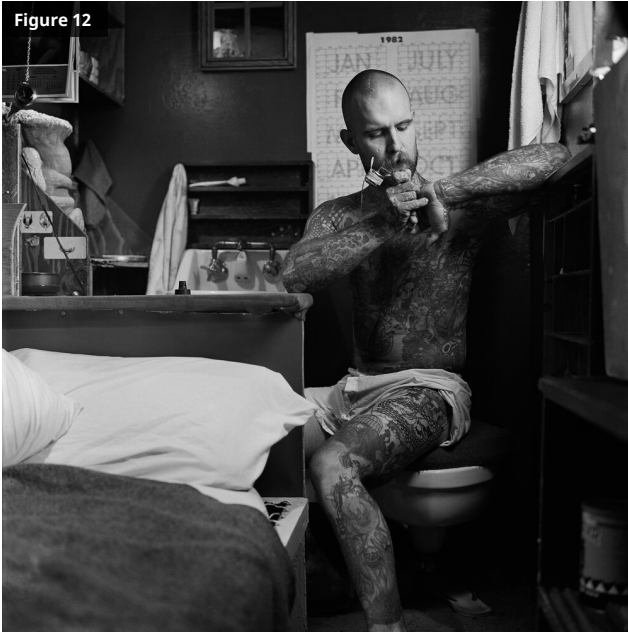


Ruth Morgan, *Percenda* from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, 1995. Three color silkscreen on paper. 21 ¹¹/₁₆ x 21 ¹¹/₁₆ in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Morgan illustrates the strength and power present in young people and the potential that they hold. Morgan, a portrait photographer, captures the essence of a young girl facing all of the systems that oppress her with dignity and fortitude. Through this print, Morgan explores the dynamics of racism, sexism, and poverty through the eyes of a teenage girl, illuminating the struggles and pressure to overcome the systems that many marginalized people experience throughout their lifetimes.

Percenda, a three-color silkscreen print from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints* created in 1995, is a bold form of representation within this exhibition (fig. 11). Ruth

Figure 12



Ruth Morgan, *Untitled from San Quentin: Maximum Security, 1981-1983*. Gelatin silver print. 48 x 48 in.

Ruth Morgan is an active portrait photographer who has explored different marginalized communities, their impact on the world around them, and the conditions they must endure. She has predominantly worked with incarcerated individuals, especially those detained in San Quentin State Prison and the San Francisco County Jail (fig. 12). Within her portfolios, she shows these detained men in their inhumane conditions, trying to live their lives to the fullest. From the late 1970s to the mid-1980s, she has documented these men and exhibited their photos in order to illuminate the hostile and inhumane conditions present within the prisons.¹ Within these institutions, she was granted incredible access to the lives of the prisoners and was granted the opportunity to give photography lessons to the men held there. Additionally, she became the director of the non-profit organization Community Works in 1994, a restorative justice program focused on the arts in San Francisco. This program helps to empower teenagers and adults alike, whether or not they have been to prison or kept in some sort of detention facility. Community Works' mission states that their "continuum of services is designed to meet the needs of people at any stage of justice system involvement" while their practices and programs are "culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and rooted in Restorative Justice and the Arts."²

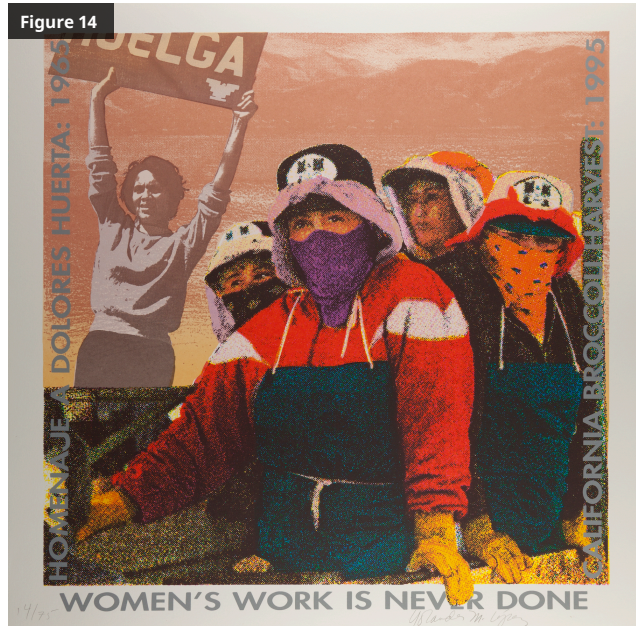
Figure 13



Ruth Morgan, *Green Family Getting Ready for Ceremony from The Piqua Shawnee: Cultural Survival in Their Homeland*, 2018. 20 x 30 in.

Along with incarcerated individuals, Morgan also explores the lives and traditions of different Indigenous peoples, such as the Ohlone of the Bay Area and the Piqua Shawnee of the Ohio Valley. With the Piqua Shawnee portfolio, Morgan explores how these people interact with nearby conflicting cultures and the reclamation and revitalization of the Native culture (fig. 13). These explorations into the various cultures of Native people and how they interact with the larger society have toured all around the world in exhibitions and publications.

Figure 14



Yolanda López, *Women's Work Is Never Done* from the portfolio *10x10 Ten Women/Ten Prints*, 1995. Silkscreen on paper. 22 x 22 in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Percenda is an example of some of the work she has completed showing the lives of homeless and impoverished young people in New York City. The print was derived from the original photo exhibited in a portfolio created by the Berkeley Art Center and Alliance Graphics entitled *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*. This portfolio and exhibition celebrated the 75th anniversary of women's suffrage and the passing of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution by commissioning ten women artists to explore what it means to be a woman in the modern era and the complications that come with that identity.³ Many additional works in this exhibition have been gathered from this portfolio, such as Yolanda M. López's *Women's Work is Never Done* (fig. 14), and Kim Anno's *Eve*. These works explore the diverse experiences of women who are part of different cultures and experience different aspects of sexism and oppression. Some artists explore the daily lives of women, while some take a more conceptual and idealized version of womanhood and femininity. Each of the works takes a different approach and point of view to their interpretation of the meaning of womanhood in the last 30 years.

As one of the pieces used to explore womanhood and femininity, *Percenda* displays the strength and resistance of marginalized young people. Within the frame, a young girl stands at the center of the composition, her eyes focused directly to the camera and arms crossed in defiance. Her gaze is sad yet set in determination; she knows of the hardships she endures and will have to endure in the future, yet she remains resolute. As a young African American girl, she will have to face racism, sexism, and many other forms of systematic oppression designed to keep her in the position she is: an impoverished and powerless person. She subverts this expectation of powerlessness with her resolute stance and crossed arms, showing the viewers that she will not be ignored or stepped over, she must be acknowledged within the frame and within our minds. She stands in front of a blackboard, with a grammar lesson on the uses of the prefixes un- and dis-, commonly used to transform words into their opposite meaning. This signifies the way young people look at the world. The Ulrich Museum of Art interprets this

lesson to hold "symbolic weight for a child who has experienced unfair or unkind treatment."⁴ For a young Black student, school may serve as the only outlet for growth and advancement within society, a sort of safe space of expression and creativity within the bounds of expectations. *Percenda* stands here illuminating her sense of belonging and ownership over her classroom, she isn't afraid to confront the viewer directly and challenge them to reevaluate what they believe is possible for this young girl.

Within this virtual exhibition, *Shifting Perspectives*, the curators focus on ideas of resistance, identity, and culture presented through art. Many works that are shown alongside *Percenda* display the unique experiences of people of color, queer people, and women and how they interpret the world around them and interact with their culture. Many of these works are directly facing the oppression placed against them by those in power by subverting expectations, using biting political commentary, or through more subtle conceptual ideas of resistance. *Percenda* by Ruth Morgan shows the power within young African Americans and their strength as they fight against those that seek to keep them in their place, especially young Black women and their fight for equality, present throughout the history of this country and up until today.

1. Ruth Morgan, "San Quentin: Maximum Security 1981-1983," *Ruth Morgan Photography*, 2008, <https://www.ruthmorganphotography.com/san-quentin>. Accessed 3 November 2020.
2. Community Works, "The Issue," *Community Works: Justice Demands Humanity*, 2016, <http://communityworkswest.org/what-we-do/the-issue/>. Accessed 3 November 2020.
3. Robbin L. Henderson, "10x10: Ten Women / Ten Prints," *Berkeley Art Center*, <https://www.berkeleyartcenter.org/10-x-10?rq=ten%20women%2Ften%20prints>. Accessed 3 November 2020.
4. Nellie, Elliot, "Percenda," *Ulrich Museum of Art*, 1 July 2020, https://ulrich.wichita.edu/ulrich_art_item/percenda/?collection_type=exhibition&collection_id=2004. Accessed 3 November 2020.

Mona Hatoum's Measures of Distance

Melika Sebihi

In April of 1998, Mona Hatoum was interviewed by fellow artist Janine Antoni for Bomb Magazine. They had known each other for a few years at that point, and had even worked side by side in an exhibition in Madrid.¹ Hatoum avoided getting too personal and confronting her Palestinian culture directly in her work. “It was the one occasion when I thought I’d work with the biographical,” Hatoum said on another occasion, when speaking about her piece *Measures of Distance* (fig. 15). “When I finished it, it was a huge relief. I thought, I can put this away and concentrate on something more subtle and abstract.”²

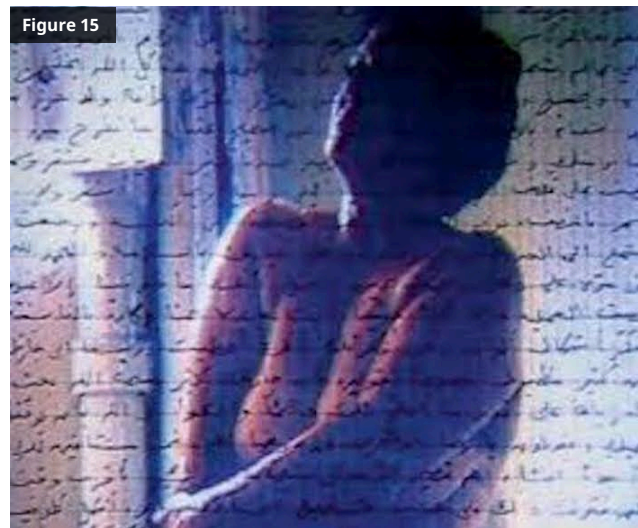


Figure 15
Mona Hatoum, *Measures of Distance*, 1988. Video/SP Beta. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

At one point during the Bomb interview, Antoni makes the observation to Hatoum that, “Everyone seems eager to define you”—commenting on the ways in which viewers and critics apply their understanding of Middle Eastern people to Hatoum’s work, despite Hatoum’s desire to avoid being essentialized and othered. Hatoum’s response to Antoni’s remark makes it clear that she is concerned with the problem of representation:

MH: I dislike interviews. I'm often asked the same question: What in your work comes from your own culture? As if I have a recipe and I can actually isolate the Arab ingredient, the woman ingredient, the Palestinian ingredient. People often expect tidy definitions of otherness, as if identity is something fixed and easily definable.

JA: Do you think those kinds of questions have made us overly self-conscious about how we represent ourselves and its effect on the work?

MH: Yeah, if you come from an embattled background there is often an expectation that your work should somehow articulate the struggle or represent the voice of the people. That's a tall order really. I find myself often wanting to contradict those expectations.³

Contradiction of expectations is just what brought Hatoum's video *Measures of Distance* to the exhibition *Shifting Perspectives*. In many ways, Hatoum's work serves to critique traditional representations of Arab women—despite the fact that Hatoum wished to distance herself from the expectation to speak for Arab issues to which she did not consent. Because of her dedication to representing the trauma of displacement, her work productively grapples with the problem of expectations.⁴ *Measures of Distance*, a fifteen minute and twenty-six second video of the artist's mother, deals with various themes including war and deportation. This deviates from the Orientalist norm, representing Arab women in a complex way that does not serve the Western fetishist gaze. Her artistic style, perspective, and her positionality as a Palestinian artist brings a unique viewpoint to *Shifting Perspectives* that adds a valuable and unique voice to the various artists represented.

Mona Hatoum is a Palestinian artist who was born in Lebanon. She was subsequently forced to stay in to England after war broke in Lebanon, displacing her from her homeland.⁵ Like many women refugee artists, such as Cuban-born Ana Mendieta, Hatoum's work both obviously and covertly speaks to themes of banishment, expatriation, and exile. *Measures of Distance* discusses these themes through a seamless combination of the personal and political. The piece itself is video footage of Hatoum's mother. The footage is hazy; combinations of dark blues, purples, and greens make up the image of Hatoum's mother, naked in the shower. The video is overlaid with Arabic script, taken from letters that the artist's mother wrote from Beirut while Hatoum was in England. This text is read aloud in English by Hatoum.⁶ The script not only provides context for the viewer, but also partially obstructs the image. Along with the translation of the text being

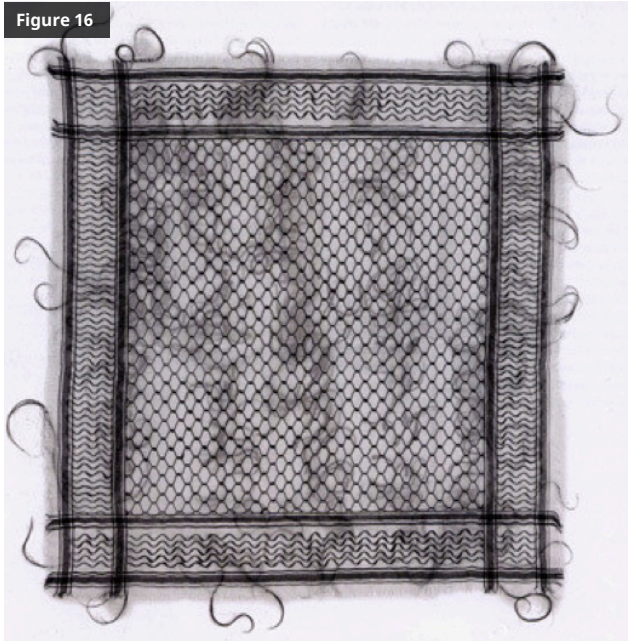
read aloud by Hatoum, the audio also features taped conversations between herself and her mother. In these conversations, they speak openly about their feelings, including topics like sexuality, prompting Hatoum's father's "objections to Hatoum's intimate observation of her mother's naked body."⁷ These conversations are described poetically by journalist Rachel Spence, who described the audio as "whispers of love and exile flickering through the bars of their calligraphic cage like a faulty, seductive current."⁸

Many of Hatoum's stylistic choices lend themselves to the themes of *Shifting Perspectives*. This student-curated exhibition is meant to focus on artists' critiques of visual representations of identity—including gender and cultural heritage. These critiques often come in the form of subversion, or reckoning with what is expected in order to call attention to power dynamics like sexism. For example, Hatoum once spoke of the inner turmoil she experienced when wondering if she should use the footage of her mother, naked in the shower, for *Measures of Distance*. In the 1980s when this work was created, Hatoum observed that there was so much disagreement over the feminist implications of the female nude that many representations of women in art had faded away altogether.⁹ The artist describes this absence as depressing, and decided to use the footage in an unexpected way, placing Arabic script from her mother's letters over the footage, and interweaving audio of both Hatoum reading the letters in English and intimate conversations between her and her mother. The act of placing her naked mother within a socio-political context using these conversations about displacement, exile, and horrific loss leads to a reading of her work that sees Hatoum's mother as both non-sexual and non-passive.¹⁰ This subverts the expectation (rooted in Orientalism) of passivity and sexualization that the Western gaze has when it comes to Arab women, shifting our perspective to see both personal humanity and political context rather than a simplified stereotype.

The Arabic script that filters *Measures of Distance* both distorts and informs the video's message, partially hiding the footage while adding context through the content of the letters. Janine Antoni describes the script as a type of veil, adding layers of meaning to the piece.¹¹ This description of the script as a veil is somewhat paradoxical—Hatoum speaks of her "rebellious and contrary attitude" to Arab stereotypes yet conforms to this somewhat essentialist understanding of the Arab woman.¹² However, art historian Jaleh Mansoor points out that within the political context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, the veil was considered a symbol of resistance. Hatoum calls upon the veil in other works such as *Keffieh*

(fig. 16). The keffiyeh is a headscarf traditionally worn by Palestinians, and functions as a symbol of solidarity between Palestine and Western countries. Hatoum later confirms that her intent was to create a “potent symbol of Arab resistance.”¹³ Similarly, in *Measures of Distance*, the “veil” has a deeper meaning. While the footage and audio connotes intimacy and closeness, the script creates a barrier. Moreover, the fact that the script is taken from letters implies a distance or farness between her and her mother. This allows us to perceive the figure while not having full access. In this way, Hatoum literally and figuratively obscures our perspective.

Figure 16



Mona Hatoum, *Keffiyeh*, 1993-1999. Human hair on cotton fabric. 120 x 120 cm. Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Mona Hatoum’s identity reflects her confrontation of socio-political issues in her work. Like many of the works in this exhibition, *Measures of Distance* reflects the lived experience of the artist. Similarly to artists Faith Ringgold and Shahzia Sikander, Hatoum defiantly reclaims the female body through the subversion of cultural stereotypes. Hatoum weaves the personal, empathetic relationship between a mother and daughter with political themes of agency: war, patriarchal values, and exile to express the complicated nature of Arab feminism. This

serves to both humanize and politicize the Middle Eastern experience, creating a space for Hatoum to express her lived experience as an Arab feminist refugee without isolating the essentialist “Arab ingredient.”¹⁴ Hatoum’s *Measures of Distance* is not included in *Shifting Perspectives* for abandoning tradition, but rather, creating a visual compromise between what is expected and what is true. This compromise, along with the balancing act between the personal and the political, lends itself to the exhibition’s mission to show how artists resist expectations through changing viewpoints, or shifting perspectives.

1. Janine Antoni and Mona Hatoum, “Mona Hatoum,” *BOMB*, no. 63 (1998): 56.
2. Rachel Spence, “Mona Hatoum: A Sense of Unease,” *FT.Com* (Jan 19, 2018).
3. Antoni, “Mona,” 54.
4. Kimberly Lamm, “Seeing Feminism in Exile: The Imaginary Maps of Mona Hatoum,” *Within Hostile Borders* (Ann Arbor: MPublishing, 2004), 18.
5. Elizabeth Manchester, *Mona Hatoum: Measures of Distance*, Tate Britain (February 2020), [<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hatoum-measures-of-distance-t07538>].
6. Museum of Modern Art, “Mona Hatoum - Measures of Distance,” (2013). [<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/118590>].
7. Manchester, “Mona.”
8. Spence, “Mona Hatoum: A Sense of Unease,” [<https://login.intra.mills.edu:2443/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.intra.mills.edu:2443/docview/2002890493?accountid=25251>].
9. Antoni, “Mona,” 57.
10. Manchester, “Mona.”
11. Antoni, “Mona,” 58.
12. Ibid.
13. Jaleh Mansoor, “A Spectral Universality: Mona Hatoum’s Biopolitics of Abstraction,” *October* 133 (2010): 49-74. Accessed November 1, 2020. [<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40926716>].
14. Antoni, “Mona,” 56.

Rupert García: Art for the Chicano Movement

Taya Wyatt

I am trying to experience the truth of being alive and experiencing my moment and the moment of human beings and the situation of the world.

—Rupert García¹

work. His art has been included in almost every major exhibition of Chicano art in the United States since the 60s.

Rupert García is a widely-known political artist whose work appears on many posters supporting the Chicano and West Coast civil rights movements from the 60s and 70s to the present. Through his art, García focuses on the mistreatment of Latinos in the United States by emphasizing the legacy of colonial violence. The exhibition *Shifting Perspectives* builds on the theme of critiquing traditional visual representations of race, culture, and gender, by also bringing attention to socio-political issues. García has been an artist who supports activism since the start of his career.

Born in 1941 in French Camp, California, García's family was the inspiration for his inclusion of folk art and Mexican artistic traditions within his work. He graduated from San Francisco School for the Arts in 1968 with a B.A. in painting. He has since received a M.A. in printmaking/silkscreen, M.A. of Art History, and Ph.D. in Art Education from University of California, Berkeley, as well as an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute. Throughout his career he has built a large community of support in the Bay Area for his political actions and art

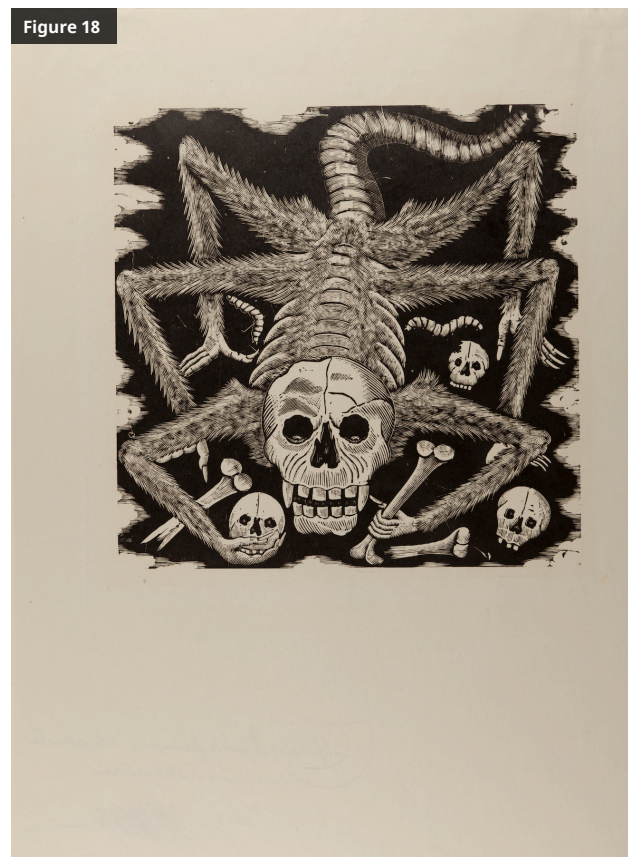


Rupert García, *Calavera Crystal Ball*, 1992. Serigraph on paper. 30 x 22 in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

It is unknown just how many different posters and other works García has made in his lifetime. Shockingly though, every piece he has made proves his mastered skill in balancing graphic and fine art. He does this by unifying the Mexican muralist traditions of early 20th century painters Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Jose Clemente Orozco with European elements and American pop culture.

Calavera Crystal Ball is a piece that stands out from some of García's more well-known prints (fig. 17). The medium of this print is a serigraph on paper, also known as silk screening; a process in which García is an expert. This practice is the oldest form of printmaking but wasn't officially considered a form of "art" in the U.S. until the 1930s when artists created the term "serigraphy" to differentiate from commercial silkscreen prints.² This print is unique because of the lack of vibrant color throughout the entirety; in most of García's prints you find solid blocks of bold colors all over. *Calavera Crystal Ball* is very muted and uses mostly silver and black in the shape of a skull that stretches from each edge of the paper. On top of the skull's head there is a featureless figure depicting Christopher Columbus with only four colors. The color

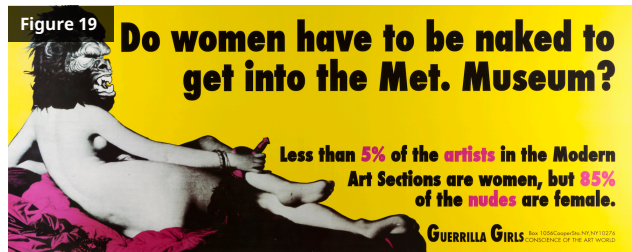
choices are a signature of García's; using complementary colors to make the figure pop out. In fellow Mills student Isabella Perry's essay on this print, she suggests that placing Columbus above the skull gives the impression that he is no longer a hero.³ My analysis concludes that skulls were often representations of Latinx communities (as seen in the work of José Guadalupe Posada) and this image was to show that Columbus does not hold power over land that was already occupied (fig. 18).



José Guadalupe Posada, *Huerta as a Spider*, 1913. Zincograph (engraving on zinc) on paper. 16 x 11 7/8 in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Posada was a Mexican artist known to have completed over 20,000 prints in mixed media, whose work conveyed political and cultural critiques. His images of skulls were used to embody *Día De Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead). Following his death in 1913, his work gained a large following and inspired many artists, such as García. Posada tended to represent people he thought of as evil in his work in hopes of bringing more awareness to the issues of power with his art. The term *calavera* translates to skull in Spanish, and can be used to explore the idea that García's skulls were also meant to evoke death upon bad people. Many of the artists who experimented with this style were inspired by the pain that colonization caused on

indigenous people. The hand placed over the faceless figure gives power back to the people by not allowing us to glorify or recognize Columbus.



Guerrilla Girls, *Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?*, 1989. Poster. 11 x 28 in. Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

Also included in the exhibition are pieces by the Guerrilla Girls, who have said that García's work has been an important influence. Inspired by the ease and accessibility of communicating through posters, both of these artists have been able to reach large audiences with their work. The Guerrilla Girls' most infamous poster, included in our show, is titled "*Do Women have to be naked to get into the Met Museum?*" and started their recognition among the art community. The Guerrilla Girls are a well-known group of anonymous women who got together in the early 1980's after the Museum of Modern Art in New York only included 13 women out of 169 artists in their *International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture* exhibition. Posters were commonplace, often used to advertise rock bands, films, and magazines. The Guerrilla Girls used this idea, putting their posters up all around New York City and gaining a large cult following soon after. "They made activism seem not only acceptable, but vital to full participation in the art world."⁴ In this way, their work is similar to García, whose entire career has been focused on exposing political issues.

Figure 20



Shepard Fairey, *Barack Obama HOPE*, 2008. Poster. 36 x 24 in.

García was ahead of his time in his experimentation with posters as a vehicle for political art. M.T. Wroblewski, a reporter for *Chron*, wrote about the advantages of posters. He mentions how posters are capable of offering continuous exposure, are more affordable, make quick impressions, and are able to be interactive if the marketing team chooses.⁵ A great example of the power posters is Shepard Fairey's *Barack Obama HOPE* poster that became the face of his presidential campaign. This poster would be recognized from anywhere. Linking this idea to more current times, the Black Lives Matter protests used signs and posters to emphasize their messages. Many of these signs could be seen plastered all over social media for millions of people to see.

Calavera Crystal Ball is a great addition to our exhibition as not only is the piece itself a form of activism, but the artist who made it also contributes to a progressive future. Rupert García is Mexican-American, and as a minority in the United States he has used his platform as an artist to spread positivity and power to the Latinx community. From

protests to posters, García has been coined as one of the most important artists in the last 25 years.⁶

1. Paul Karlstrom, "Oral History Interview with Rupert García, 1995 Sept. 7-1996 June 24," *Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution*, 24 June 1997, [www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-rupert-garcía-13572].
2. "What is Serigraph Printing?" Cedar Hills Long House, September 19, 2018, [cedarhillslonghouse.ca/blogs/what-is-serigraph-printing/] Accessed November 11, 2020.
3. Isabella Perry, "Colonialism and Rupert García's Prophecy of Death," *State of Convergence*, (Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, 2020) , [mcam.mills.edu/publications/stateofconvergence/catalogue/rupert.html.]
4. Rebecca Seiferle, "The Guerrilla Girls Artist Overview and Analysis," *The Art Story*, 02 Mar 2017, <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/guerrilla-girls/life-and-legacy/> Accessed November 10, 2020.
5. M.T. Wroblewski, "The Advantages of Posters," *Small Business - Chron.com*, 5 Nov. 2018, [smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-posters-63269.html.] Accessed November 10, 2020.
6. "Rupert García," *Smithsonian American Art Museum*, [americanart.si.edu/artist/rupert-garcía-1732.], Accessed November 9, 2020.



ADRIANNA ADAMS

Weekly Routine #1, 2020, 7 color screen print on 100lb
Cougar natural paper, 16 x 20 in.

NEW ACQUISITION

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase,
Selected by Simone Gage, Sage Gaspar, Sydney Pearce,
Melika Sebihi, and Taya Wyatt, students in the Mills College
Fall 2020 Museum Studies Workshop

Adrianna Adams is a painter and printmaker from the Bay Area, currently residing in Oakland. Her work involves an exploration of extensions of femininity, its counterparts, as well as traces of cultural identity. She is one of several Bay Area artists and muralists involved in painting the *Women of The Resistance* mural and *Alto al Fuego en la Misión* mural, which honors homicide victims killed by the San Francisco Police Department.



14/15

eve

K. Anno

KIM ANNO

Eve, 1995, from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, Silkscreen on paper, 22 x 22 in.

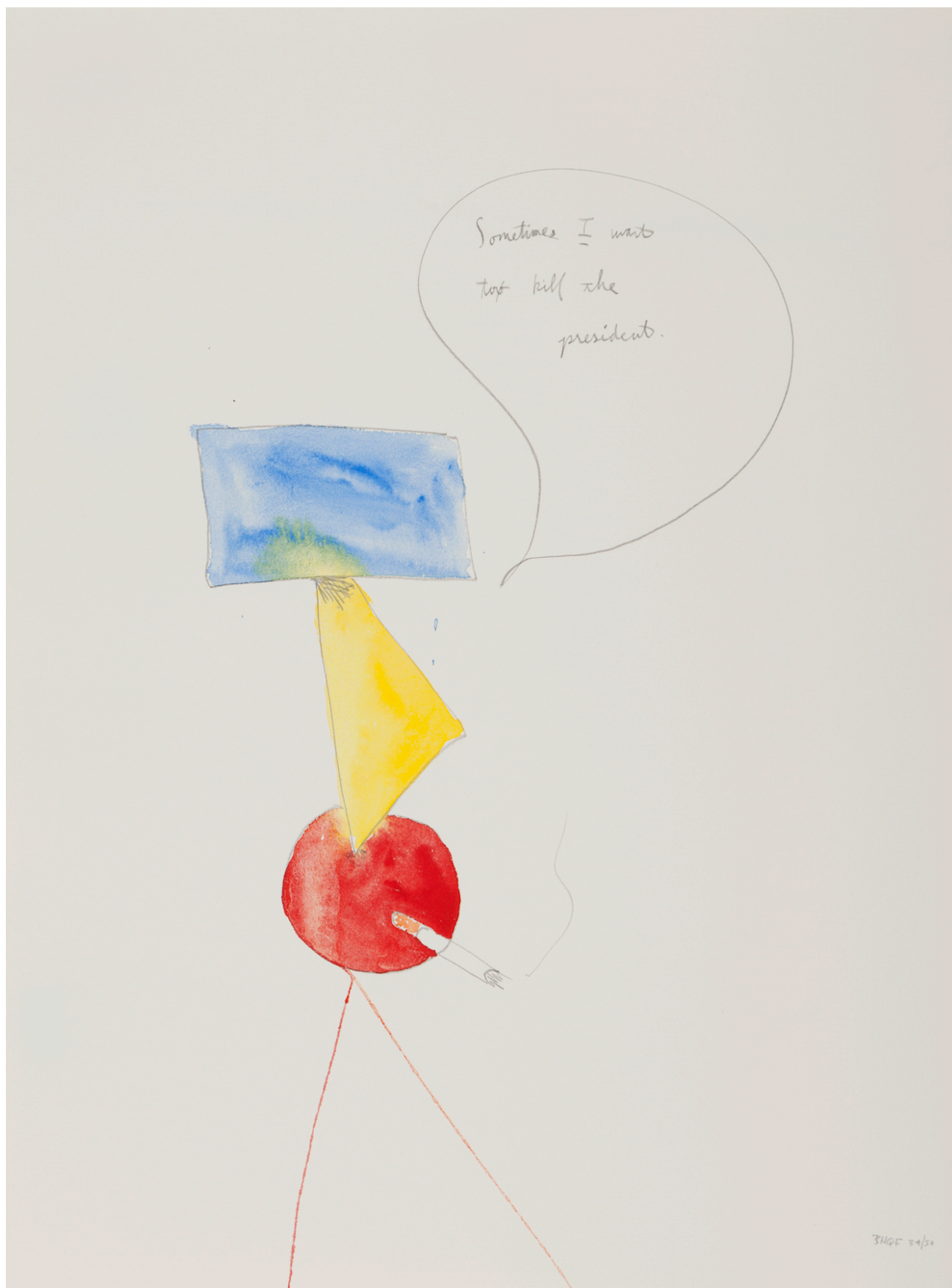
Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Mrs. John C. Sigourney [Mary Singleton], B.A. 1949, Fund, 1995.12.b

In this print Kim Anno explores ideas about women's identity and sexual fertility. In *Eve*, Anno processes images that are often related to a woman's identity—soft round shapes that resemble breasts or eggs move around the print. The title *Eve* refers to the first woman in the Biblical creation story, thus pushing the viewer to consider how far back these cultural associations are connected. *Eve* comes

from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, which was published by the Berkeley Art Center in 1995 to commemorate that year's International Women's Day (March 8th) and the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the 19th amendment, which gave women in the U.S. the right to vote.

Kim Anno is a multimedia artist based in the Bay Area. Abstraction remains prominent in her practice throughout the decades resulting in works that draw the viewer in to engage with its complex ideas.

Sage Gaspar



THE BRUCE HIGH QUALITY FOUNDATION

Sometimes I Want to Kill the President, 2008, from the Exit
Art Print Portfolio, *Expose*, Hand-painted monoprint, pencil
and watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Gift of Exit Art c/o
John Koegel, The Koegel Group LLP, 2012.13.3.b



GUILLERMO GALINDO

Siguiendo Los Pasos del Nino Perdido/Following the Steps of the Lost Child, 2017, Acrylic on beacon flags used by humanitarian aid group Water Stations, 29 ½ x 47 in.

NEW ACQUISITION

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Selected by Simone Gage, Sage Gaspar, Sydney Pearce, Melika Sebihi, and Taya Wyatt, students in the Mills College Fall 2020 Museum Studies Workshop

As an experimental composer, sonic architect, and performance artist, Guillermo Galindo redefines the

conventional boundaries of music and the practice of music composition. A Mexico City-born artist now based in Oakland, his present work focuses on bringing attention to humanitarian and socio-political issues. Galindo's works from his flag series are printed directly onto a group of faded, weathered flags found at the border. Provided to the project by the humanitarian citizen organization Water Stations, these discarded flags were once used to indicate the presence of water tanks placed throughout the Calexico desert for migrant border crossers. In *Siguiendo Los Pasos del Niño Perdido/Following the Steps of the Lost Child*, Galindo embroiders a looping trail of a child lost in

the desert. The crossing lines create an intricate network of traces, suggesting the steps of a lost child while also operating as a score for a musical composition. Galindo

received his MA in composition and electronic music from Mills College.



24/100

Calavera

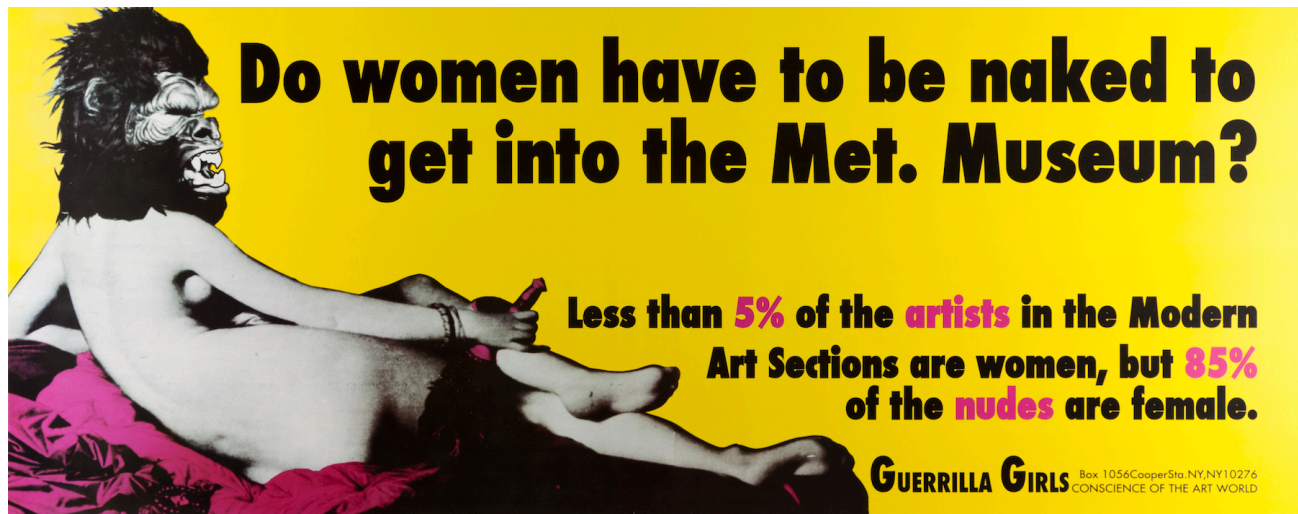
Crystal Ball

© Superfeminine 1992

RUPERT GARCÍA

Calavera Crystal Ball, 1992, Serigraph on paper, 30 x 22 in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Gift of Elsa Cameron,
2002.7.2



GUERRILLA GIRLS

Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?,
1989, Poster, 11 x 28 in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase,
Mrs. John C. Sigourney [Mary Singleton], B.A. 1949, Fund,
2016.7.3

TOP TEN WAYS TO TELL IF YOU'RE AN ART WORLD TOKEN:

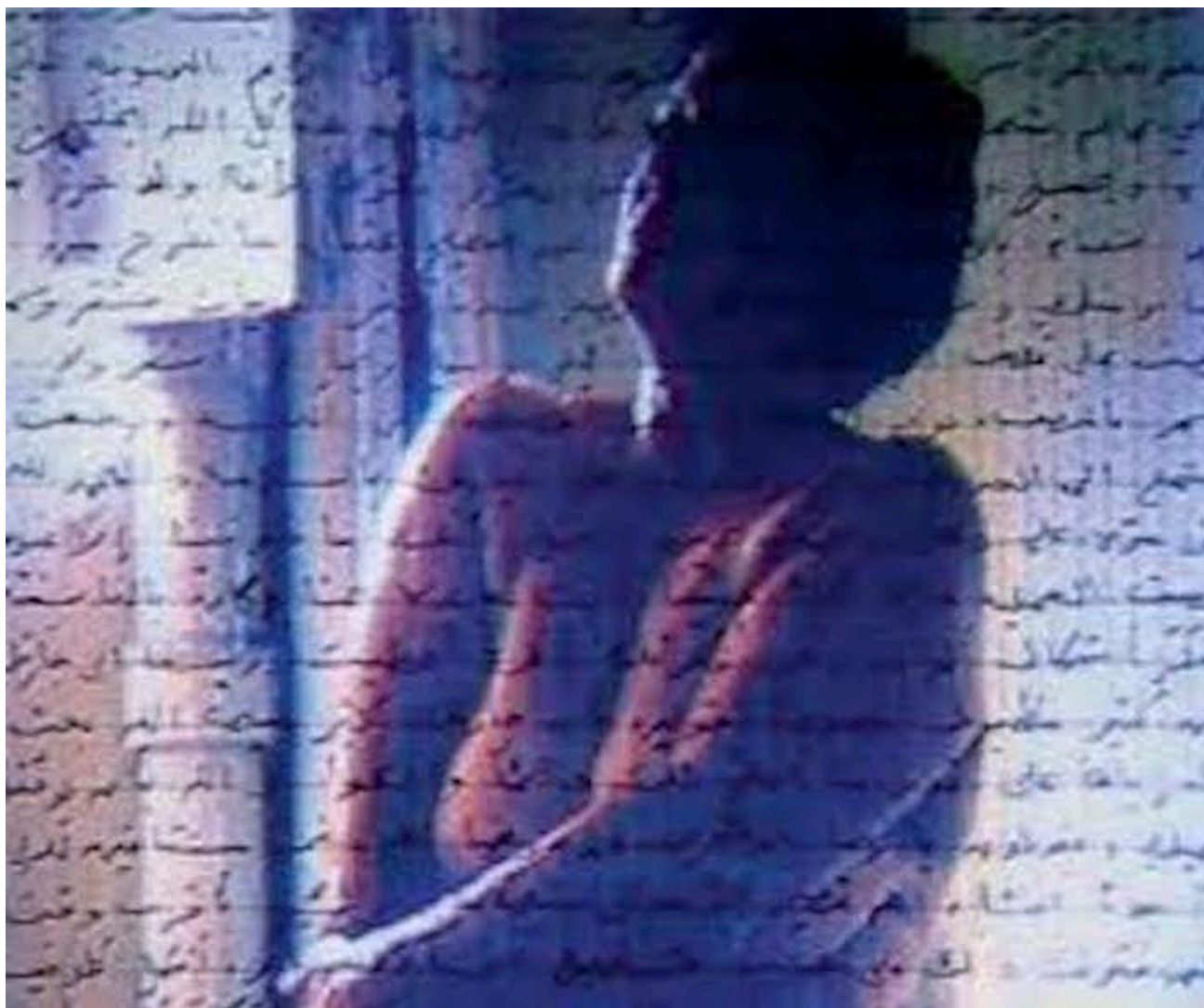
10. Your busiest months are February (Black History Month), March (Women's History), April (Asian-American Awareness), June (Stonewall Anniversary) and September (Latino Heritage).
9. At openings and parties, the only other people of color are serving drinks.
8. Everyone knows your race, gender and sexual preference even when they don't know your work.
7. A museum that won't show your work gives you a prominent place in its lecture series.
6. Your last show got a lot of publicity, but no cash.
5. You're a finalist for a non-tenure-track teaching position at every art school on the east coast.
4. No collector ever buys more than one of your pieces.
3. Whenever you open your mouth, it's assumed that you speak for "your people," not just yourself.
2. People are always telling you their interracial and gay sexual fantasies.
1. A curator who never gave you the time of day before calls you right after a Guerrilla Girls demonstration.

A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM **GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ARTWORLD
532 LAGUARDIA PLACE, #237 • NY, NY 10012

GUERRILLA GIRLS

Top Ten Ways to Tell if You're an Art World Token, 1995,
Poster, 17 x 22 in.

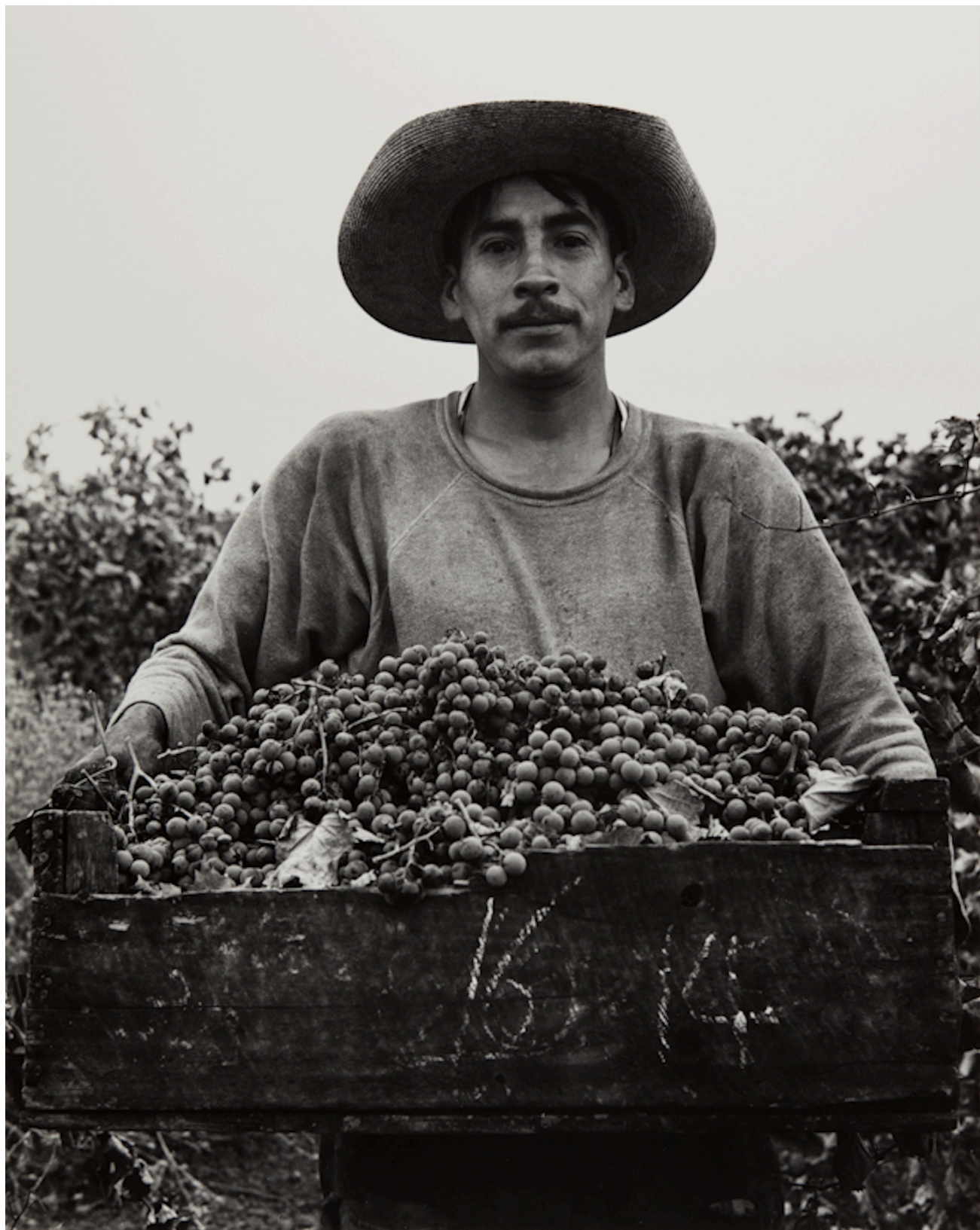
Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase,
Mrs. John C. Sigourney [Mary Singleton], B.A. 1949, Fund,
2016.7.8



MONA HATOUM

Measures of Distance, 1988, Video/SP Beta

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase,
Susan L. Mills Fund, 2005.8



PIRKLE JONES

Grape Picker, Berryessa Valley, California, 1956, Gelatin silver print, dry-mounted on non-rag board, 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Found in Collection, 1983.3.9



BETTY KANO

Red, White and Blue, 1988, Watercolor on paper, 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 19 in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Gift of Michael S. Bell and Thomasin Grim in honor of George W. Neubert, 1988.15.5

Betty Kano is a Japanese American painter based in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is known for her work in Asian-American activism, including co-founding the Asian-

American Women Artists Association in 1989. Her work explores the intersection between political consciousness and personal identity. In this piece, Kano evokes American patriotism using the colors red, white, and blue. The rainbow shape the colors form travels across the canvas and assume a smudged effect. The rainbow then disappears and fades into whiteness, disappearing from the canvas. It can then be assumed that Kano is critiquing the American dream, and the ways in which it allures its

constituents, and then fails to live up to its promises. As an Asian-American activist, Kano may also be critiquing the effect of American imperialism on the diaspora of Asian Americans, such as herself.

Melika Sebihi



RUSSELL LEE

San Antonio, Texas, Privy and Water Supply in the Mexican District, 1939, Gelatin silver print, 10 x 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Gift of Susan Herzig and Paul M. Hertzmann, 2003.29.6

As a documentary photographer, Russell Lee took a special interest in disadvantaged and neglected communities. This image, taken at the tail end of the Great Depression, emphasizes the unsanitary and dangerous conditions many people were forced into through poverty, evidenced by the drinking water supply being placed right next to the outhouse, with no separation or distinction. Many of Lee's

photographs from the Mexican quarter of San Antonio depict similar situations of squalor and lack of support. These photographs were taken for the use of the Farm Security Administration, which was created by the New Deal in 1937 to combat rural poverty and help support very poor land-owning farmers. This piece displays the need for assistance in rural areas populated mostly by Mexican migrant workers, many of whom worked for those the FSA intended to support.

Sydney Pearce



HUNG LIU

White Rice Bowl, 2014, Mixed media, 80 x 80 in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Gift of the Artist and
Trillium Graphics, 2015.10



YOLANDA M. LÓPEZ

Women's Work Is Never Done, 1995, from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, Silkscreen on paper, 22 x 22 in.

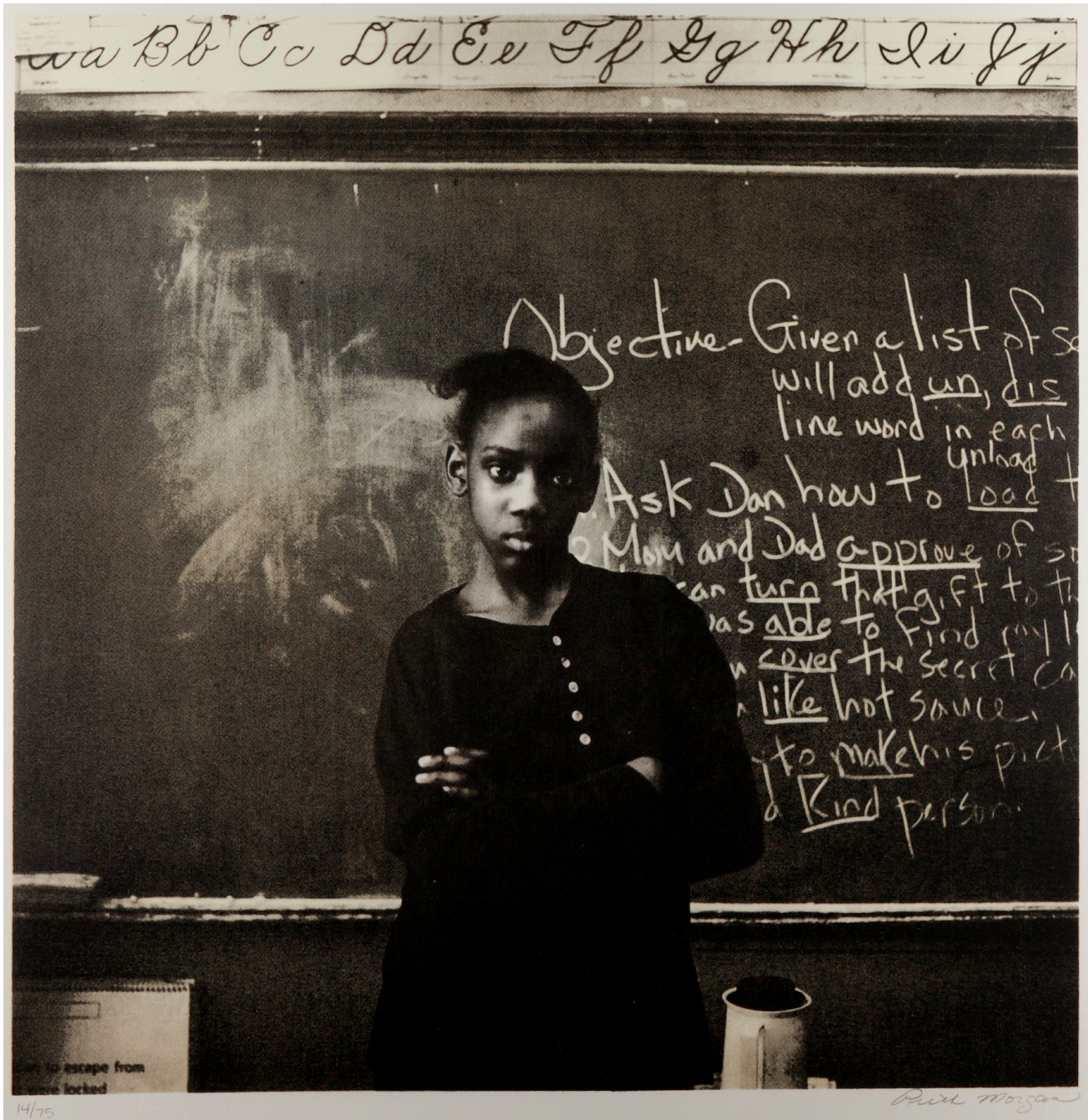
Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Mrs. John C. Sigourney [Mary Singleton], B.A. 1949, Fund, 1995.12.f

In this print, Yolanda López combines two photographs to honor the resilience of Latina women. One photograph features women labor workers from a California broccoli farm and the second photo is an image of Dolores Huerta who was the co-leader of the agricultural labor union United Farm Workers (UFW). Huerta is holding a sign that says "Huelga," which means strike in Spanish, with the UFW logo on the bottom corner of the sign. This print comes from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*,

which was published by the Berkeley Art Center in 1995 to commemorate that year's International Women's Day (March 8th) and the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the 19th amendment, which gave women in the U.S. the right to vote.

Yolanda López is a Mexican American artist who has deeply connected her activist work to her art practice. One of her most famous political prints was *Who's the Illegal Alien, Pilgrim* (1994). López is known for works focusing on the experiences of Mexican American (Chicana) women and analyzing influential female iconography. She grew up in San Diego then moved to the Bay Area where she participated in social activism, including the student strike at San Francisco State University in 1968.

Sage Gaspar



RUTH MORGAN

Percenda, 1995, from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, Three color silkscreen on paper, 21 ¹¹/₁₆ x 21 ¹¹/₁₆ in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Mrs. John C. Sigourney [Mary Singleton], B.A. 1949, Fund, 1995.12.g

Ruth Morgan is a photographer who has focused primarily on photographing incarcerated individuals and Native American populations since the late 1970s. Through this photo, Morgan illustrates the strength of youth with an image of a young girl, taken for the portfolio entitled *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, created for the Berkeley Art

Center in 1995. The young woman stares straight into the lens with arms crossed in defiance, standing her ground in front of a chalkboard. She embodies the power of the young to persevere in the face of racism, sexism, and other types of prejudice that may be used against them. Morgan not only displays her subject as strong and independent through her stance but also through her surroundings in a classroom, where her mind is cultivated to fight against the systems that hold her in place while also educating her about the ways of the world.

Sydney Pearce



YÉTUNDÉ OLAGBAJU

∞, 2020, 4 color screen print on 100lb Cougar white paper, 16 x 20 in.

NEW ACQUISITION

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Selected by Simone Gage, Sage Gaspar, Sydney Pearce, Melika Sebihi, and Taya Wyatt, students in the Mills College Fall 2020 Museum Studies Workshop

Yétundé Olagbaju is an artist currently residing in Oakland, CA. They utilize performance, sculpture, action, and video as modes of inquiry regarding Black labor, legacy, and processes of healing. They are rooted in the need to understand history, the people that made it, the myths surrounding them and how their own body is implicated in history's timeline. Olagbaju received their MFA in studio art at Mills in 2020.



JOSÉ GUADALUPE POSADA

Huerta as a Spider, 1913, Zincograph (engraving on zinc) on paper, 16 x 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Susan L. Mills Fund, 1955.1

Although it is estimated that Posada produced roughly 20,000 images in his lifetime, he was a multi-disciplinary artist who remained highly unrecognized until his death in 1913. In the 1920's muralist Jean Charlot described Posada's work as "printmaking for the Mexican people." After this statement was made his work gained much

recognition and was printed in papers as representations of *Día De Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead). His work conveyed political and cultural critiques—specifically, in this piece the spider is a symbol of Mexican dictator Victoriano Huerta. He was known to Mexico as a counter-revolutionist and was overthrown shortly after getting his seat in power. Posada tended to represent people he thought of as evil in his work in hopes to bring more awareness to social and political issues with his art.

Taya Wyatt



141/75

Faith Ringgold © 2/22/95

FAITH RINGGOLD

Jo Baker's Birthday, 1995, from the portfolio *10x10: Ten Women/Ten Prints*, Eleven color silkscreen on paper, 22 x 22 in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Mrs. John C. Sigourney [Mary Singleton], B.A. 1949, Fund, 1995.12.i

Jo Baker's Birthday is from Faith Ringgold's *French Collection*, a series of painted quilts depicting the fictional life of Ringgold's heroine, artist Willia Marie Simone, and her encounters with various artists in 1920's France. The borders of this quilt tell the story of Simone painting a portrait of French cabaret dancer and vocalist Josephine Baker. The composition references Manet's *Olympia*, 1863, as Baker's bare chest, ornate jewelry, the large flower in her hair, and her leisurely pose in the left foreground echoes that of Olympia herself. And yet here the roles have

been reversed—in Manet's painting, the nude, white Olympia is being offered flowers by her Black maid Laure. Ringgold has used the fictional narrative of Simone painting this portrait to reimagine the history of Black artists, and specifically Black women, within the world of art history. Ringgold instead positions Baker as the principal figure of this scene, reducing the role of Baker's white maid by placing her even deeper in the background as she arranges fruit on a table in what appears to be a different room. In addition to Manet's *Olympia*, Baker's maid references Matisse's *Harmony in Red*, 1908. Through borrowed elements from famous French artists, Ringgold reshapes art history to include the subjective experience of Black women, bringing them out of the background and into the forefront.

Simone Gage



SHAHZIA SIKANDER

Plush Blush, 2003, Gouache and ink on hand clay-coated paper, 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, 2003.30



DANIEL VALENCIA

Como Los Gigantes Que Seguimos, 2019, 3 color halftone screen print on 100lb Cougar paper, 20 x 17 in.

NEW ACQUISITION

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase, Selected by Simone Gage, Sage Gaspar, Sydney Pearce, Melika Sebihi, and Taya Wyatt, students in the Mills College Fall 2020 Museum Studies Workshop

Daniel Valencia is a self-taught photographer who practices traditional black and white darkroom techniques. He was born in San Jose and raised in Seven Trees, San Jose by his Mexican-American mother. Seven Trees was its own unincorporated city and was not recognized as a part of San Jose until it was annexed in 2009. Growing up with no designated police force, city officials, or governing authority in the area, Daniel chose a skateboard and a

camera as his way of observing, documenting, and processing the mayhem around him. In 2014, he began working as a darkroom technician, where he started exploring his current techniques of burning and physically

manipulating photo negatives, as well as mural sized darkroom printing. He is the official photographer for the political printmaking collective the San Francisco Poster Syndicate.



CARRIE MAE WEEMS

Commemorating Every Black Man Who Lives to See Twenty-One, 1992, Glaze and gold paint on Lenox porcelain plate, $\frac{3}{4} \times 10 \frac{5}{8} \times 10 \frac{5}{8}$ in.

Mills College Art Museum Collection, Gift of Fay Pfaelzer and Jonathan Abrams, 2013.5.6

This piece is one in a series of twenty commemorative plates in which Weems commissioned the American china manufacturer Lenox—known for their production of customized dinner plates and tableware for the White House, U.S. Embassies, and governors' mansions—to produce commemorative plates celebrating achievements and cultural contributions in Black American history, both grandiose and tragically simple. Weems appropriates this classic design of a white, gold rimmed dinner plate with centered, plain text commonly used in celebration of the

political triumphs of the wealthy elite to instead recognize and honor the accomplishments of Black Americans, and does so in such a way that calls our attention to the powerful significance of such achievements as a Black man living to see the age of twenty-one. Given the 2020 resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in protest of police brutality and systemic racism in the United States, the harrowing message conveyed through the text on this plate is as relevant today as it was when Weems created this piece in 1992. Other commemorative plates in the series include *Commemorating Blues, Jazz, Collard Greens & Thelonious Monk* and *Commemorating Jo Ann Robinson, Claudette Colvin, Rosa Parks for Not Getting Up*.

Simone Gage