

Tony Bechara

The two works that I selected—the Bolotowsky tondo and the Polk Smith oval—make for interesting dialogue and counterpoint with my forty-eight-inch diameter tondo.

The thesis of shape and form as they define painting is a century-old tradition where the painted surface is treated as a window into an imaginary dimension. This of course is the reaction of the rectilinear picture plane or frame. The shapes of the three paintings in their own ways manifest different and interesting nuances and variations on that thesis.

In Ilya Bolotowsky's beautiful abstraction, the lines, colors, and right angles are the content of the painting, and the point is emphasized by his choice of a circular shape for the canvas. The painting is not a window into an imagined landscape or a view of recognizable objects, but rather a visualization of a mathematical idea. Leon Polk Smith lets the shapes painted on the canvas determine the shape of the painting itself. The composition of shapes and colors is integral to the actual shape of the canvas. In my work the emphasis is on color activating the surfaces and optically affecting the shape of the canvas. My tondo is an object randomly charged by fifty-four colors painted on the front and sides. It is also certainly not a window.

Ross Bleckner

When you meet somebody and you “fall in love,” another way of saying that is, “You are the key that unlocks the place in my heart where I am in love.” That is, “You are my connection to the place in myself where I am in love.” And you say, “I am in love.” And then you say, “with you.” Actually, “You are my connection to the place in myself where I am ‘in love’.” And what happens is, when you can't get into that place by yourself, you get very hooked on the person who releases that mechanism, which might be sexual, it might be emotional, it might be some concatenation of events that releases you into this place. And you want to collect the person, you want to possess them, just like a junkie wants to possess their connection. Where will you be Thursday, where will you be Friday, let's nest together. Now, the problem with that is there is fear in it, because sooner or later the person's going to die or go away, or something is going to happen. So, there's always fear about losing your connection to that place in yourself. As you begin to awaken spiritually, and realize that as you are awakening into awareness, you are also awakening into the place inside yourself, which is called love; it's not romantic love, it's just the presence of this quality of love. As you start to reside in it, you look at people and you experience being in love with them. But you grew up out of a model of deprivation where there wasn't enough love and all of it was conditional. So, when you experience love with somebody, you say, “I'm in love with you.”

—Ram Dass

Jeremy Dennis

The *Sacredness of Hills* series refers to the continued desecrations of unmarked Indigenous burial grounds surrounding the Shinnecock Indian Nation territory in Southampton, New York, which bases its economy largely on real estate and development.

Among countless examples of our ancestors' being removed from their eternal resting place: On Monday, August 13, 2018, skeleton remains were found during residential development work on Hawthorne Road in the Shinnecock Hills. The developers and homeowners contacted the

Southampton Town and Suffolk County police departments, who further disturbed the ground—convinced that an ancient burial site was somehow a crime scene that needed to be dug up and studied in private.

We, as Indigenous people, have been rendered invisible through a lack of recognition, and the unwillingness of Southampton to acknowledge treaties and laws; the lack of compassion Southampton has shown toward our ancient ancestors continues this legacy of erasure. In the *Sacredness of Hills* series, I hope to reassociate our identity with these sacred hilltops to bring awareness of our continued presence from 10,000 years ago until today.

William Merritt Chase's *Shinnecock Landscape* of 1894 was chosen as a pairing artwork because of the irony in its title and the lack of actual Shinnecock people in the landscape. Like America's earliest landscape painters, settlers were persuaded of the false narrative of a tabula rasa or new world—devoid of any previous inhabitants. Yet our ancestors and cultural resources can be found anywhere the land is disturbed.

Eric Fischl

The Painting Stares Back: Portraits of Women from the Parrish Art Museum Collection

When painting people (portraits or characters), the artist must make decisions about who the person portrayed may or may not be looking at. These are significant decisions the artist must address because each choice carries a wide range of associations, meanings, and provocations that must be dealt with for the sake of clarity and precision in order to achieve a profound experience.

In the process of making a painting, the artist must ask: Is this person I'm painting looking straight out to a distant horizon, or looking back at the viewer, or averting their eyes? Are they staring blankly, focused on nothing? Are they being introspective, or are they eye-dreaming? Are they aware of my presence, of my looking/watching them? Are they comfortable with this? Are they feeling startled, put upon, vulnerable, or impatient? Are they delighted and pleased to be seen, to be caught, to be captured; and by implication, in this moment, the artist must also ask, "Am I?"

As a rule and a preference, I look for art that captures people, not their likeness. I look for art that puts me into a precise moment of reality. With portraiture, that moment of precise reality is one in which the sitter has been made real in all their complexity, whether they are conscious or unconscious of what they are revealing about themselves.

The portraits I've selected from the Parrish's collection are all portraits of women and girls, painted between the mid-nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. All but two stare back. All but two were painted by men.

Claude Lawrence

The reason I chose Jackson Pollock is his approach to painting, the area we live in (the special light), and the fact that he liked jazz. I have paintings that will last a thousand years, I've dined with the Author of Thought, I live in the All of Art, and played for the Angels. I could become a Cool Old Man.

Robert Longo

I've always been inspired by Frank Stella's work. From when I was a student to now, his body of work has consistently felt like a lightning storm, and it continues to move me and inspire me. I still vividly recall seeing a group of his works in Paris in 1988 that evoked a car crash: monumental, brutal twisted metal. For *Artists Choose Parrish*, I selected this lithograph because it's emblematic of Stella's move from an austere minimalism to bold expression. A large-scale print that feels like a kind of map, the work is compositionally a collision and explosion through its shapes and color. Stella makes abstraction move. His work is never illustrative, never burdened by representation.

Alongside Stella's collision, I have chosen to present a work I made with Stella in mind. My large-scale charcoal drawing depicting a NASCAR crash is an attempt to make representation move through the depiction of a self-destructive American pastime. I consider myself an abstract artist working representationally. My work is defined by the artists who came before me. As an artist of the Pictures Generation, I turned away from Minimalism and Conceptualism toward representation. I use representation to provide something beyond what the viewer sees and to motivate the viewer to spend time with an image. Although my work is immediately representational, upon closer inspection, the image is a composition of expressive mark-making with the primitive medium of charcoal.

Eddie Martinez

I have paired drawings from my archives with drawings from the Parrish collection. My interest in these drawings is twofold.

This exhibition affords artists an opportunity to highlight works from the collection that by and large are unfamiliar to the general public. Taking advantage of this unique opportunity, I decided to limit my search of the Museum's collection to works that mostly predate 1970 as a way of (re)discovering artists and trying to find common ground despite the generational distance.

Looking at the final selection of drawings from the Parrish collection and my own side by side, it is easy to see the commonality in our approach to this medium. With overlapping subject matter, similar constructs, and a resonance in mark-making, I found a sense of the familiar that fascinated me. Wilfrid Zogbaum, Abraham Hankins, and Fredrick Stuart Church are a few of the artists I was unfamiliar with prior to this exploration but in discovering them and others, I am now in conversation with them. The Parrish's invitation led to this serendipitous encounter.

Enoc Perez

Looking at the Parrish collection felt familiar and surprising at the same time. I did not know that it was as extensive as it is, but I did know the work and histories of most of the artists in it. I have never seen such a good collection of Fairfield Porter's paintings. Such sincere work, it looks and feels exactly like Long Island. Beautiful. Also some excellent William Merritt Chase paintings.

Then I saw the beautiful Hans Hofmann painting in the collection, and it read to me very much like a painting that I had finished recently, titled *Dorado Beach Hotel*. My painting is of a hotel pool in Puerto Rico. Simple but full of promise. Realistic and unreal all at once, like an unfulfilled promise. And I thought to myself, My painting is as abstract as this Hofmann painting. The palette is similar, and they both feel like shiny tropical promises. The Hofmann painting is the scientific explanation of the poetry that painters want to communicate. The Hofmann painting

contains an attraction and seduction very similar to what this painting of mine holds. That's a cool find. Hofmann was a strong and fearless painter.

Hank Willis Thomas

Hank Willis Thomas is interested in notions of perspective and perception, specifically how framing and context influence what and how a viewer sees. Inspired by the color theories of Josef Albers and Augusto Garau, his retroreflective prints examine, with archival film images and Hollywood stills, the charged language surrounding such terms as "color correction" and "white balance," particularly during desegregation and at the time when Technicolor proliferated in the United States. Raymond Parker's color field paintings add their voice to this conversation, while Jack Youngerman's and Jimmy Ernst's use of sculptural elements deepen the experience.

Thomas's *Two Dancers* (2018) alludes to Henri Matisse's work of the same name, but re-creates it with soccer jerseys for a new interpretation of the dynamic between the two figures. Similarly complicated, loving, and unique interpretations of the human figure can be seen in the works of Claude Lawrence, Jeremy Dennis, and Emilio Cruz.

"I'm very much looking at Matisse and Stuart Davis as both European and American painters who were seen as early and influential figures in abstract and modern art," says Thomas. "Both were interested in popular culture, but also became really interested in abstraction around the time Europe and the United States started to encounter African art in a kind of commodifiable, collectible, way. And, as we know through Picasso and many more, this idea of primitivism is basically the foundation of modern art, and I'm really curious about that. What I am exploring is the maybe 'primitive' roots of modern society, and modern art.

I don't really believe in primitivism, obviously, but I do find it curious. The way that Duchamp, Picasso, Matisse, and Gauguin started painting dramatically differently and were praised for their innovations, which were in some cases clearly stolen from unnamed and probably un-compensated artists from the colonies of England, France, and Holland. African art *is* modern art, it just wasn't named as such. You could make an argument that modern art is an extension of African Art, and so the way in which a lot of times African artists are put into a category that's regional, and not contextualized as maybe the foundation of contemporary thought."

Thomas's sculpture *Resistance in Black* (2021) is inspired by his *Punctum* series, which draws from archival source material and images found in visual culture. The artist takes segments of photographs and turns them into sculptures by using different media. By isolating certain aspects within an image, he is concerned with what is left in and out of the frame and the forms of aesthetic information.

Resistance in Black is based on an image from *Popular Science* magazine from 1943 and draws upon the history of the secret Leopard (Anyoto) Society, active from 1890 to 1935 across West Africa. Although established for political emancipation and empowerment to circumvent colonialist rule, the Leopard Society is depicted as violent, evil, and sexually promiscuous in the Eurocentric imagination, as traced through the Tarzan stories, Tintin comics, and Disney motion pictures. By isolating the claw of the leopard, Thomas draws attention to its symbolism of power, unity, and community.

Thomas displays this powerful symbol in black Carrara marble alongside Arlene Wingate's *Eve* (ca. 1950s) in white marble. An initial reading could have them in contrast but here, too, Thomas

is interested in perspective and perception. Who is defined as the hero and who as the villain depends on who is telling the story.

Nina Yankowitz

To drive a renewed dialogue between the Museum's past and future for the 125th anniversary exhibition, I'm creating different viewing perspectives for experiencing the art in the Museum's collection that I chose to collaborate with. I'm installing works to be viewed by leaning back or looking upward from two adjustable reclining chaise lounges or by climbing stairs to a platform floor to stand on and look up, down, and all around the gallery to view my art scenarios on each wall and the floor. Some selected small framed works are installed slightly angled, or tilted, on the wall for viewing in visual conversation with the Museum's architecture.

Two rugs appear split with sound scores spreading along parts of the floor addressing the idea of using eyes to hear the room's stories while a cacophony of audio sounds is heard as an abstract, symphonic backdrop to the wall events.

The east wall hosts Jackie Black's images of food last eaten by prisoners before they begin their walk along death row juxtaposed to my *Cantilevered Foot* body segment painting and *Cantilevered Wing Tongue* and all relying on visitors' memory to imagine what is on the other side. Like an aftermath of this event, a uniform is slumped on a hanger suspended from the ceiling by a transparent line, slowly moving as if worn by a ghost in this wall's story.

The west wall installation invites viewers to sit on a heavy mosaic chair I made, now used to confront Chuck Close's self-portrait at a near distance for a visually powerful interactive communication.

The north wall hosts a large intense Louisa Chase painting I saw as a high-pitched surface of scribbles with abstract frenetic drips of color profoundly spreading everywhere to nowhere.

The south wall has a Tara Donovan maze-like form that I viewed like a loop having no beginning or ending. Rashid Johnson's art struck me as tangled networks of an emotionally charged pattern that is trapped without exits and begging for erasures. My remote-controlled motorized sound notation drawing is in motion on an opening/closing shade scoring the woven scratches. Jennifer Bartlett panels display serial marks connecting separate left and right views, while Mary Heilmann's minimalist color palette forms inverse and converse shapes twisting the bold step into a visual sonata. Vija Celmins's paint twinkles are revealing undercover agents, while a Jimmy Ernst painting with a linear time graph acts like a conductor measuring color and Max Kozloff's portrait of art gallerist Holly Solomon appears caught inside a color cast photograph.

Joe Zucker

When the Parrish Art Museum invited me to participate in *Artists Choose Parrish*—to select works from the collection and include works of mine—I was intrigued by the task.

I am often asked whether I am influenced by the legendary magical sea-stained light of the Hamptons, which many artists out here have professed to be. I have to say no, even though I have been interested in maritime subject matter and have addressed it in eight different series of my work from 1973 to 2016.

I remembered Donna De Salvo's brilliant 1991 exhibition *A Museum Looks at Itself* and her discovery that founder Samuel Parrish used red-tinted burlap to cover the museum walls. In order to give the spine gallery wall a cohesiveness, I decided to re-create the past.

Exploring the Museum collection, I noticed that more than one hundred works deal with maritime themes. I discovered amazing works by Winslow Homer, Thomas Moran, Betty Parsons, Malcom Morley, and Peter Campus, and exquisite wood cuts by Yoshimune II owned by Samuel Parrish and bestowed as a gift by the Littlejohn Collection in 1961.

I selected smaller-scale works, which welcome viewers to take a moment and closely study these hidden gems of the permanent collection. These works show the depth of the Museum's collection and spotlight the boundless generosity of the long list of illustrious Museum patrons.