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Media Contact: Christa Cesario

MCAM Program Director

(510) 430-3340 | ccesario@mills.edu

Mills College Art Museum Presents Its Winter Exhibition Line-Up

*Personal to Political: Celebrating the African American Artists of the Paulson Fontaine Press
and Unseen: The Hidden Labor of Women*

PERSONAL TO POLITICAL: CELEBRATING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE PAULSON FONTAINE PRESS

JANUARY 22 – MARCH 13, 2022

OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 2022 | 5:00-7:00 PM

Oakland, CA (November 9, 2021) — Mills College Art Museum is pleased to announce *Personal to Political: Celebrating the African American Artists of the Paulson Fontaine Press*.

There is no singular way to address the conversation of race and representation in contemporary art. *Personal to Political* presents fourteen artists who capture the personal narratives and political discourses of African Americans across the country, reflecting a collective experience expressed in uniquely individual ways. This powerful exhibition of figurative and abstract artworks channels the poetics of the human experience from past and present and boldly presents ideas about history, identity, personal stories, and spiritual inspiration.

At the heart of this show is Berkeley-based fine art print studio [Paulson Fontaine Press](#), who over the past two decades has developed an unparalleled roster of internationally celebrated artists – artists like Martin Puryear, Kerry James Marshall, and the Gee’s Bend Quilters – who characterize the fresh perspectives that are today’s avant-garde.

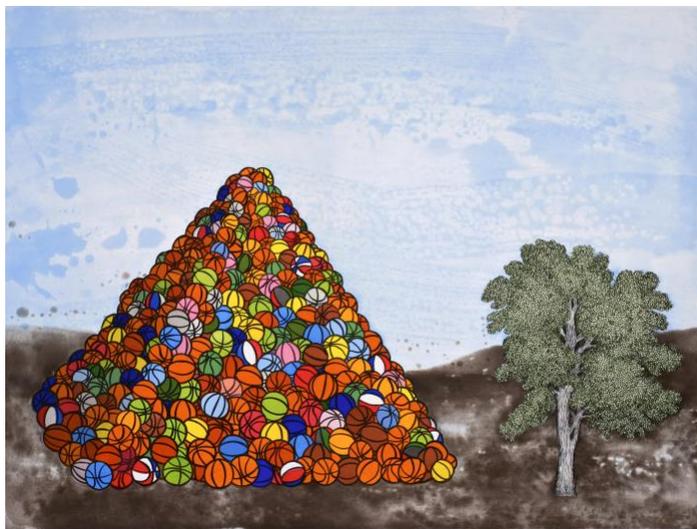
In addition to the forty-four prints from Paulson Fontaine Press, the exhibition includes a selection of studio works by several of the exhibition artists including paintings, collage, sculpture, and quilts. Taken



Samuel Levi Jones, *Amalgamation*, 2017, Flat bite and color aquatint, 39 in x 31.5 in

as a whole, this show offers a rich display of media and material and an expansive approach to art-making.

Personal to Political features works by Edgar Arceneaux, Radcliffe Bailey, McArthur Binion, Gee's Bend Quilters (Louisiana Bendolph, Mary Lee Bendolph, Loretta Bennett, Loretta Pettway), Lonnie Holley, David Huffman, Samuel Levi Jones, Kerry James Marshall, Martin Puryear, Gary Simmons, and Lava Thomas. The exhibition was organized by Carrie Lederer, Curator of Exhibitions, Bedford Gallery, Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, CA.



David Huffman, *Basketball Pyramid*, 2007, Color aquatint, spit bite sugar lift, soft ground and hard ground etching, 37.5 in x 45 in

ABOUT PAULSON FONTAINE PRESS

Established in Emeryville in 1996, Paulson Fontaine Press, formerly Paulson Bott Press, is known for amplifying important, often underrepresented, voices in the visual arts. In 1997, after hearing the painter Kerry James Marshall give a talk about the dearth of Black voices and representation in major museums and art institutions co-founder Pam Paulson realized there was a vacuum to be filled.

Through their fine art publishing program, Paulson Fontaine Press reaches new audiences for African American artists across the country. Artists include Samuel Levi Jones, known for compositions created from

deconstructed institutional texts; Bay Area artist Lava Thomas, whose multidisciplinary practice considers themes of social justice, female subjectivity, current events and the shifting tides of history; and Edgar Arceneaux, a Los Angeles native who has been a pivotal leader of the Watts House Project, an effort to revitalize the Watts community through art.

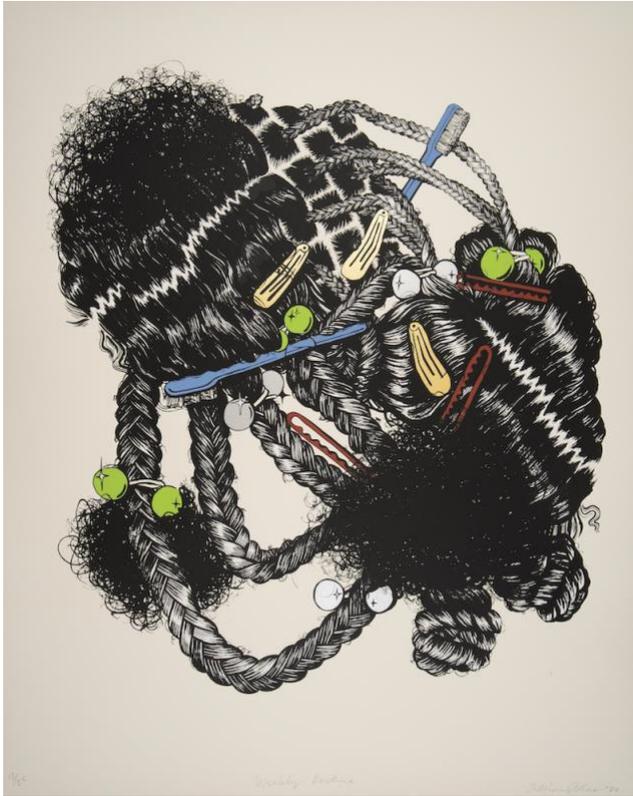
About the importance of this focus at the press, Rhea Fontaine states: *"People like William Arnett, who supported the Gee's Bend Quilters, and Lowery Stokes Sims, whose pioneering work at the Metropolitan Museum and the Studio Museum in Harlem introduced so many minority artists to larger audiences—these are the people who are taking risks that others aren't willing to take, saying things that other people aren't willing to say, seeing things that other people are not seeing. We've always tried to connect ourselves with that type of visionary. Because of them, a handful of these really talented artists have become known to us and the world at large."*

<http://paulsonfontaine.com/>

UNSEEN: THE HIDDEN LABOR OF WOMEN

JANUARY 22 – MARCH 13, 2022

OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 2022 | 5:00-7:00 PM



Adrianna Adams, *Weekly Routine #1*, 2020, 7 color screenprint on 100lb cougar paper, 16 in x 20 in

Featuring works from Mills College Art Museum's permanent collection, *Unseen: The Hidden Labor of Women* examines multiple feminist perspectives on women's labor. Curated by students in the Fall 2021 Museum Studies Workshop, the exhibition highlights the traditionally under-recognized emotional, physical, and domestic work of women as caregivers, community organizers, professionals, and artists.

At a moment when Mills is transitioning away from its identity as an historically women's college, *Unseen* celebrates the power and legitimacy of women's experiences. Featured works examine the issue of beauty standards, including pieces by Adrianna Adams and Mildred Howard that speak to black women's bodies, as well as a feminist reassessment of Mel Ramos' pinups. The complicated role of motherhood and family are captured in several works, including a rarely-seen early drawing by Lynn Hershman Leeson. A wide variety of media are represented in the exhibition, from photography to works on

paper, as well as paintings by Constance Jenkins Macky and Clark Hobart that were part of the museum's founding collection from 1925.

The exhibition showcases pieces from MCAM's holdings, including works by Adrianna Adams, Mary Cassatt, Ann Chamberlain, Imogen Cunningham, The Guerrilla Girls, Lynn Hershman Leeson, Clark Hobart, Mildred Howard, Kathe Kollwitz, Carmen Lomas Garza, Constance Jenkins Macky, Bill Owens, Mel Ramos, Beth Van Hoesen, and Elizabeth Ginno Winkler.

Unseen also features new acquisitions by contemporary artists associated with NIAD Art Center in Richmond, California, a progressive art studio for adult artists with developmental disabilities. The recent additions to MCAM's collection are part of a newly launched student acquisition project to identify, research, and justify specific artworks that help diversify the museum's permanent collection.

Unseen: The Hidden Labor of Women is curated by Olivia Olson-Roberts, Susan Prier, Mollie Schottstaedr, and Jenny Varner. The exhibition is accompanied by a digital catalogue featuring original scholarship by the students.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Opening Reception

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 5-7PM
Mills College Art Museum

Artist Lecture: Lava Thomas

Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 7–8:30PM
Danforth Lecture Hall, Mills College

Visit mcam.mills.edu for details.

About the Mills College Art Museum

Founded in 1925, Mills College Art Museum is a forum for exploring art and ideas and a laboratory for contemporary art practices. Through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections, the museum engages and inspires the intellectual and creative life of the Mills community as well as the diverse audiences of the Bay Area and beyond. mcam.mills.edu

Museum hours: Tuesday-Sunday 11:00am-4:00pm, Wednesday 11:00am-7:30pm
Admission is FREE and open to the public.
