

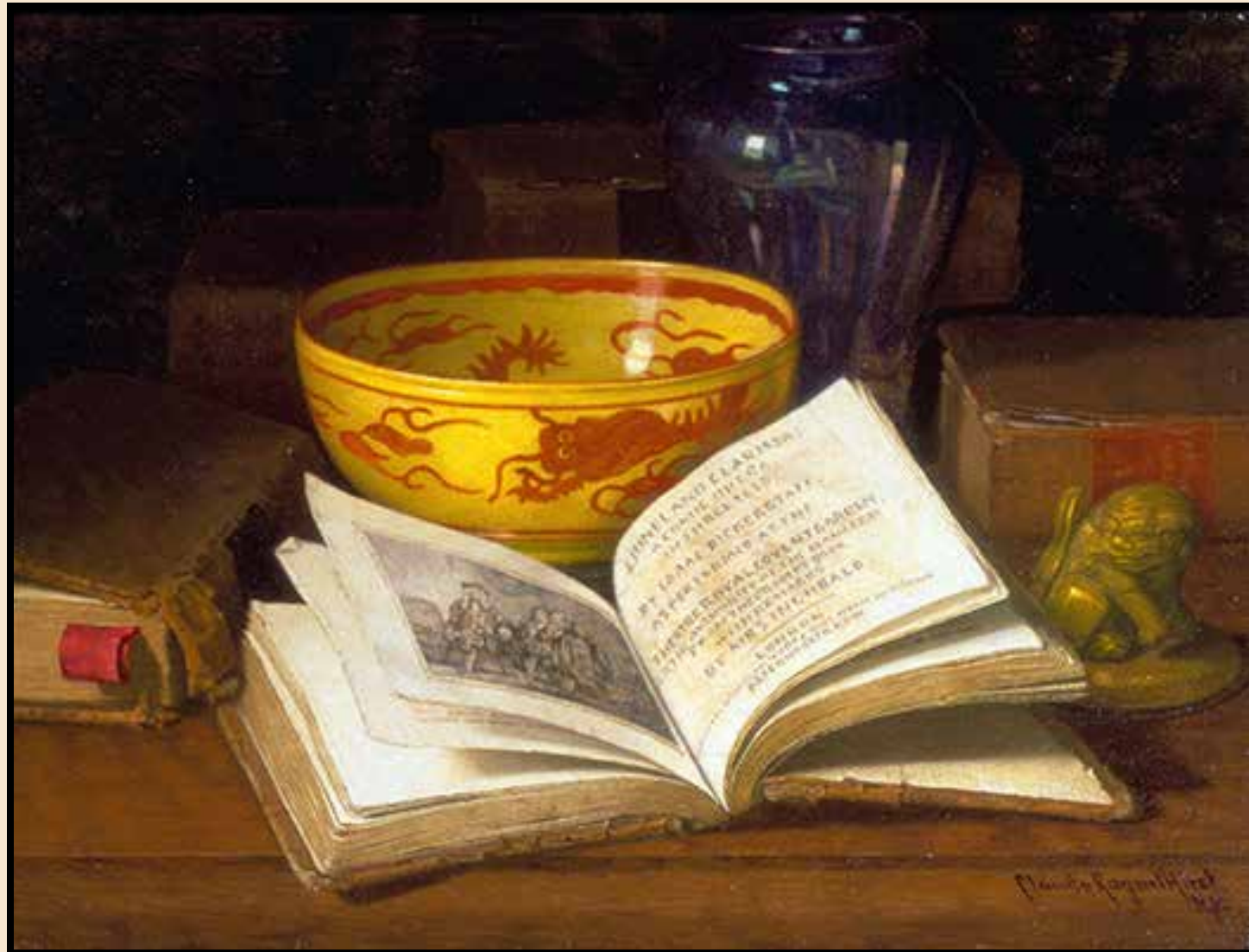
American Women Artists Since the Vote

Amendment XIX of the Constitution of the United States

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

This online exhibition presents works from the Museum's collection by twenty-five American women since 1920, the year of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. These selections represent every decade of the past century and a range of media, including painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, and installation. The artists included here came from, lived in, and traveled to diverse regions of the United States and some even around the world, and they relate to a range of social and ethnic backgrounds and experiences. Their artworks indicate the engagement of American women in a variety of modes and styles of artmaking during this period, including their elevation of some practices that have been considered women's work and, hence, less important than "fine" arts like painting and sculpture.

This exhibition has a dual purpose: to celebrate the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment and to consider its ramifications for the American women it was intended to enfranchise. Certainly, it was a boon—agonizingly hard-won—for the women of this country finally to have the right to vote. However, the language of the amendment made the extension of the right to vote limited and allowed states, counties, and municipalities to continue inhibiting voting rights on other accounts, including age, ethnicity, literacy in English, and ability to pay poll taxes. We honor the achievement of women's suffrage by showcasing the accomplishments of these artists, and we examine the contexts and circumstances that make their deeds all the more impressive. They overcame barriers that existed not only because of their sex and gender, but also because of their identities in terms of race, class, and geography.



Claudine Raguet Hirst (American, 1855–1942)
Still Life with Bowl
(*Lionel and Clarissa – A Comic Opera*), ca. 1922
Oil on canvas

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund and Gift of Museum Associates (91.280)

Hirst signed this painting like her others with the first name Claude, because it helped improve sales of her work if she were considered a man. Her early repertoire focused on flowers, but after 1890 she painted still-lives with masculine subjects that were called library table compositions. She was often referred to as the “female Harnett,” because of her friendship with painter William Harnett and the similarity of their highly naturalistic style, called *trompe l’oeil* (fool the eye). Reflecting the gender inequities in the field of the visual arts during Hirst’s lifetime, no one referred to Harnett as the “male Hirst.”



Miriam McKinnie (American, 1906–87)

Still Life with Art Books, ca. 1925–30

Oil on canvas

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (2011.27)

Remarkably, McKinnie's parents and teachers encouraged her from a young age to pursue her interest in art. She studied at both the Minneapolis School of Fine Art and the Kansas City Art Institute and participated in the Art Colony in Ste. Genevieve. She was a well-rounded artist who showed great technical skill in a variety of media. The originality of her compositions was noted by contemporary critics, and she received several commissions from the Works Progress Administration. McKinnie received awards from local and national organizations, including the St. Louis Artists' Guild, the Kansas City Art Institute, and the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors in New York.



This New York Breadline

Clare Leighton

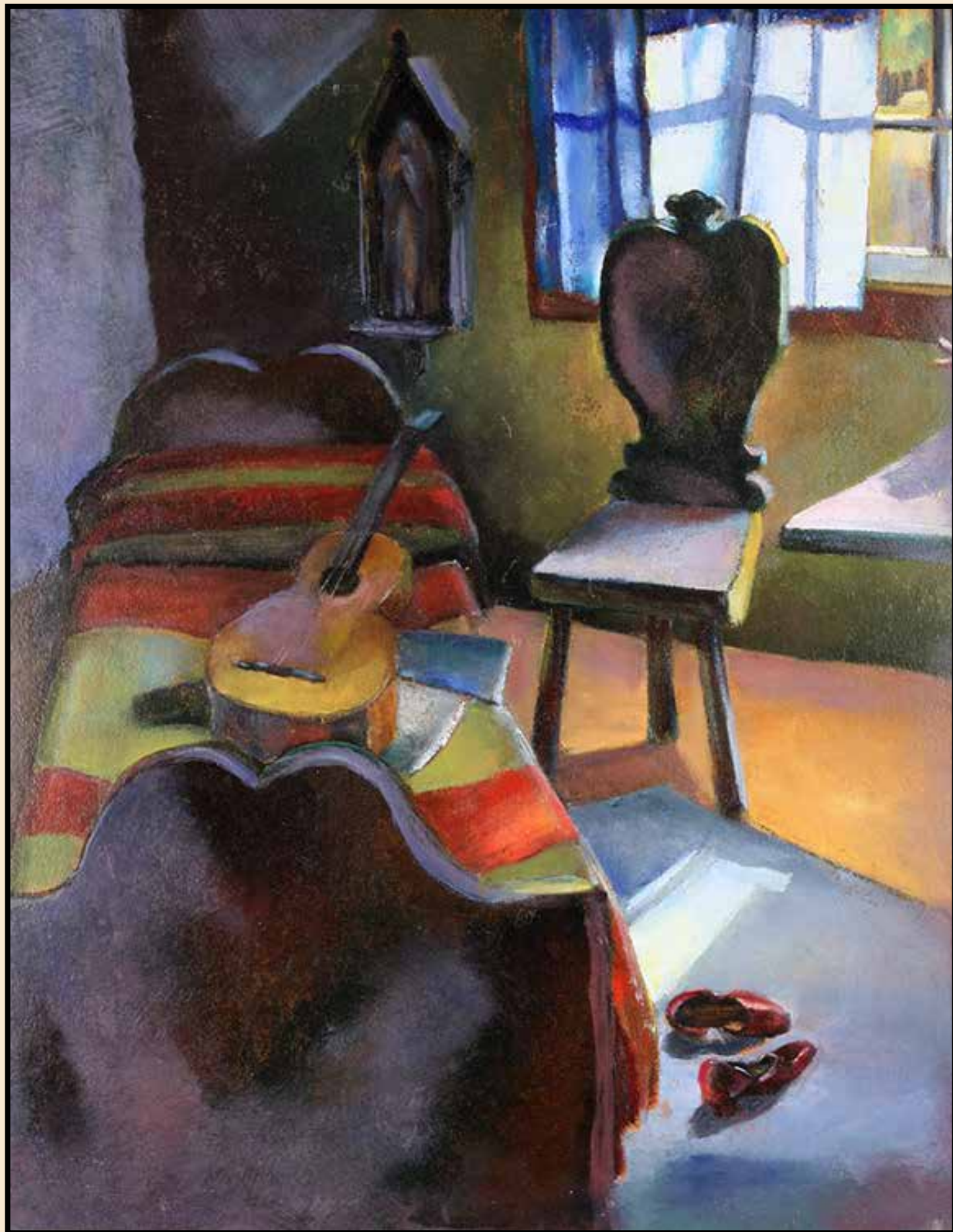
Clare Leighton (British-American, 1898–1989)

New York Breadline, 1932

Wood engraving on paper

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (2009.124)

Leighton's parents and uncle, the artist and illustrator Jack Leighton, recognized her budding talent in painting. She trained formally at Brighton College of Art and the renowned Slade School of Fine Art in London, her native city. In 1922 she began wood engraving, a medium that was not widely practiced, and came to specialize in it, producing over 900 prints throughout her career. Wood engraving lends itself to Leighton's style with striking tonal contrasts. In this bold composition, she captures the grimness of Depression-era Manhattan.



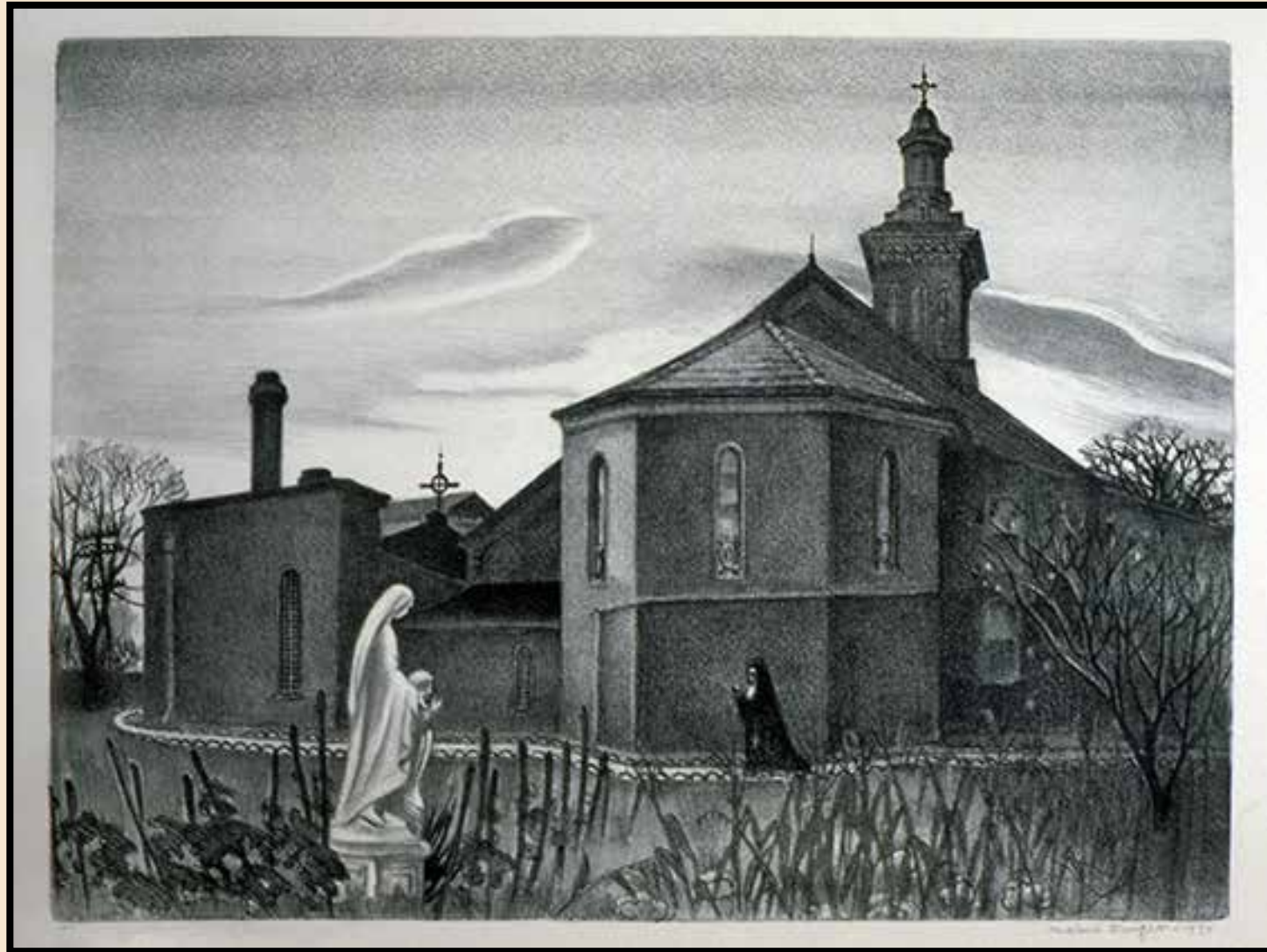
Jessie Beard Rickly (American, 1895–1975)

Red Shoes Fantasy, ca. 1932–35

Oil on Masonite

Gift of Museum Associates (2011.24)

Rickly was born in Poplar Bluff, Missouri and educated at Harvard University and Washington University in St. Louis. In 1934 she and fellow St. Louis artists Bernard Peters and Aimee Schweig founded an artist colony in the southeast Missouri town of Ste. Genevieve. The summer colony attracted well known artists and became known nationally for its aesthetic, political, and social progressiveness. Notable artists who participated include Thomas Hart Benton, Joe Jones, and Joseph Vorst. Independent, spirited, and politically active, Rickly became a voice for women in the arts by defying prevailing gender expectations.



Mabel Dwight (American, 1875–1955)

Convent, Staten Island, 1934

Lithograph on paper

Transferred from the Old Collection (X-92)

As a young woman Dwight formally studied art in San Francisco and travelled extensively in France, Italy, Egypt, India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and Java (Indonesia). By 1903 she settled in Greenwich Village in New York City and pursued a career as a painter and illustrator. She largely gave up her work when she married a fellow artist. After her divorce in 1918, she joined the Whitney Studio Club, an arts facility supported by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney and precursor to the Whitney Museum of American Art (opened in 1931). At the age of fifty-one, Dwight moved to Paris in order to study lithography. Upon her return to New York in 1928 she had a solo exhibition at the Weyhe Gallery that received critical acclaim. She worked exclusively in lithograph for the remainder of her career. This print dates to her time working for the Federal Arts Program. In 1936, *Prints* magazine named her one of the best living printmakers in America.



Maria Martinez (Pueblo, 1887–1980) and
Julian Martinez (Pueblo, 1885–1943)

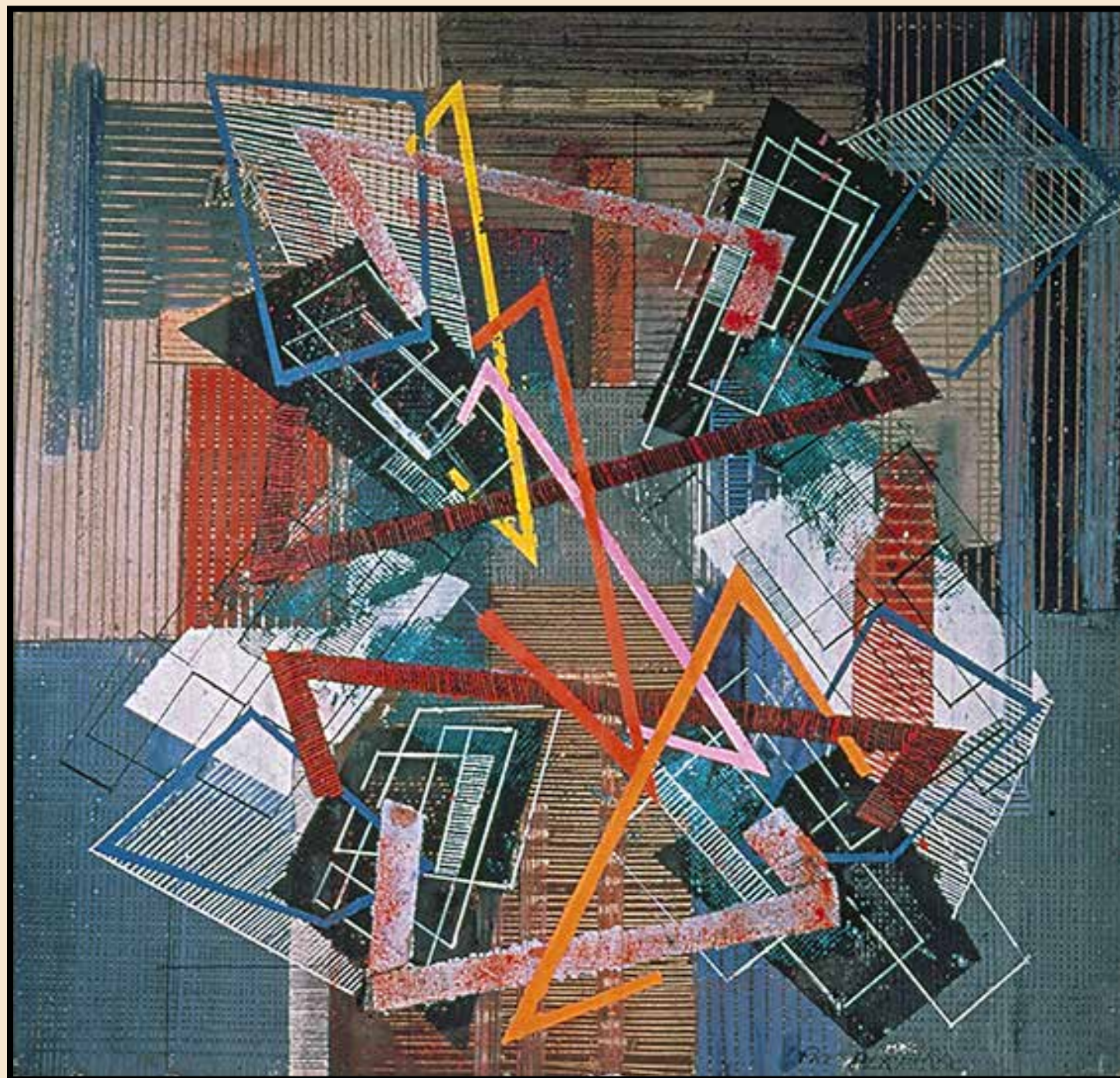
Plate, ca. 1934–43

Black-on-black ware

Gift of Vera and Boyd O'Dell (96.8)

Maria Martinez is one of the most celebrated Native American ceramists. She developed an immediately recognizable – and later widely copied – style of traditional vessel forms with polished black-on-black decoration. She had been hired in 1908 by archaeologist Edgar Lee Hewitt to recreate ancient forms for exhibition. While she learned from the range of vessel shapes and forms recovered from excavations, the decorative technique she and her husband, Julian Martinez, developed was uniquely their own.

Although the Nineteenth Amendment granted voting rights to many, it did nothing for Native Americans like Maria and Julian Martinez; they were not recognized as citizens of the United States until 1924 and were not guaranteed the right to vote in all states until 1962.



Irene Rice Pereira (American, 1907–71)

Triangles, ca. 1948

Gouache and mixed media on paper

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Small (69.1009)

Pereira is considered an important figure in American Modernism in the mid-twentieth century. She studied at the Arts Student League in New York City and the Académie Moderne in Paris. Cubism, Russian Constructivism, Bauhaus, and De Stijl influenced her style of abstract and geometric forms and her experimental approaches to art-making. Her work also reflects her interests in science, metaphysics, and the occult. As an employee of the Works Progress Administration, she helped design and build the Design Laboratory for the Industrial Arts in New York City, where she subsequently taught. An example of her technical experimentation, this gouache on paper incorporates areas of incising, embossing, and imprinting with various textured materials. She always signed “I. Rice Pereira,” perhaps to avoid gendered labeling of her work.



Grace Hartigan (American, 1922–2008)

The Gallow Ball, 1950

Oil and newspaper on canvas

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (2002.27)

Hartigan was part of the Abstract Expressionist movement, sometimes called the New York School, because it flourished in New York City in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Not until recently have women artists' significant contributions to this movement been recognized through exhibitions and publications. Hartigan and her cohort were proponents of seeking higher or universal truths through abstraction. Influenced by theories of psychoanalysis, these artists sought to reflect unconscious energies through the gestural act of painting. They applied paint with bold brushstrokes and sometimes dripped or poured it directly onto their canvases. This painting, one of Hartigan's earliest works, exhibits her assertive handling of paint and brush, as well as her experimentation with collage using repurposed material.



Anne Ryan (American, 1889–1954)

#333, 1954

Paper, handmade paper, fabric, and foil
mounted on wove paper

Gift of the Student Fee Capital Improvement Committee
University of Missouri (82.324)

Ryan came to visual arts later in life, after having a marriage with three children and pursuing her ambitions as a writer. She published both poetry and fiction and became involved in the vibrant arts community of Greenwich Village in New York City. She began painting in 1932 at the age of 43. During the 1940s she joined Atelier 17, the innovative print workshop of Stanley William Hayter (1901–88), which had been relocated from Paris to New York due to World War II. During her time there she made experimental works in engraving, etching, and woodcut. An exhibition of works by the German artist Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948) inspired her to take up collage in 1948. In their small scale and subtle materials, Ryan's collages are intimate and nuanced expressions of the ideas of the Abstract Expressionist movement, or New York School, of which she was a first-generation member. During the last six years of her life, she created approximately 400 collages, many of them numbered like this one, akin to the practice of composers identifying their musical works by number.



Daisy Cook (American, 1902–77)
Meeting All Day and Dinner on the Ground, 1968
Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph O. Fischer in honor of Dr. Saul Weinberg (77.118)

Called the “Grandma Moses of the Ozarks,” Cook painted both from memory and imagination the rural life she had experienced as a child and young woman. A school-teacher in the environs of Branson, Missouri, she began painting in her retirement, when her daughter encouraged her to take some painting classes. During a period when many women artists pushed back against gender stereotypes, Cook’s paintings are tinged with nostalgia for an idealized past. She represented rural work and past-times that are associated with women, including preparing foods, gardening, quilting, doing farm chores, and attending school church.



Diane Arbus (American, 1923–71)

Untitled (8), 1969

Gelatin silver print on paper

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (99.5)

Born into a wealthy family in New York City, Arbus began her career as an assistant to her husband, a fashion photographer. She studied photography under Lisette Model at the New School in New York and later achieved success and fame as a fine art photographer. Her works often capture individuals and communities who were — and still are — marginalized, including transgendered people, circus performers, and mental health patients. The raw intensity of her photos follows the tradition of straight photography and implies documentary realism, but like all forms of documentary, her imagery allows for multiple — sometimes conflicting — interpretations. Arbus was frequently consumed by depression and tragically committed suicide on July 26, 1971.



Tracy Montminy (American, 1911–92)

Captive Prometheus, ca. 1970–76

Oil on canvas backed by wood panel

Transferred from Missouri Student Unions, Student & Auxiliary Services, MU (2011.280)

Born Mary Elizabeth Tracy in Boston, Montminy graduated from Radcliffe College with a Fine Arts degree in 1933 and studied at the Art Students League in New York in 1934–35. She painted five murals for the Works Progress Administration during the late 1930s and received a Guggenheim Fellowship in painting in 1940. She went on to teach at Stephens College and the University of Missouri. A trust she bequeathed upon her death established the Montminy Art Gallery at Boone County History and Culture Center.

This painting from later in Montminy's career reflects her interest in Greek mythology. Prometheus held captive is the subject of several notable Old Master paintings; thus, this towering work could be interpreted as a bold statement of the artist's sense of self.



Brooke Bulovsky Cameron (American, b. 1941)

Miss Willie, 1977

Etching on paper

Printed by R. E. Townsend, Georgetown, Massachusetts

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Christopher A. Graf (78.196)

Cameron is professor emerita of art at the University of Missouri. She earned her MFA in intaglio printmaking from the University of Iowa and has participated in advanced studies in a variety of print techniques. This etching depicts a woman called Miss Willie, who had moved to Fulton to start work as a nurse only to be turned away because she was Black. Cameron became aware of this story when Miss Willie's tragic death was covered in the *Columbia Tribune*. Miss Willie had lived in a tent in Fulton, but upon her death it was discovered that she had a significant amount of money in the bank. "So that life was her choice," Cameron says. "I admired her independence and fierce will to survive." For many citizens in this country the lack of a residential or permanent address remains a barrier to their voting rights.



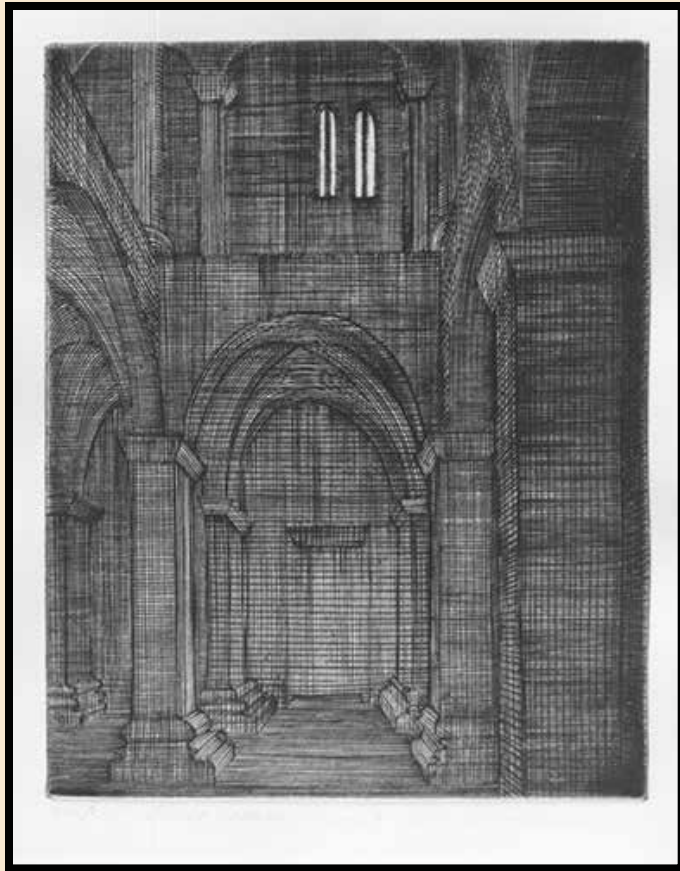
Fran Bull (American, b. 1938)

Lincoln Center/Dusk, 1979

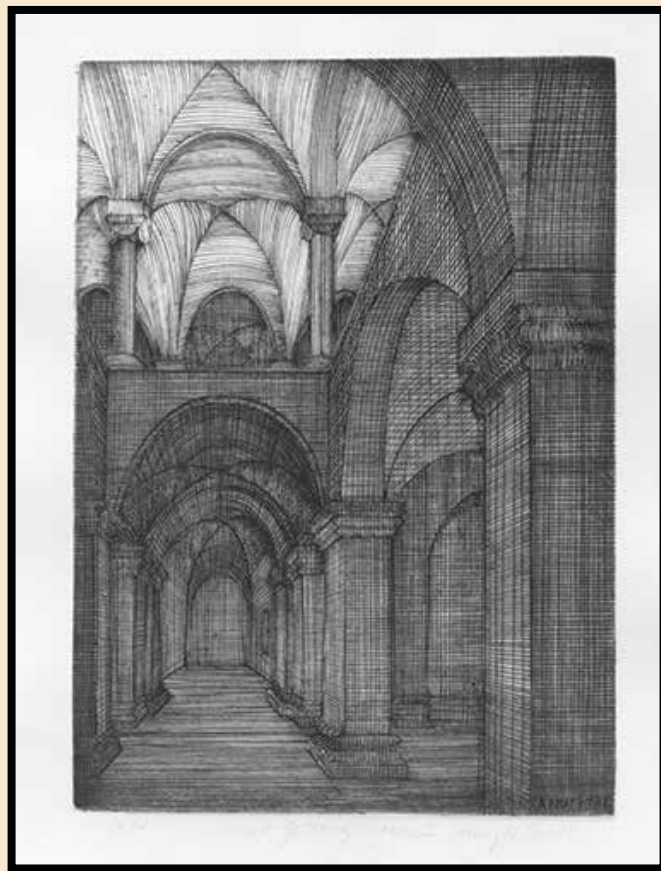
Serigraph on paper

Gift of the Department of Art, MU (2010.19.5)

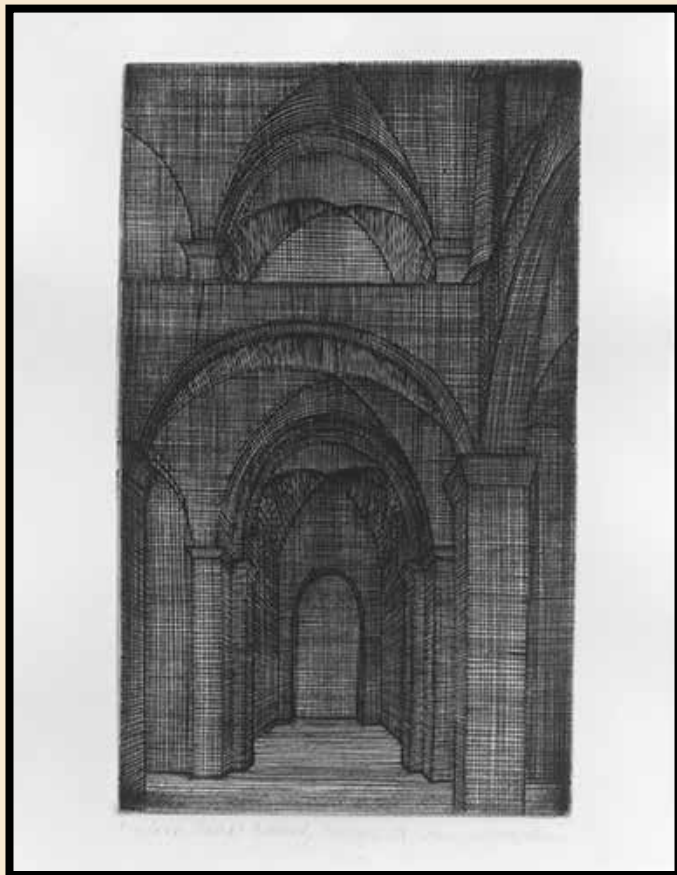
Bull has considered herself an artist since she was a child, when she participated in educational programs at the Newark Museum of Art. She formally studied painting at Bennington College and textile design at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and earned a Masters in Art and Art Education from New York University. She established herself as a photorealist in the 1970s and 1980s, as exemplified by this serigraph, but has since explored several other styles and techniques. She now lives and works in Brandon, Vermont, where in 2004 she established Gallery in-the-Field, a fine art gallery and performance space, whose mission is to present the work of provocative, innovative, and “edgy” living artists.



Sankt Gotthard, Mainz I (85.265)



Sankt Gotthard, Mainz II (85.266)

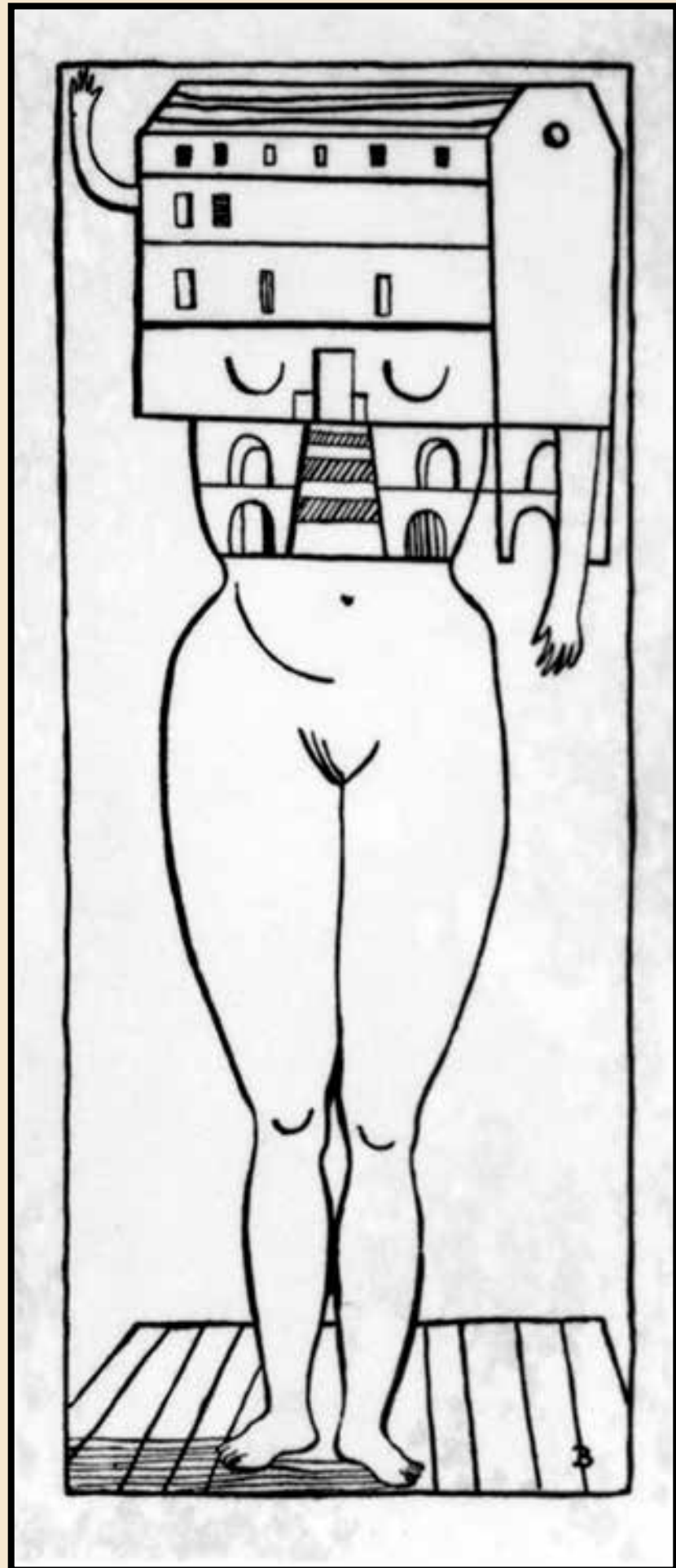


Sankt Gotthard, Mainz III (85.267)

Amy Worthen (American, b. 1946)
Sankt Gotthard, Mainz I, II, III, 1982
 Engraving on paper

Gift of Dr. Christopher A. Graf (85.265, 85.266, 85.267)

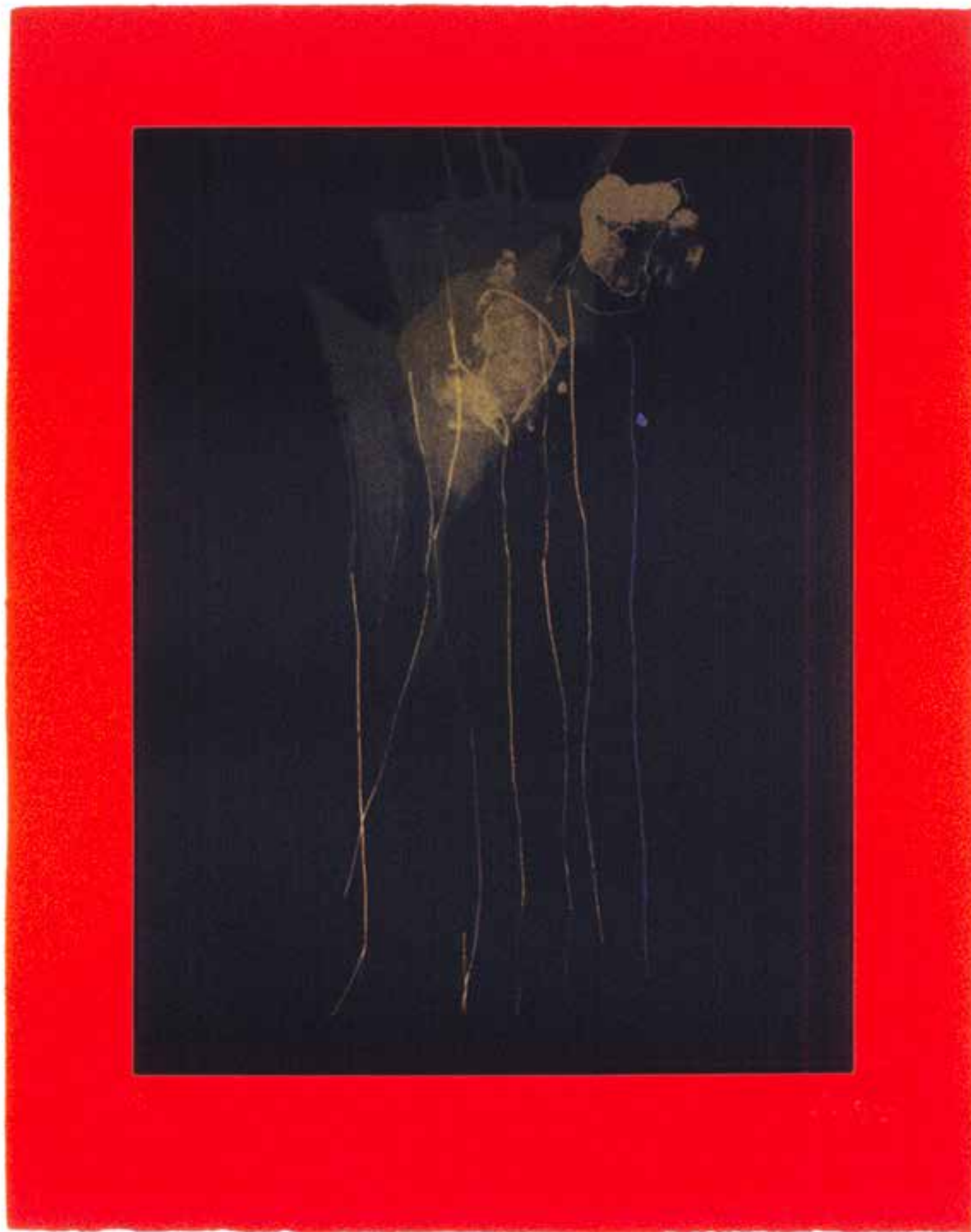
A native of Brooklyn, New York, Worthen has made her career as a printmaker and print historian in Iowa. She studied printmaking at Smith College and at the University of Iowa. Her principle technique is engraving, an exacting method of cutting lines with a burin into copper plates. International travel has been an important part of her life and work, and since 2004, she has divided her life between Des Moines and Venice. Her body of work reflects this interest in the experience of place through the numerous architectural views and cityscapes she has produced. This series represents the interior of the Romanesque chapel of Sankt Gotthard in the cathedral of Mainz, demonstrating the extraordinary variation in tonal values that Worthen can achieve with engraving.



Louise Bourgeois (American, 1911–2010)
Femme Maison (Housewife), 1984, reprinted 1990
Photogravure on Arches paper
Printed by Piero Crommelynck, Paris
Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (2000.3)

Bourgeois was born in Paris and studied art there both in formal programs and with several notable artists. She immigrated to the United States in 1938 and continued her studies at the Art Students League in New York. She had a remarkably long and prolific career as a painter, printmaker, and sculptor and is best known for her large-scale public sculptures.

In 1946–47 Bourgeois made a series of paintings titled *Femme Maison*, which play on this French term for “housewife” that translates into English literally as “Woman House.” These works combined representations of domestic architecture and the female form. Almost forty years later she returned to the subject with this print. Critics in the mid-twentieth century saw the images as affirming a “natural” identification between the woman and the home; however, later interpretations suggest alternative views of domesticity as sources of tension and conflict for some women, when their identities become dominated by their roles as homemakers.



Helen Frankenthaler (American, 1928–2011)

Ramblas, 1987–88

Lithograph and etching on paper

Gift of Museum Associates (92.75)

A New Yorker, Frankenthaler rose to prominence early in her career with her inclusion in significant exhibitions of Abstract Expressionist and Color Field paintings. She had a romantic relationship with the art critic Clement Greenberg, who championed these styles. She married fellow artist Robert Motherwell in 1958; they divorced in 1971. Although she is best known for her paintings using a stain technique from the mid-twentieth century, she was also a printmaker and produced numerous works throughout her long career. The ethereal quality of her abstractions with thin paint on canvas is also evident in this print, which achieves gestural expressiveness with acid and ink. When asked about being a woman artist, she said, “I don’t resent being a female painter. I don’t exploit it. I paint.”



CURE/HEAL

Lorna Simpson (American, b. 1960)

Cure/Heal, 1992

From the series *10, Artist as Catalyst, A Portfolio to Benefit the Alternative Museum*

Serigraph on paper

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (97.16.12)

After interning at the Studio Museum in Harlem and completing her master's degree at the University of California at San Diego, Simpson emerged in the mid-1980s as a leading artist exploring identity politics, especially the experiences of Black and African-American women in contemporary society. This print suggests a woman without depicting her, using externalities conventionally associated with women. "By presenting these clichés about women, I'm dealing with the language of stereotypes," she says. "I'm pointing to the fact that the wrong questions are so often asked, and this is why you don't know anything about this person."



Jo Stealey (American, b. 1950)

X Marks the Spot II, 1992

Handmade and colored paper

Gift of Museum Associates (92.78)

Professor emerita of art and former director of the School of Visual Studies at the University of Missouri, Stealey is a celebrated educator and artist. She developed the fibers curriculum here at the university into a program recognized around the world. She serves on the advisory board for the National Basketry Organization, which she has represented at international conferences, and she is on the board for the Society of Arts and Crafts in Boston. She co-curated a major travelling exhibition of American basketry that began its national tour in 2016 at this Museum. Her artworks have received international attention in several exhibitions of basketry and fiber arts.

This vessel is an early example of a key thread in her work as a contemporary basketmaker using woven and collaged handmade paper. "These sculptural baskets are vessels that depict aspects of my experiences and philosophy of life. Each piece is a visual response to my everyday life, a window into what I read, see, feel – my thoughts, dreams, joys and sorrows."



Carrie Mae Weems (American, b. 1953)
GRABBING SNATCH AND BLINK AND YOU BE GONE, 1993
From the series *Slave Coast*
Gelatin silver prints and serigraph on paper
Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (99.10 a-c)

Weems attended the University of California at Berkeley in the 1970s, earning a master's degree in folklore studies. In 1984 she received another master's degree in photography from the University of California at San Diego. Best known for her photographs that address various themes of the Black experience, Weems challenges viewers to question equality as it relates to race, gender, and class. She developed the series *Slave Coast* in 1993 after she visited a historical slave-holding fort on Gorée Island just off the coast of Dakar, Senegal. As the final point of departure from the African continent for captives, this fort marks the brutal severance of culture, identity, dignity, freedom – and sometimes life – for an unknown number of victims.



Faith Ringgold (American, b. 1930)
The Sunflower Quilting Bee at Arles, 1996
 Lithograph on paper
 Gift of Museum Associates (99.9)

This print honors both noteworthy historical African-American women and quilting and sewing, means of artistic expression associated with women. Each of the women depicted here represents some form of Black activism, including abolitionism, slave liberation, civil rights, as well as education, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy. Among these women is Fannie Lou Hamer (1917–77), an activist for women’s rights and voting rights, an important organizer during the Civil Rights Movement, and a co-founder of the National Women’s Political Caucus, which supports women running for political office. The Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 said that citizens could not be denied the right to vote on the basis of sex, but this wording left room for denial of rights for other reasons. It was ratified during the Jim Crow Era, when both legal and illegal activities—including intimidation, violence, and murder—prevented Blacks from voting, especially in southern states.



Nancy Spero (American, 1926–2009)

Sacred and Profane II, 1996

Paint, appliqués, and woodcut prints on silk

Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund and Gift of the Student Fee Capital Improvement Committee, University of Missouri (2001.2)

A feminist and political activist, Spero was long preoccupied with representations of women. Her work reacts against traditional representations of the female form by male artists. She began her career portraying women as victims but later imbued her figures with strength, vitality, and sexuality. Measuring forty-five feet in length, this work is a double-sided banner of silk panels sewn together, depicting multiple female figures from Eastern and Western cultures. Spero applied the imagery by building up the surface with inking, stamping, and collage techniques.



Detail



Detail



Karen LaMonte (American, b. 1967)

Sleep, 2000

Glass

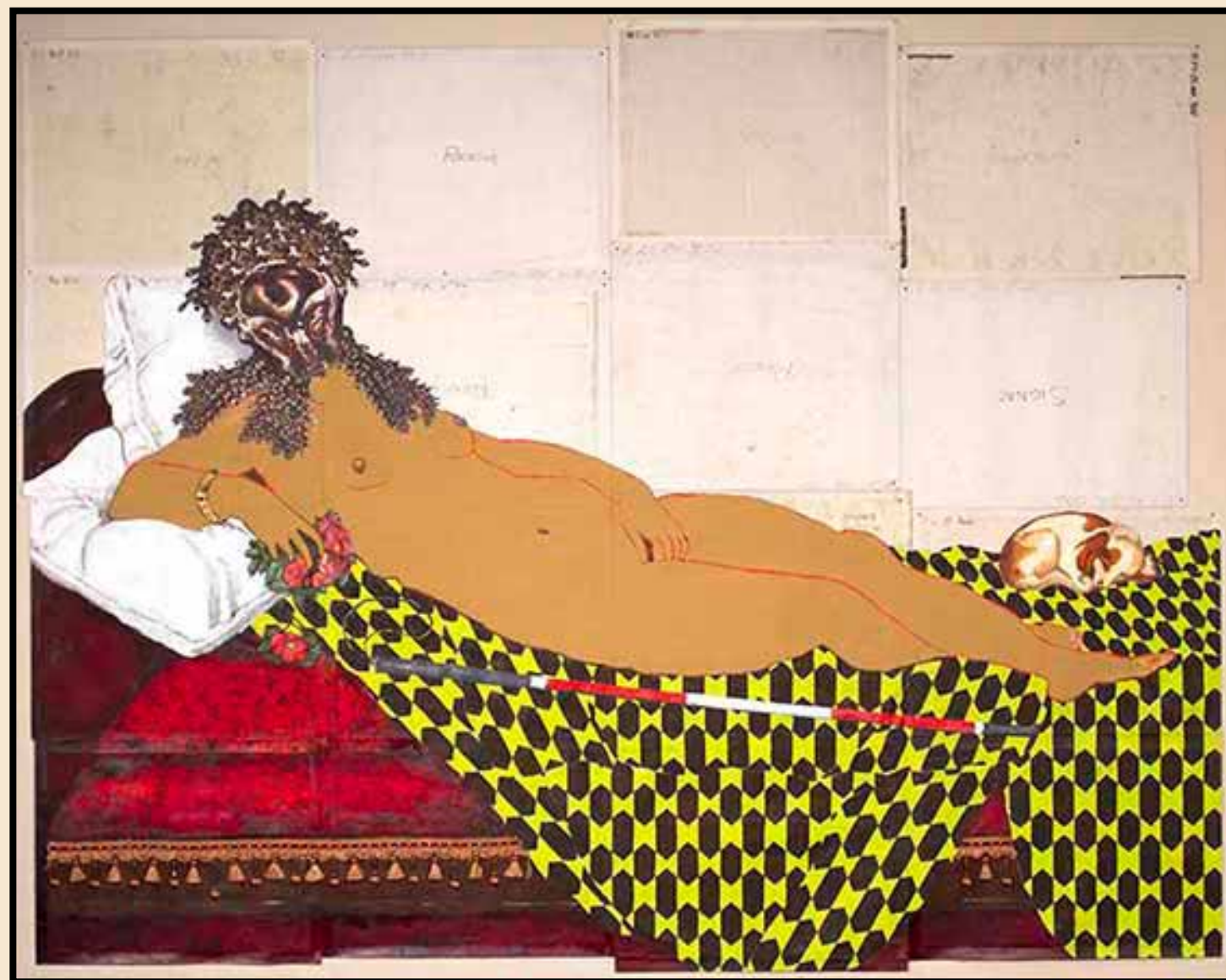
Gift of Mr. Mark Landrum (2009.660)

LaMonte is fascinated by the role clothing plays in personal identity, particularly for women. In order to achieve her aims, she has had to develop innovative casting techniques in collaboration with master glassmakers in the Czech Republic, known for its long history of glass traditions. Many of her sculptures are developed from life-casts of both the human body and the surface of a garment. When the two molds are combined, a hollow space remains between the two layers of glass. This allows light to permeate the sculpture, illuminating the contours and curves of the body as well as the folds and wrinkles of the garment. Through this technique, LaMonte is able to simultaneously display the role of clothing as a presentation of identity while also capturing the form of the body, which is the vessel of true identity.



Kara Walker (American, b. 1969)
Edition No. 19: The Bush, Skinny, De-Boning, 2002
Paint on stainless steel
Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (2017.15 a-c)

Walker's contributions to art and critical discourse were recognized by both an Art Matters Grant and a MacArthur Grant before she reached the age of thirty. She is best known for her visually striking and thematically provocative artworks in black silhouettes, confronting the difficult history and consequences of slavery in the United States as well as persistent stereotypes of race and gender. She made an edition of these sculptures especially for her solo exhibition at the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin in 2002. They are far smaller than her characteristic cut paper silhouettes, which are pasted directly onto gallery walls when exhibited. Those monumental works are meant to be immersive; she sometimes projects aspects of her compositions onto walls, so that viewers become part of the disturbing scenes, thereby suggesting that this is everyone's shared history.



Katherine Sherwood (American, b. 1952)
Blind Venus (for G), 2018
 Acrylic and mixed media on recycled linen
 Gilbreath-McLorn Museum Fund (2018.7.1)

This work is just as much autobiographical as it is critical of Western art. It reinterprets one of the most famous Renaissance nudes, *Venus of Urbino* by Titian (see image below). The figure's face and hair are represented with numerous overlapping medical scans of the artist's head and brain. The figure is incapable of returning the gaze of the viewer, her blindness signaled by a white cane. The red on the cane indicates that she also has significant hearing impairments. The work is painted on the backs of teaching reproductions of great works of art; the artists' names identifying each work are visible. As part of a series of large-scale images in which Sherwood reinterprets famous paintings of nudes, she uses brain scans and other medical images to emphasize internal substance and capability rather than external form and beauty.

