
WE KNOW WHO WE ARE.
WE KNOW WHAT WE WANT.

The Inaugural Exhibition at 1311 E. Cesar Chavez
The permanent home of Women & Their Work

We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.

Curated by Vicki Meek

Featuring artists: Nida Bangash, Lauren Cross, Rehab El Sadek, Angela Faz, Pallavi Govindnathan, Lahib Jaddo, Pat Johnson, Lovie Olivia, & Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga

July 24 - September 21, 2021
1311 E. Cesar Chavez, Austin, Texas

As women and nonbinary artists march into the 21st Century, there are a myriad of possibilities regarding our placement in the annals of world history. We have seen promising movement forward while simultaneously watching that forward movement slip away in bits and pieces, both nationally and internationally. The proverbial two steps forward only to be knocked back four steps is an ever-present reality. **The battle for equal rights seems never-ending.**

Contents

6 ——— Women & Their Work Mission & History

8 ——— The Curator, Vicki Meek

10 ——— *We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want. A Clarion for Kujichagulia/Self-determination in Art* by Aïssatou Sidimé-Blanton

26 ——— Exhibition Images

44 ——— Exhibiting Artists

50 ——— Women & Their Work Board, Staff & Exhibition Sponsors

WOMEN & THEIR WORK

For over 40 years, Women & Their Work has been a cornerstone of the Austin arts community and has played an important role in the development of the visual and performing arts in Texas. We have actively developed the careers of more than 1,900 women artists, presenting hundreds of visual art exhibitions, music, dance and theater events, film festivals, and education programs.

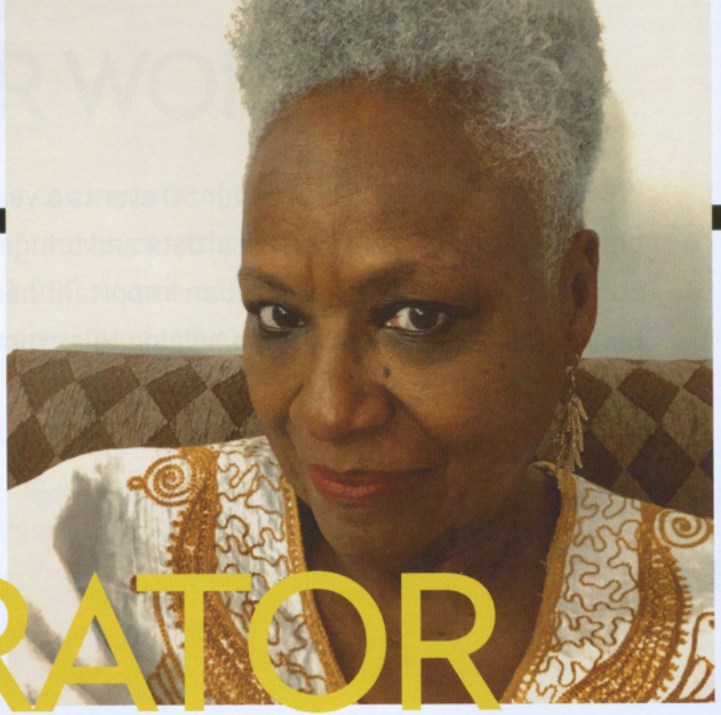
Nationally recognized for the quality of its work, W&TW was the first organization in Texas to receive a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts Visual Arts Program. National Public Radio featured W&TW and its production of an original play about an African-American Texas woman in a six-minute segment on *Morning Edition*. *THIRST*, our first large scale public art installation located on Lady Bird Lake in 2013, called attention to the catastrophic drought in Texas and was viewed by over 185,000 people. It received international attention including features in The *New York Times, The Huffington Post, The Atlantic*, on Canadian public television, and in a 30-minute PBS documentary. In 2020, the Smithsonian Archives of American Art acquired the 43- year archive of W&TW ensuring that our entire history of the work of women artists and our website will be preserved in perpetuity. All 138 W&TW publications will be available in the Smithsonian Library. Also in 2020, W&TW found and purchased a permanent home at 1311 E. Cesar Chavez Street with the support of over 200 donors.

W&TW exhibitions have been reviewed in *The New York Times, Art in America, ArtForum,* and *Art News*, unusual coverage for an organization of this size and geographic location. W&TW was a charter member of the National Performance Network (NPN), a consortium of performing arts presenters across the US. Since its inception in 1986, our education program, It Takes Art To Spell SmART has reached thousands of under-served children in Austin. Our goal is to introduce young audiences to the joy and challenge of contemporary art and provide art education each year to over 850 school children. For many students, visits to Women & Their Work provide access to experiences that they have never had before.

W&TW has grown to present over 50 events a year featuring on-going exhibitions and performances of Texas women artists and bringing artists of national and international stature here. W&TW helps meet an important need in Texas providing exhibition and performance opportunities and helping to attract critical attention to the work produced here. It is the only organization of its kind in the region.



We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.
is the inaugural exhibition in our permanent home
at 1311 E. Cesar Chavez, Austin, Texas



THE CURATOR

Vicki Meek is a nationally recognized artist, independent curator and writer who has exhibited widely. Meek's work is in the permanent collections of the African American Museum in Dallas, The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, and Paul Quinn College. She is currently represented by Talley Dunn Gallery, Dallas, TX. Art League Houston selected Meek as the 2021 Texas Artist of the Year. She recently had a retrospective exhibition of three decades of her work at the Houston Museum of African American Culture and a solo exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center.

In 2013, she was selected as one of ten artists to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Nasher Sculpture Center with the commissioning of a site-specific installation. She has been awarded three public art commissions with the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Art Program and was a co-artist on the Dallas Convention Center Public Art Project, the city's largest public art project. She served on the board of the National Performance Network from 2008-2015 and was Chair from 2012-2014. Meek is currently a full-time artist and COO of USEKRA: Center for Creative Investigation in Costa Rica, a retreat founded by Elia Arce.

"*We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.* is an exhibition that examines how the idea of feminism continues to be one that has many definitions, depending on the lens through which it is viewed. I invited artists whose artwork and lives intrigue me and who all take an unapologetic view of their world, to come together in a collective conversation around issues of feminism and humanism. Each of them speaks their truth about belonging or not belonging, about sisterhood, about othering, about justice or injustice, and about the amplification of their voices on all of these topics.

I have included artists who work in a wide variety of media and who represent equally varied backgrounds. I think in so doing, the conversation takes on a more complex dynamic, not depending solely on a common visual language but instead seeks to draw inferences rather than direct relationships."

Vicki Meek

We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.

A Clarion for Kujichagulia/Self-determination in Art

by Aïssatou Sidimé-Blanton

The world as we knew it imploded in 2020. It was as if a gaping maw consumed first the sense of self through physical lockdowns in the face of a deadly global pandemic that severed familial and social ties, then our sense of safety as dashcam footage and cellphone videos streamed unjust police killings, and then nearly the nation's moral underpinnings as the Leader of the long-touted "Free Democratic World" incited followers to overthrow a legitimate election. The unexpected havoc left no part of society untouched, the art world included. But, as in prior crises, artists and arts institutions have taken up the mantle to help rebuild. The arts non-profit Women & Their Work commissioned acclaimed artist and arts administrator Vicki Meek of Dallas to curate an exhibition befitting this time of social and cultural change, as well as this venerable organization's move into its first permanent space in Austin, Texas.

The exhibition, titled *We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.* is a continuation of the organization's more than four decades of pushing to broaden the art canon. Inspired by the progress of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Women & Their Work joined new arts institutions like the AIR Gallery and the Los-Angeles-based Women's Building to focus solely on promoting women artists. Forty-three years later, Women & Their Work remains the dominant

such institution in the South, having fostered the careers of more than 1,900 women artists through art criticism, juried exhibitions, performances, studio visits and advocacy.

We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want. is a celebration of the organization's and the art world's achievements. One year after the 100th anniversary of the right to vote being given to some U.S. women, we are far removed from a world in which 16th century preeminent painter Artemisia Gentileschi was tortured by judicial officials to prove her claims that her male art mentor had raped her, or even just shortly before Women & Their Work was birthed when Texas banks routinely refused to open bank accounts for women unless their fathers or spouses were listed as joint account holders. Women artists are no longer prevented from studying the human form or required to limit their artistic expression to needlework or landscape painting, which negatively affected their abilities to master artistic techniques for centuries, as Linda Nochlin so effectively documented in her 1971 essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" In fact, a few arts institutions have embarked on concerted campaigns to acquire artwork by women: Using donations from arts advocate Kaleta Doolin, the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas started buying only art by women in 2015.[1]

This exhibition is also a flashing yellow "warning" symbol cautioning against apathy. Women artists still face greater expectations and pressure than male artists to place child-rearing and spousal duties before their own artistic pursuits. More concretely, the need remains for institutions like Women & Their Work to help rectify the persistent, massive gender gap in show exhibitions and sales pricing. In the 26 largest American museums, art by women accounted for 11% of collections and 14% of exhibitions in 2018. Significantly, one study reported that annual acquisitions were stagnant over that time period.[2] In a separate 2019 study, just 2% of all global auction sales were for works created by women. That was just $4.8 billion over a decade,

the equivalent of all the money spent on just Picasso works during the same period. That's even as the art world acknowledged the massive role women artists have played in art history: Allan Schwartzman, then chairman of Sotheby's Fine Art Division, noted that the women's movement of the 1960s and '70s changed American art so that it could be "psychologically vulnerable, personal, diaristic, fragile, tender, self-revealing, small, colorful, eccentric, handmade. Since then, much of the most valued contemporary art is many of these things."[3]

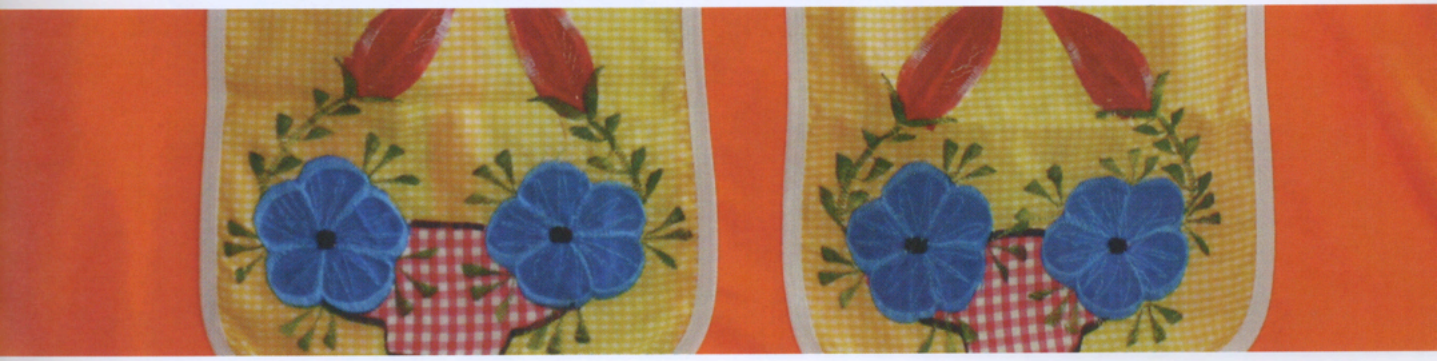
When we consider women of color in visual arts, the gap becomes a massive crater of blindness to the greatness, often in our own backyards. This inaugural exhibition features all Texas-based artists of great skill, in some cases internationally recognized, who have been creating in the Lone Star state for years, and yet often received minimal acclaim at home. One of the artists in this show freely states that she must "water down" her artwork, essentially excise any imagery that might reflect her ethnicity/nationality and any content that might convey her political leanings to be represented by a local art gallery. Meanwhile, in a separate part of the state, another artist must hide her efforts with other women in her community to fund raise and letter-write in support of the political campaigns of women of color who wish to run for state office.

THE ARTIST & HER/THEIR ART

The exhibition is a forward-moving, thoughtful expose. The artists in *We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.* reflect a wide range of foci with several overlapping discussions of displacement and place-making. They expand on the rise of multiculturalism and the realignment away from a Eurocentric, male-focused culture that had begun in the 1980s and 1990s by vying for the inclusion of blue-collar working women, Southern women, non-binary value systems, veiled women, Muslims in America, and people who place family first in fine art. Their videos, installations, collages, sculpture, and painting embrace humanism. Some employ

the traditional "women's work" of sewing, quilt-making, and crocheting, but also the subversion/re-framing of old tropes, such as the saintly evangelists for the Holy Bible [Dr. Lauren Cross] and Texas memorials [Angela Faz]. For Rehab El Sadek, Lovie Olivia and Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga, basic construction components such as plaster/fresco secco, sheet metal and floorplans have untold stories worth excavating.

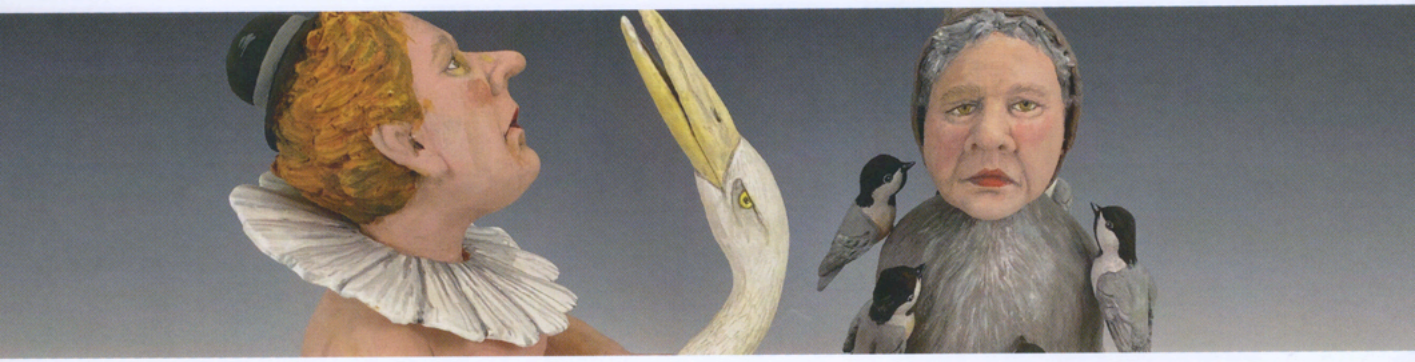
Curator Vicki Meek selected nine women artists who unapologetically create art to be an integral part of community- and nation-building. They reject arguments that art should be objective, apolitical, or "art for art's sake" as inherently false, fake. They affirm that beyond technical skill, art is inevitably about how the artist sees the world, her perspective/lens, her position in society, and that the art world is inherently about which positions get validated. *We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want.* is truly an embodiment of E Pluribus Unum, the Latin phrase that means "Out of many, One" which was the unofficial motto of the United States of America that circulated widely during the first two centuries of this nation's official history.



Angela Faz (They/She, Their/Her)

In *Visible Labor* Angela Faz pays homage to abuelas, women's work, caregivers, and their working class roots by merging a traditional apron with a construction safety vest. In this respect, it is

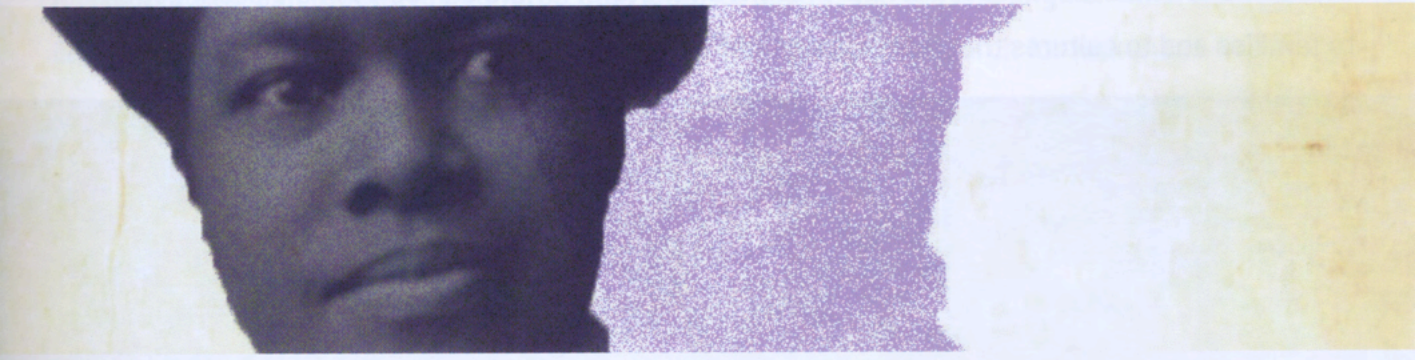
reminiscent of works by artist Emma Amos, who painted her face on the bodies of famous male art icons to challenge viewers to reconsider the power we assign to clothing and gender. Faz, a West Dallas native, was forged by a fourth-generation Mexican-American mother who was a staunch supporter of women controlling their own reproductive rights and Planned Parenthood, and a Mexican immigrant father. Their artwork was influenced by attending a public arts academy and finding "their own people" among Black lesbian writers that included Audre Lorde and bel hooks. Inspired by acclaimed African American printmaker Elizabeth Catlett, who was married to social justice printmaker Francisco Mora and who was a strong proponent that art should document history, they frequently employ printmaking to address community concerns, historical and identity explorations with an often tongue-in-cheek, subversive manner. Recent projects have focused on claiming/reclaiming spaces through monument making and have included erecting an historical marker that renamed a Dallas park for Santos Rodriguez, who was killed by police, and launching the Arkikosa Future Monuments campaign to return the Trinity River to its original name among the indigenous peoples that populated the Dallas area.



Pat Johnson (She/Her)

Similarly, Pat Johnson's narrative scenes and straightforward, often humorous titles bely the weighty contemporary political issues she often addresses, such as Klansmen [*People Whose*

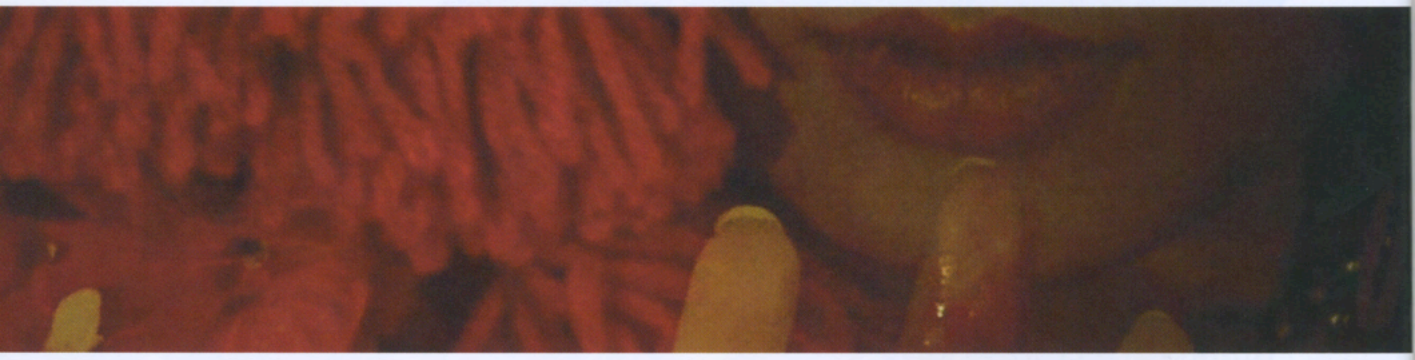
Manners I'd like to Correct), boatloads of refugees abandoned on high seas, deforestation (*Clown cuts down trees. Rabbit can't stop him*) political corruption (*Field Guide to Ukraine*), political prisoners, and Trumpism. The Houston native, who has lived in Fayetteville, Texas for 45 years, admittedly was "not good at throwing pottery but loved the history and texture of clay" and so began sculpting clay figures. Drawn to the political playbills of Mexican printmaker Jose Posada, Caravaggio's mysterious scenes and the bronzes of Lubbock-Santa Fe artist Terry Allen, her most recent art often features the cute, almost precious, *Rabbit versus The Evil (orange) Clown*. At first blush, they allude to traditional illustrations of endearing childhood stories but are actually a way that Johnson balances the constraints in her conservative, rural central Texas community with her impulses towards environmental and social activism (which has included organizing against and the eventual canceling of a strip-mining operation near town) and embracing non-traditional roles such as being the first female ambulance driver in her county.



Dr. Lauren Cross (She/Her)

Dr. Lauren Cross is best known for using often-overlooked paper ephemera, such as her brown paper bag installations, and videos to visually reinforce the value of family. A proud Southern woman, she often shines a light on cultural history by examining her own family's traditions and history that were passed down from her grandmother Mrs. Daisy Mae Harper Lucas to the women

of her family. In *Daisy's Casual Corner* and *Nannie Helen Burroughs: A Call to Black Women [Calling All Daisies]*, Cross looks at scarf fashions and famous women and activists in the Black Judeo-Christian community as depicted in manuals that Cross inherited from her grandmother, a church Missionary. The works marry visual art techniques with the oral history-telling that Cross first began studying in earnest in 2013 at UC Berkeley. And yet she is no simpering "Southern lady" stereotype: Cross is rooted in Alice Walker's "womanist" perspective that women of color artists have a responsibility to be active builders of their communities, which includes their men. Cross's work is a concerted rejection of the idea of objectivity that has resulted in biases in the art world and a silencing of voices and stories that are deemed "unobjective." One of her treasured inspirations is Julie Dash's lush, iconic feature film "Daughters of the Dust" about a Gullah family fighting to survive and remain connected in face of coastal development. As an artist and art historian, Cross seeks to create space for Southern artists and the past in a society that can often be overly focused on the present and future: "There can be such a disconnection to families and to cultures that exist outside of the typical cultural cannon of the art world."



Pallavi Govindnathan (She/Her)

Filmmaker and author Pallavi Govindnathan has a history of questioning the contradictory messages in Indian and Indian-American representations. The Arizona- and Texas-based artist strips away facades, such as in her "Hinduism Striptease" drawings. For instance, one image

features, Lakshmi, who is both a Hindu goddess but also the title bestowed on newly married brides. Like the goddess, brides are supposed to symbolize overflowing wealth and prosperity but they frequently are treated as burdens to be dispatched by their parents. As a result, brides often walk from their parents' homes into marital lives in which spouses can abuse them without recourse. Gang rapes are rampant in India and, in one infamous case, multiple police officers raped a woman when she went to a police station to report her husband's abuse. Govindnathan's videos pick up the mantle of revealing how women's bodies are often war zones. In *Perennial Annal*, a 12-part video series, she explores the isolation and shaming that women endure in multiple societies around the globe due to the uniquely female, natural bodily function of menstruation. Reminiscent of one of her artistic inspirations, Chantal Ackerman's 3 ½-hour film of a housewife completing many domestic chores [*Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai de commerce, 1080 Bruxelles,*] Pallavi often films long continuous sequences that, through their incessant close focus on a singular, repetitive act, force the viewer to absorb the toil and anguish inherent in the content. The *Perennial Annal* series is also a metaphor for how the search for whiteness, in this case viewed as a sign of purity, can be corrosive at basic levels.

Nida Bangash (She/Her)

Iran-born, Pakistan-raised artist Nida Bangash tackles the obstacles to self-actualization in post-colonial societies in a manner that is often rhythmic in nature, but also loaded with the repetitive patterning that is common in traditional Persian carpet weaving, Mughal-era paintings and Islamic art that she has studied throughout her career. Early works that aren't in the show, such as *Roof* reveal the unconscious biases that are absorbed in childhood as in the white, peaked roofs that Pakistani children are taught to draw when depicting "home" even though that architectural feature is native to their former British colonizers and not found in traditional Pakistani homes. Her works can feel meditative, as in *Toranj i,* in which Bangash repeatedly



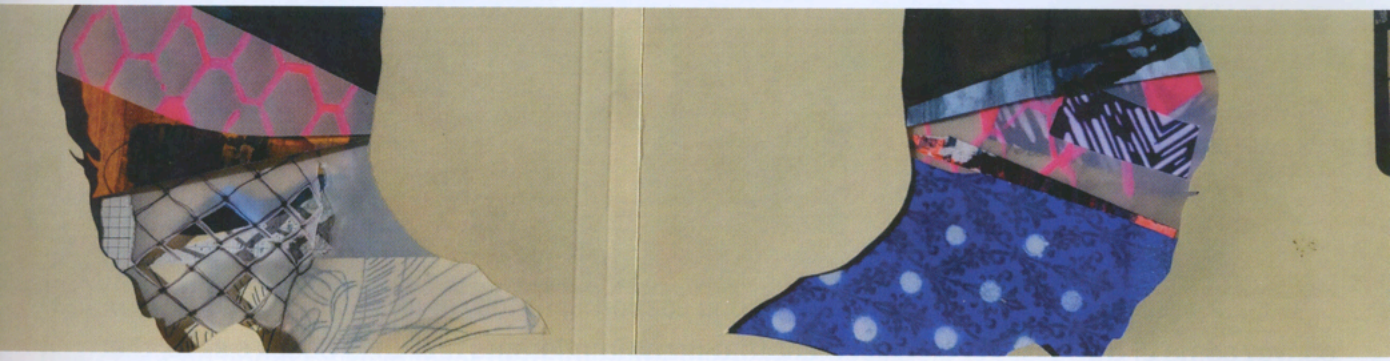


painted the diamond-shaped Persian symbol for finding one's self that at one point covered the exterior of the famous Mughal-era Tomb of Anarkali until the British had it white-washed, literally coated in white paint, to "refresh" it, a practice that persists today post-independence. For Bangash, the painting of the toranj was a mantra or the practice of what is called mashq in Farsi, that is the repetition of an act to make that act successively better each time. It was also an homage to traditional carpet-weaving practices where the weavers leave some knots unfinished; Bangash also left some of the symbols incomplete. This meditative practice also is evident in her life-size video installation in the exhibition, *Site Plan*. In this video, Bangash's back literally supports a table as it is gradually laden with dirty, white imperial porcelain teacups, alluding to the invisible, domestic work performed by many women and immigrants for the benefit of the dominant society. In the footage, she sways and trembles under the growing weight, but – even as she cries silently - she endures.

Lovie Olivia (She/Her)

Similar to Dr. Cross and Bangash, Houston-based artist, Lovie Olivia, spends a lot of her practice alternately excavating and archiving. In *Simulacrum aka ProFiles aka BioPly*, Olivia has assembled visual representations of the lives of imaginary people from medical case notes, journal entries, magazine articles that have caught her eye, sketches, and other paper ephemera that might typically have a short lifespan. These "profiles" in manila folders are as

much reminders of medical experiments on women and queer bodies as they are commentaries on how the human practice of cataloguing information can reveal, hide and even obscure the real person and, in medical history, be used to justify spurious claims and medical procedures. It is in a sense the companion to her most well-known artistic practice of painstakingly building



layers of fresco secco, Italian plaster used in rococo friezes, that are painted and printed, and then digging through the dried layers to see what is revealed. Olivia pulls inspiration from Diego Rivera's fresco murals, Kerry James Marshall's silhouetted Black bodies inserted into historical paintings, and Theaster Gates' focus on archiving as an artistic practice. Her "excavations" of the fresco secco challenge the assumptions that the medium often sparks – usually of ornate, architectural elements that glorified male, hetero society – to, as she says, "insert Black, Queer, fat bodies" that were/are often ignored in the past, present and even in visualizations of the future.

Rehab El Sadek (She/Her)

Like Faz and Jaddo, Rehab El Sadek uses fabric as the base for her art installations. El Sadek employs gauze, and sometimes other fabrics, to reflect on how different architectural structures and materials affect viewer/user experiences, as well as on the lives of the humans who have inhabited the fabrics. In her installation *The Outsider*, unbleached gauze, which has been

used since antiquity to dress the dead in her homeland of Egypt and in many desert countries, becomes a screen that at once holds and obscures her memories. The play of light and shadow of the double-sided window installations invite viewers to walk into a space that seeks to



convey some of the layers of displacement that many immigrants feel. In El Sadek's case, that feeling of disconnection has been exacerbated by being Middle Eastern in a society that tries to pretend immigrants don't belong in America, despite the historical records that show Muslims accompanied Spanish conquistadors to the New World. The rolls of fabric feature Arabic script that, as El Sadek says, allows her to present "her truest self" by using her native language. It is similar to some of her prior art installations, such as a community art project that she led near Nairobi and that featured Swahili text on fabric that was made by Kenyan women. El Sadek's use of Arabic script and keen attention to the role that light plays in creating spaces, harkens to two common elements in great Islamic art.[4] *The Outsider* also continues her ongoing discourse on the ways that people who make every-day utilitarian things are devalued.

Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga (She/Her)

Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga, a Kenya native residing in San Antonio, merges soft and hard artistic practices, literally by bending, weaving and crocheting metal and wire. Her sculptures reflect a duality in which they are on one level about time, immigrants' journeys, or a record of natural

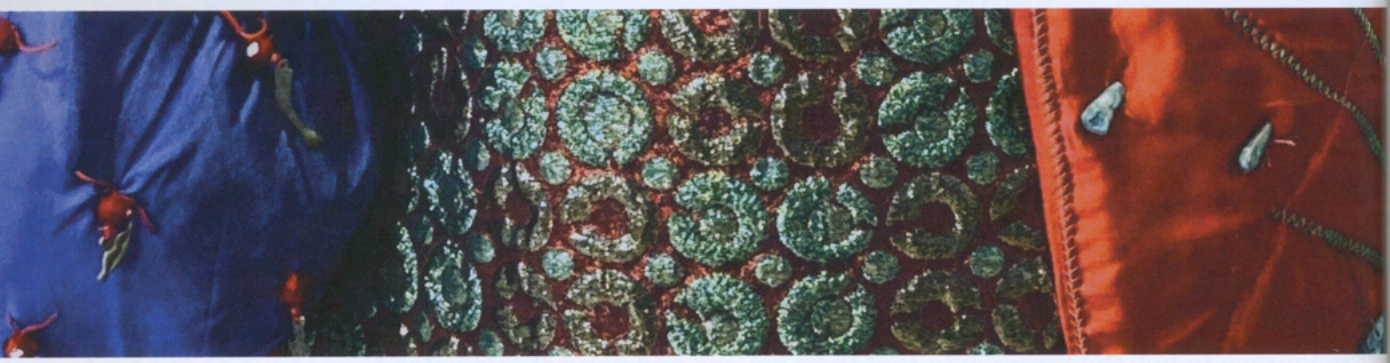


history, but also are on a second level a perpetual honoring of the construction material that is their base (galvanized sheet metal). The sheet metal, which is called mabati in her native language, is an homage to the masses of Kikuyu village women who organized and pooled their resources to buy the material to roof their houses and harvest rainwater, thus reducing the time they spent on home tasks in favor of more profitable ventures: With more free time, they were able to build income-generating activities that allowed them to be political king-makers for a period in the 1960s and 1970s in Kenya. Her artistic sensibilities were also shaped by famous African authors Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe and Peter Abrams. Gakunga's abstract mabati sculptures are frequently weathered and painted, and sometimes collaged with text from her favorite authors. The end result often flows off walls or pools in massive puddles. In *Gitiro (Woman's Dance)*, *Taura (Interpret It)*, and *Sisote (All of Us)*, Gakunga reprises a regular inspiration for her artistic career: dance as a wave and movement that can bring change. The sheets were warped into large-scale, swirling metal versions of the pleated skirts that the British colonizers brought to Kenya but in honor of the traditional women-only gatherings. They invite the viewer to engage and join the global dialogue on equity, opportunity, and women's rights.

Lahib Jaddo (She/Her)

The artwork of Iraqi-born Lahib Jaddo is all about connection and disconnection. The former college architecture professor felt as though she "had arrived home" upon settling in flat,

dusty Lubbock. And yet she yearns for lost places and the cultural connections she left behind in Iraq and Lebanon, where she'd also lived. An admirer of the narrative realism of Wasma al Agha and Frida Kahlo, she spent the 2010s using her daughter as the muse in visual allegories



from childhood tales and surrealist tableaux based on her Turkmen heritage and Arab sayings and iconography. Jaddo incorporated her architectural skills in wood burnings [*Ghost*] and more recently her stitched, and quilted floor-size sculptures. Called *Archetypes,* these stylized constructs honor the sewing techniques passed down by family matriarchs, as well as the veiled women Jaddo had encountered in her childhood and found captivating, engaging brides, grandmothers, and outdoor market women, but whom today are frequently denigrated or pitied by Western societies. In the visual remembering, the art evokes the words of one of her inspirations, 13th century Sufi poet Jalal al-Din Rumi: "You dance inside my chest, where no one sees you, but sometimes I do, and that sight becomes this art."

CONCLUSION: We Know Who We Are. We Know What We Want. Kujichagulia.

Ultimately, Meek's exhibition is a resounding call for social change that eradicates sexual violence, that reflects all people's contributions in his/her/their-story rather than the victors' white-washing of reality, and that expands our definitions of collectible fine art. The needle has moved even as most new acquisitions for large art institutions continue to be donations by white

men, rather than museum purchases (with the notable exception of the Baltimore Museum of Art's recent campaign to sell off artwork by famous white men who had more than one work in the museum's collection in order to purchase works by more women and artists of color). Faced with unavoidable video footage of racial disparities in policing, the art world has vocally embraced calls for greater diversity, equity and inclusion ("DEI").

But, in comparing these artists' works to many other exhibitions, it is clear that there is still work to do. These nine artists intentionally wield and advocate for kujichagulia, the Swahili word for self-determination – or, what Maslow coined as the highest human need, self-actualization – through art. *We Know Who We Are. We Know what We Want.* challenges us to answer bel hooks's call to not only see poor women, women of color, and non-Western women but also to respect their histories, families and loves. In that regard, the works embody a key facet of what artist and art historian Dr. Freida High Tesfagiorgis coined "Afrofemcentrism," which promotes a balance in dualities rather than pitting women versus men in perpetual conflict, all while having an "assertive female stance".[5]

American women have ridden the waves of feminism from efforts to obtain the right to vote for white middle-class women known as the First Wave; to pressure for economic equality and a valuing of household activities and childrearing (Second Wave); through struggling to define what is "womanhood" or "uniquely feminine;" into a recognition that women globally have different experiences that are intersected by race, xenophobia, mestizaje/hybridity, gender orientation, disability/ability; to now focusing on what women can bring to global challenges such as climate change, bioethics, international development and human rights. The DEI premise, and this exhibition, are a reminder that the world was not always as it is; it can be what we make it.

Footnotes:

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2. Solly, Meilan, "Study Shows US Museums Still Lag When it Comes to Acquiring Works by Women Artist," smithsonianmag.com, September 20, 2019.
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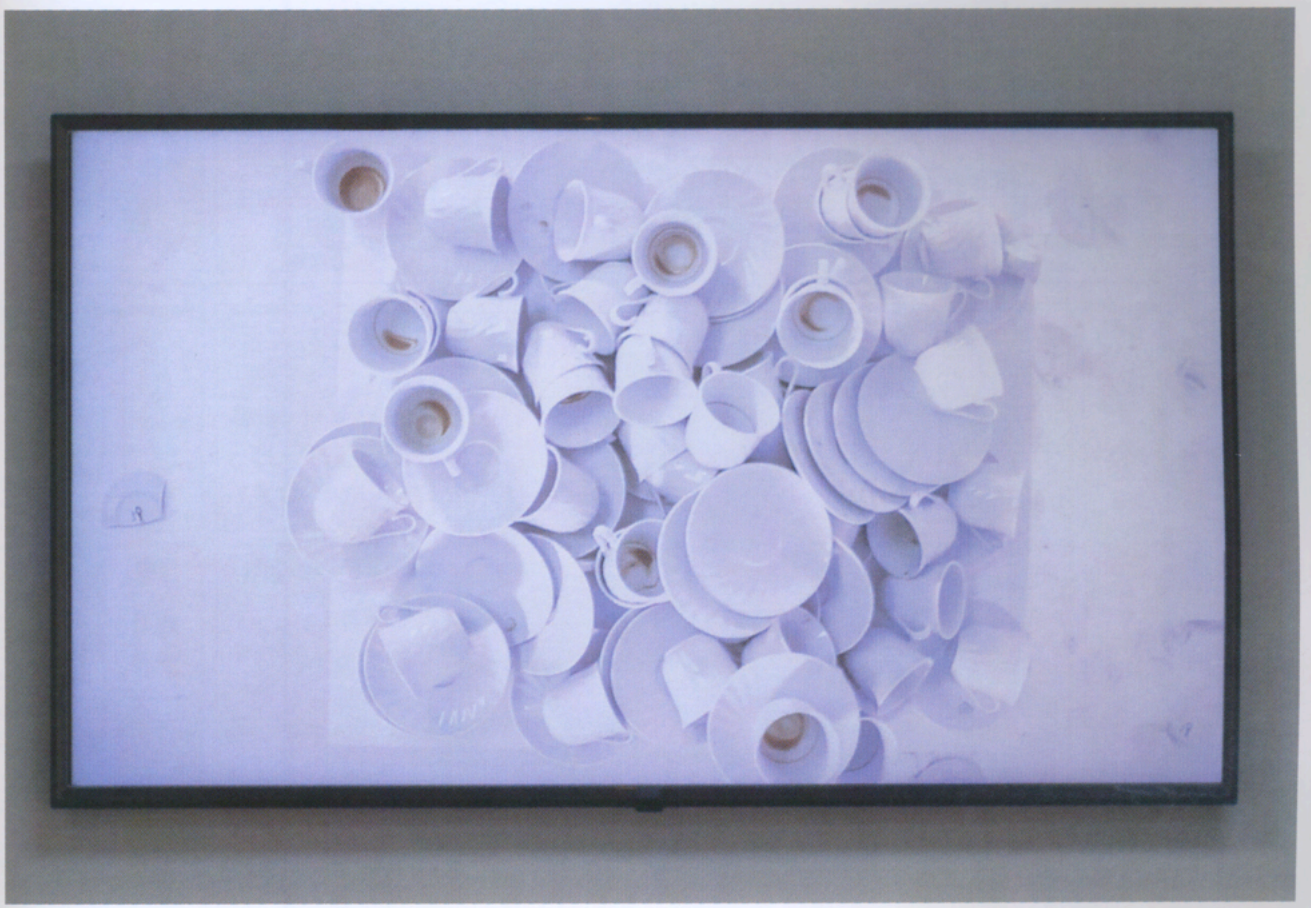
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2. "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," by Linda Nochlin, *ArtNEWS*, January 1971
3. "We Should All Be Feminists: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie," TEDxEuston, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg3umXU_qWc, April 12, 2013.
4. "Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga: Tushauriane: Let's Talk About It," by Charlotte Jansen, *Wasafiri*, vol. 32, No. 4, December 2017, pages 45-52.
5. "The Hill We Climb: An Inaugural Poem for the Country," by Amanda Gorman, January 20, 2021.

Aïssatou Sidimé-Blanton is a collector of contemporary visual art by African American women. A former newspaper reporter, she has contributed arts-related articles to the *International Review of African American Art, Tampa Tribune, San Antonio Express-News,* and *Black Focus Magazine*. After arriving in San Antonio, she began helping artists show their works, including facilitating exhibitions at StoneMetal Press Printing Studio for Valerie Maynard, MacArthur "Genius" Fellow, John T. Scott, Steve Prince and Deborah Roberts of Austin. She curated a survey of regional contemporary African American women artists focusing on Texas women at the Carver Community Cultural Center in San Antonio (2014); a poetry-visual art exhibition at Gemini Ink and Southwest School of Art (2015); and, most recently, "Re/Devaluing Colorism: The Intersections of Skin Color and Currency," an exploration of the roots, tentacles and offshoots of global Colorism. It featured 14 women artists, a commissioned poetry-dance performance, hands-on art workshop for teen girls, activities for art teachers, tips for parents by a diversity and inclusion trainer, and a full-color catalog at the Southwest School of Art (December 13, 2019 through April 5, 2020). In 2017, she and her husband Stewart Blanton partnered with the San Antonio Ethnic Art Society to begin offering the SAEAS Abaraka Award, a biennial grant that supports visual arts, arts research and curatorial projects by African American women artists/art professionals. For more information, go to SidimeBlantonFund.org.



Nida Bangash, *Sight Plan,* 2019, two channel video installation, dimensions variable, edition of 3. Image courtesy of Talley Dunn Gallery, photo credit: Kevin Todora



Nida Bangash, *Sight Plan,* 2019, two channel video installation, dimensions variable, edition of 3. Image courtesy of Talley Dunn Gallery, photo credit: Kevin Todora



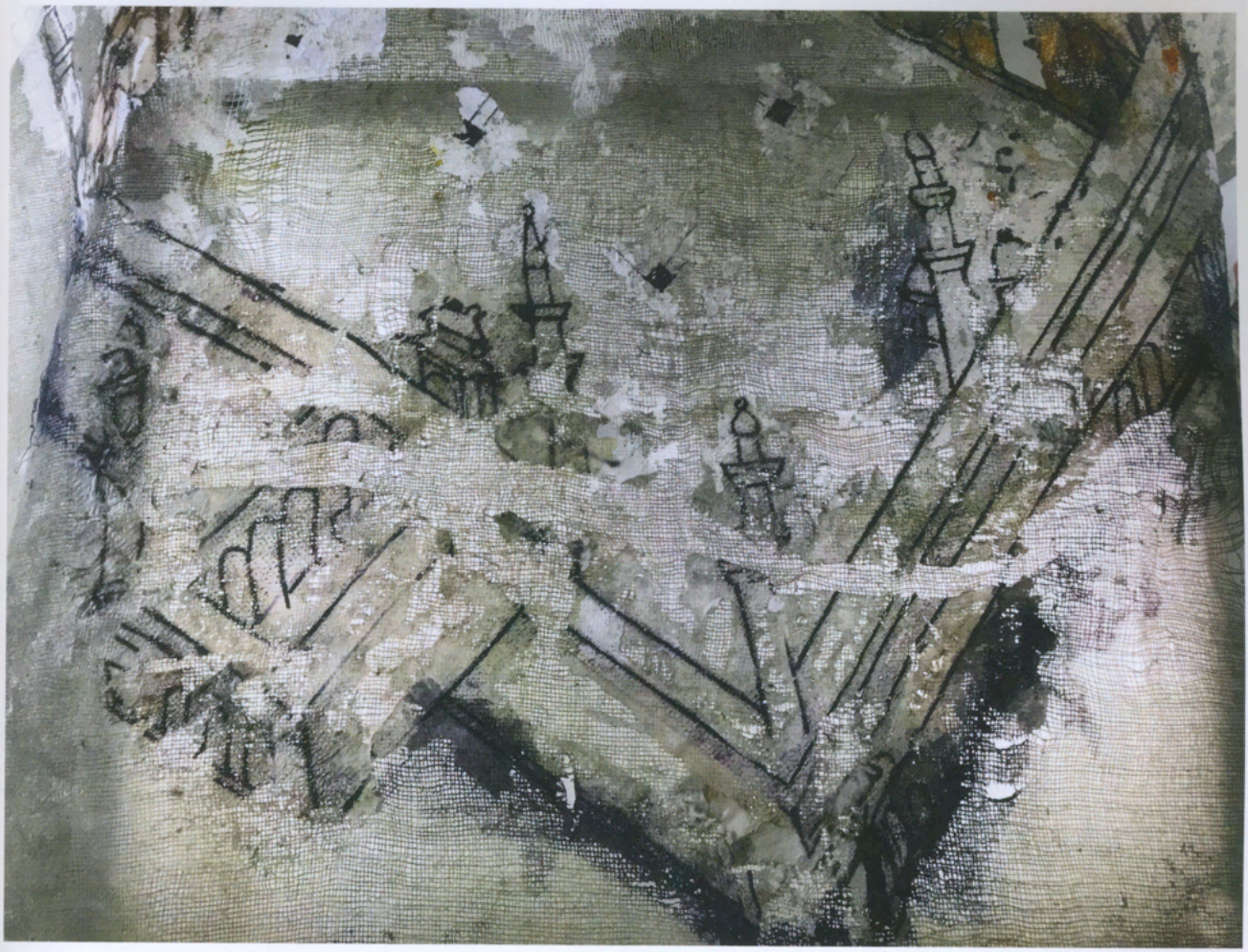
Lauren Cross, *Purple is to Lavender* from the series *A Call to Black Women/Calling All Daisies (Nannie Helen Burroughs/Purple is to Lavender)*, 2021, digital inkjet print, 8"x 11.65"



Lauren Cross, *Daisy's Casual Corner*, 2015-2021, digital inkjet prints, 18–5"x 6"



Rehab El Sadek, *The Outsider*, 2019, gauze, pigments, paper, glue and natural light, 36" x 16.5" each



Rehab El Sadek, *The Outsider* (detail), 2019, gauze, pigments, paper, glue and natural light, 36" x 16.5" each



Angela Faz, *Visible Labor*, 2021, fabric, 24" x 24"



Angela Faz, *Trabajadores 1*, 2021, linoleum print & gold leaf, 8" x 10"



Pallavi Govindnathan, *Menstrual Kumari* from the series *Perennial Annal,* 2021, digital video (still), 10 minutes



Pallavi Govindnathan, *Menstrual Pray* from the series *Perennial Annal*, 2021, digital video (still), 7 minutes 20 seconds



Lahib Jaddo, *Anna & the boys*, 2020, acrylic paint on canvas, 16" x 20"



Lahib Jaddo, *Galin*, 2021, mixed media, 4' x 19" x 19"



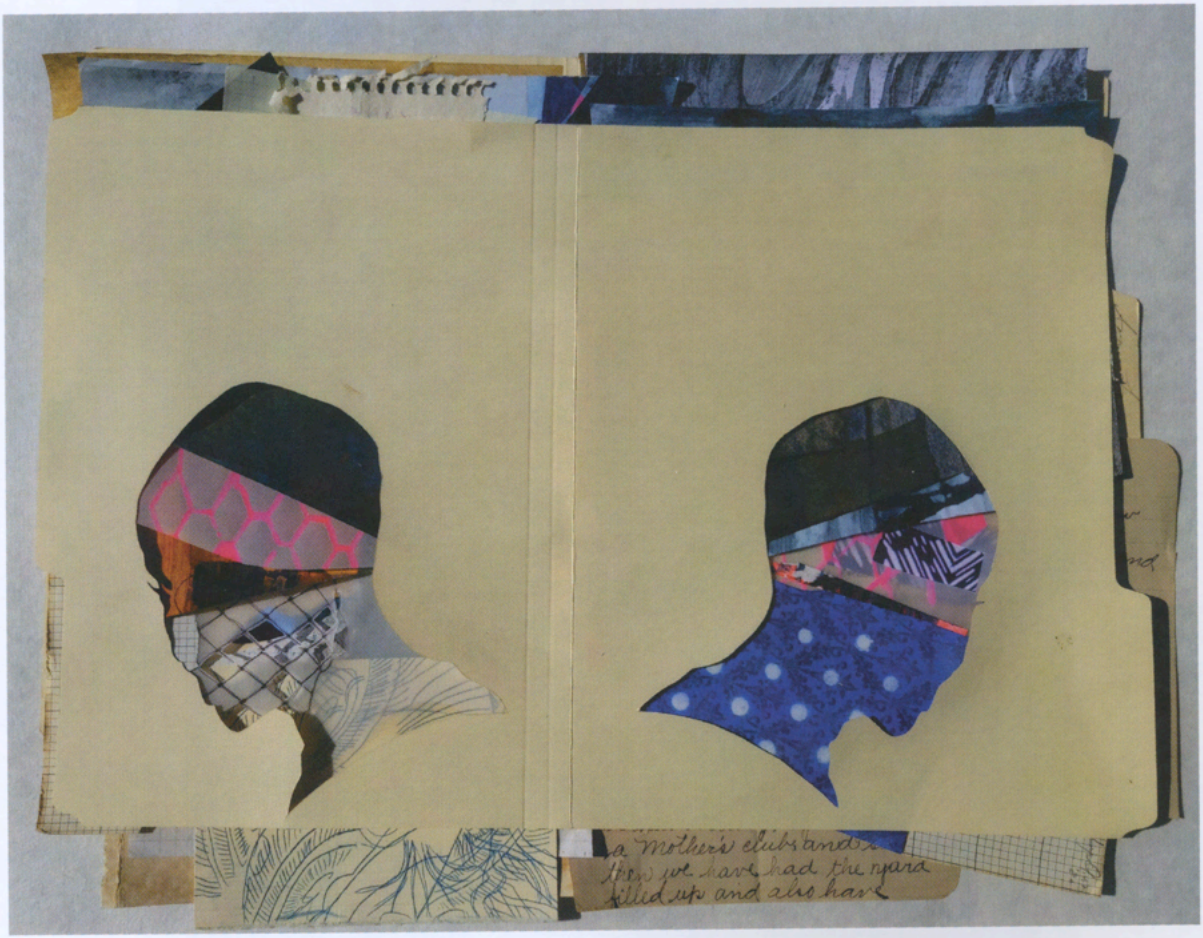
Pat Johnson, *Nervous Waters*, 2020, terra cotta & found objects, 15" x 22" x 22"



Pat Johnson, *The Clown cuts down tree. Rabbit can't stop him*, 2020, casein on terra cotta, 14" x 21" x 8"



Lovie Olivia, *Carbony*, 2019, mixed media collage/de-collage with archival file folder, 21" x 17"



Lovie Olivia, *Cat II*, 2020, mixed media collage/de-collage with archival file folder, 22" x 28.5"



Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga, *Gitiiro - Woman's Dance* (detail), 2015, sheet metal & steel wire, 99" x 90" x 24"



Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga, *Sisi Sote - All of Us*, 2017, sheet metal & steel wire, 99" x 90" x 24"

THE ARTISTS

1. Nida Bangash
DALLAS, TX

2. Lauren Cross
FORT WORTH, TX

3. Rehab El Sadek
AUSTIN, TX

4. Angela Faz
DALLAS, TX

5. Pallavi Govindnathan
DENTON, TX

6. Lahib Jaddo
LUBBOCK, TX

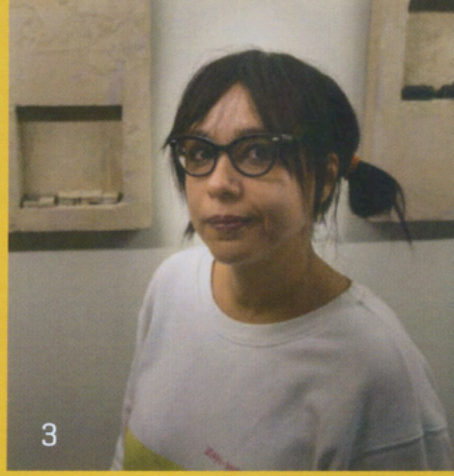
7. Pat Johnson
FAYETTEVILLE, TX

8. Lovie Olivia
HOUSTON, TX

9. Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga
SAN ANTONIO, TX



















images courtesy of the artists

Nida Bangash

Interdisciplinary artist Nida Bangash was born in Iran and raised in Pakistan. Utilizing intricate patterns and precise details, Bangash's works weave in personal identity and experience to investigate the complexities of immigration, colonialism, culture, and race. Bangash earned a MA in Visual Arts from the National College of Arts in Lahore and an MFA from Southern Methodist University. Additionally, Bangash received the Charles Wallace Arts Fellowship to study at the Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts in London.

Lauren Cross

Lauren Cross is an interdisciplinary artist, filmmaker, curator, and scholar whose work has been screened and exhibited across the country. Cross earned a BA in Art, Design, and Media from Richmond, the American International University in London, England, and an MFA in Visual Arts from Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She has a Ph.D in Multicultural Women's and Gender Studies from Texas Woman's University. She is a passionate advocate for diversity in the arts, and has written and contributed research in the fields of women's studies, visual studies, and multicultural studies.

Rehab El Sadek

Born in Egypt, Rehab El Sadek is a conceptual artist whose career has spanned over 25 years, working and exhibiting in 17 countries and on 4 continents. Utilizing media such as sound, photography, sculpture, and the written word, she explores issues related to immigration, belonging, communication, and language. She earned a BFA in painting from Alexandria University, Egypt.

Angela Faz

A native of Dallas, Angela Faz is a multi-disciplinary artist focusing on creating community. A printmaker for over twenty years, Faz co-founded Nopalistxs in 2020 to fill the public streets with images and words to support emotional and mental health, share resources, and inspire people to dream of more than just the future. Faz holds a BA in Visual Communications from Collins College in Tempe, Arizona. Their handcarved print Collective Care was recently acquired by the Library of Congress.

Pallavi Govindnathan

Pallavi Govindnathan is a multidisciplinary visual artist who was born in India, and grew up in Thailand. She moved to the U.S. to pursue an undergraduate degree in Fine Art from the Savannah College of Art and Design. She was awarded Post-Baccalaureate and Masters degrees in Painting and New Genres from the San Francisco Art Institute. Calling various geographical locations her home, she has dedicated her academic life to studying cultural and social norms that violate human rights, focusing primarily on women.

Lahib Jaddo

Lahib Jaddo creates her work through processes of improvisation and self-discovery exploring questions of identity and home in the context of diaspora. Jaddo was born in Baghdad and spent her childhood in Iraq until her family was exiled to Beirut, Lebanon. At 22, she moved to the U.S. and continued her education in architecture and art, and for twenty years she served as a professor at the College of Architecture at Texas Tech University before becoming a full time artist in 2016.

Pat Johnson

Pat Johnson's narrative ceramic sculpture and tile work reference political and social issues; her influences range from images from antiquity to today's popular culture. In these imagined scenarios, she depicts herself as the protagonist or "the artist" taking action against racial injustice, political corruption and corporate greed. A professional artist for more than 40 years, she received a BFA from North Texas State University (now University of North Texas).

Lovie Olivia

Lovie Olivia is a multidisciplinary visual artist who uses the media of printmaking, painting, and installation to explore themes of gender, sexuality, race, and class. Olivia's work has been exhibited nationally and is in numerous private and public collections including the National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian Institute.

Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga

Naomi Wanjiku Gakunga grew up among the Kikuyu people of Kenya. She earned a BA in Design from the University of Nairobi, continued graduate work at UCLA, and has exhibited internationally. Her sculptural works are made from sheet metal and steel wire that combine traditional techniques with contemporary processes. This sheet metal – known as mabati – is infused with Gakunga's childhood memories and Kenya's history. By replacing their traditional thatched roofs with mabati, Kenyan women created a source for clean drinking water. Instead of going to the river, women collected water from their roofs which dramatically affected the quality of their lives and increased their political standing. These stories of struggle and triumph have had a large influence on Gakunga's work.

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