



The List Gallery Swarthmore College

Spatial Recollections: Art from the Swarthmore College Permanent Collection and Recent Exhibitors

September 20 — November 20, 2020

The List Gallery is pleased to present ***Spatial Recollections: Art from the Swarthmore College Permanent Collection and Recent Exhibitors***. The exhibition continues through November 20, 2020. Admission is limited to members of the Swarthmore College community who are authorized to be on campus. Located in the Lang Performing Arts Center, the List Gallery is open daily, Noon — 5:00 p.m. Reservations can be made via the One Card Center. During gallery hours, visitors can also call (610) 328-7811 or stop by the gallery to see if space is available.

When Swarthmore's plans for a hybrid fall semester entailed closing its buildings to outside visitors, List Gallery director Andrea Packard installed *Spatial Recollections* as a resource for both students on campus and, eventually, for others who will visit online. Organized during a pandemic that has highlighted social divisions and shifting attitudes toward labor, shared spaces, and the environment, the exhibition features diverse artists who model craftsmanship, civic engagement, and innovation. Calling attention to masterworks that are usually installed in College offices or storage rooms, *Spatial Recollections* offers a glimpse of Swarthmore's often-hidden artistic landscape. An online version of the exhibition is currently being organized in collaboration with four Swarthmore seniors who are participating in the gallery's internship program: Bria Dinkins, Inna Kimbrough, Lee Cohen, and Kristina Stallvik.

Separated by an open partition, the two rooms of the gallery emphasize contrasting components of the exhibition. The smaller, inner gallery features a selection of ten 18th-century, 19th-century, and early 20th-century landscapes and portraits painted in oil. Highlights include two paintings by Benjamin West, who was likely born on Swarthmore's campus in 1738 before teaching himself to paint, emigrating to England, and co-founding England's Royal Academy of Arts. Other notable paintings on view include *Wissahickon*, by West's pupil, James Peale; *Mount Desert*, by Thomas Birch (1779-1851); and *Early Spring*, by the noted Scottish painter, Alexander Frazer the Younger (1827-1899). The inner room also offers the opportunity to compare early 20th-century works by Daniel Garber, Frederick Childe Hassam, Robert Henri, and Mildred Bunting Miller—American artists who distilled lessons from the Western canon, especially Impressionism, and emphasized transcendent beauty.

In contrast to the historical landscapes and portraits in the inner room, the List Gallery's the outer room features 23 works in varied media by 20th Century masters who are represented in the permanent collection and artists who have exhibited at the List Gallery during the past twenty five years. Selected artists include Romare Bearden, Mary Lee Bendolph, Daniel Heyman, Orit Hofshi, David MacDonald,

Chris Staley, Donald Teskey, Ellen Shankin, Judy Glickman Lauder, Kevin Snipes, and Donna Polseno. The featured artists also include Professor of Studio Art Syd Carpenter and three distinguished alumni. Robert Turner '36, who received an honorary degree from Swarthmore in 1987, is widely regarded as one of the foremost ceramic artists and teachers of the 20th century. Bruce Cratsley '66, a student of Lisette Model, photographed gay life in New York City. Alex Anderson '13, a rising star in the contemporary art scene, exhibits his ceramic works internationally and throughout the United States.

Perhaps the most eye-catching works on exhibit are two quilts, *Strip Quilt* (2006) and *Fleet* (2000's), by Mary Lee Bendolph. Visitors are immediately captivated by the artist's craft, dynamic patterns, and surprising mix of muted and bright color choices. Acquired after Bendolph's 2018 retrospective at the List Gallery, these works reflect the improvisational visual aesthetic associated with the Gee's Bend Collective, a group of Black women whose quilting traditions embody an innovative and intergenerational response to systemic racism, poverty, and isolation. Hanging on a wall nearby, Romare Bearden's lithograph, *Quilting Time* (1979), explores the social and political context of craft and labor in African American culture. Installed near *Quilting Time*, Judy Glickman Lauder's photograph, *Prayer Shawls* (1988), both documents the Holocaust and offers an image of transcendent light. The inclusion of textiles as both an artistic medium, subject, and cultural touchstone invites viewers to consider how everyday objects can both represent and transform shared memory.

Several works in the exhibition grew out of residencies by artists invited to Swarthmore from abroad or by Swarthmore-based artists who engaged in extended cultural exchanges. For example, the small oil sketch, *Crum Creek*, was created by the noted Irish artist Donald Teskey as part of a plein air painting demonstration he gave in Swarthmore's Crum Woods during his 2017 residency at the College. *Crum Creek* offers a point of continuity between the historical works in the gallery's inner room and the recent works in the outer gallery. By exploring ephemeral qualities of light, paying close attention to his surroundings, and elaborating the plein air tradition in his own way, Teskey creates a vision of nature that resonates across cultures and eras. *Spatial Recollections* reflects many such collaborations between Swarthmore and artists in communities as distant as Gee's Bend, Alabama; Haifa, Israel; County Mayo, Ireland, and Jingdezhen, China. Although the pandemic has postponed such collaborations, it offers an opportunity to distill lessons from the past and reflect on values we wish to carry forward.

Any exhibition of works from a permanent collection would not be possible without myriad acts of generosity and leadership—qualities we need to nurture now more than ever. *Spatial Recollections* and the forthcoming online catalog were made possible by the Kaori Kitao Endowment for the List Gallery, the Donald J. Gordon Visiting Artist Fund, and the generosity of Joan Gordon.



Open daily: 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Make an appointment via the College OneCard Center
During gallery hours, call: 610-328-7811

For more information, contact:

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Visit: <https://www.swarthmore.edu/list-gallery>