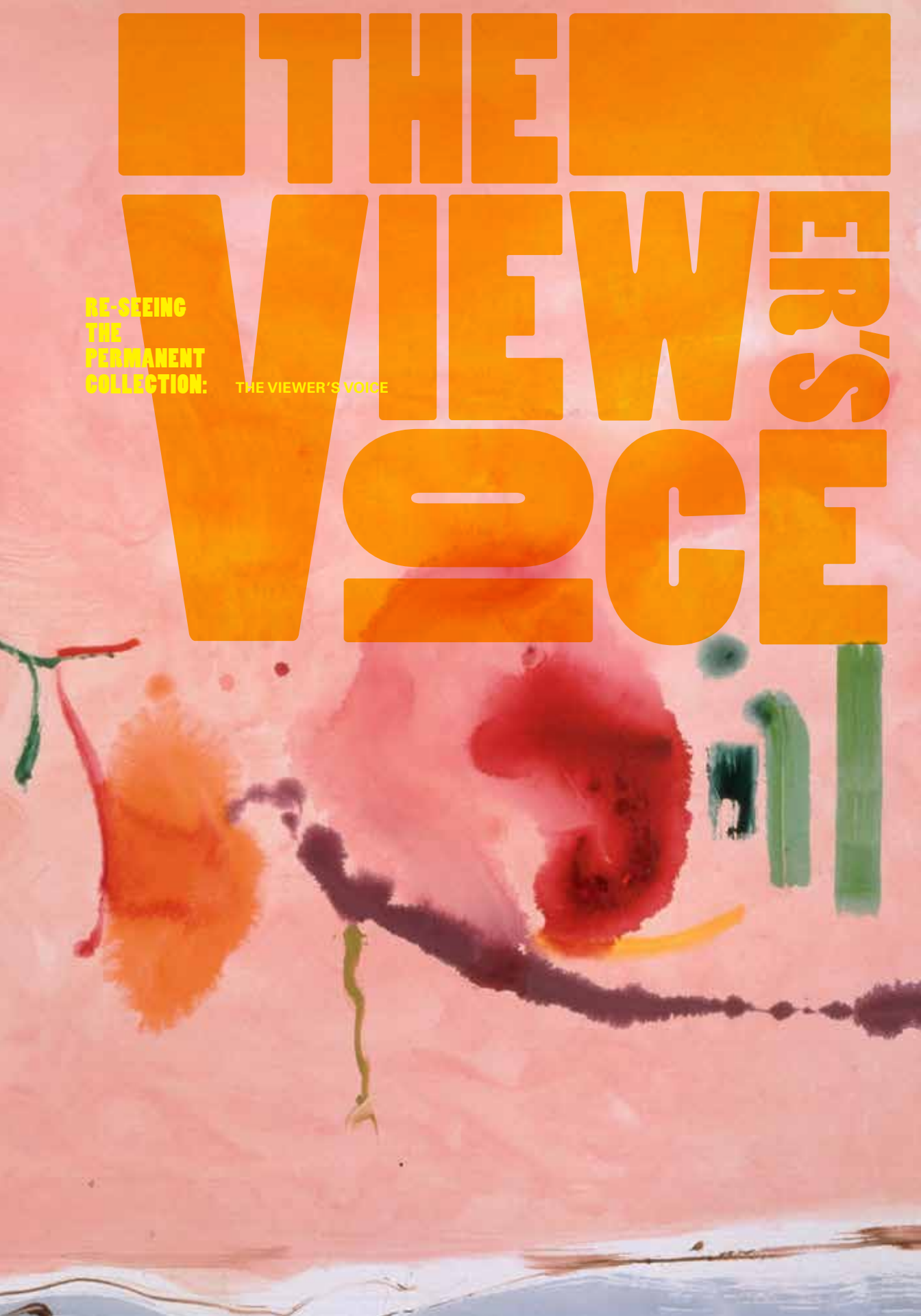


RE-SEEING
THE
PERMANENT
COLLECTION:

THE VIEWER'S VOICE

AT THE VIEWER'S VOICE



RE-SEEING THE PERMANENT COLLECTION:

THE VIEWER'S VOICE

The exhibition Re-Seeing the Permanent Collection:

The Viewer's Voice engages individuals from the museum's audience in an experiment of interpretation. A work of art can elicit countless reactions and readings, depending on the perspective of the viewer. This exhibition seeks to provide a platform for Marquette University students, faculty, and staff from across the academic disciplines to share their personal observations about objects from the museum's permanent collection.

Participants were invited to write a brief reflection on the artwork of their choosing.

The selected works include a range of historical and contemporary artistic styles and media, which represents the depth and breadth of the Haggerty's holdings and reflects the diverse intellectual and creative interests of the Marquette community. Some participants describe the qualities that draw them to a particular work of art, others explain how the work is relevant to their teaching practices, and still others consider the myriad ways that thinking about their areas of specialization through the lenses of the visual arts stimulates new insight and understanding. All participants provide fresh interpretations that fall outside the scope of standard museum wall labels.

This exercise demonstrates the collaborative spirit that is unique to a teaching museum like the Haggerty. By making its permanent collection available to the community, the museum enriches the educational experience at Marquette. It is the museum's hope that *Re-Seeing the Permanent Collection: The Viewer's Voice* will inspire visitors of all kinds to embrace the value of visual analysis and creative thinking and explore their own potential to derive personal meaning from the visual arts.





ROBERT H. BISHOP, Ph.D., P.E.

God set us gently on a small blue-green speck orbiting an ordinary star, deep in a gravity well that confines our atmosphere, keeps our water from escaping into space and, for most of recorded time, confined us. He also created within us an innate desire to explore, to learn, and to understand the mysteries of the universe. Gravity challenges humans to reach orbit and explore. The cold, black emptiness of space beyond the effective reach of Earth's sphere of influence reminds us of the fragility of human life.

As a young child, I watched television in amazement as the Apollo astronauts meandered about on our moon in protective spacesuits, faceless explorers hidden behind shiny faceplates. But the same television that brought the magnificence of the deeds of our space pioneers into our homes also broadcast the daily horror of Vietnam—reminding me that my own father was a long way from home in a foreign country. The early space age was a heroic time providing for me and for many others a proper balance to the harsh realities of Vietnam, the expanding drug culture, and the political shenanigans in play at the time. The dream of flight and space exploration was my own personal trust zone. When the astronauts were on the moon, my future was secure. That could have been anyone behind the mask on the moon—and that was reassuring. Heck, it could be me one day.

OPUS Dean
College of Engineering

Rauschenberg's *Trust Zone* captured the essence of human engineering capacity in the late 1960s to protect life from the unfiltered harshness of our environment as we explored the moon. He reminded us through use of detailed technical jargon highlighted on the spacesuit that creating a trust zone—a place of safety—is a highly complex enterprise. Engineering intellectual firepower does not come easy. By overlaying the technical data and figures on the backdrop of the Florida coast, he drives home that point that we are coupled to our planet. Not surprisingly, the first powered flight captured in a timeless grainy photograph at Kitty Hawk provides the creative structural support foundation for Rauschenberg's *Trust Zone*. It was here that we first broke the bonds of gravity in a sustained powered flight mode. Rauschenberg ingeniously connected the dream of flight of our ancestors, those that first looked up and watched birds in flight and wondered how, to the brilliance of the Apollo engineers through the genius of the Wright Brothers.

Despite the evolution to less bulky spacesuits providing greater agility and freedom for our astronauts, Rauschenberg's *Trust Zone* remains relevant. Today, we face different harsh realities of seemingly never-ending wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a pop culture that glamorizes violence and drug use, and political mischief beyond comprehension—and indeed we continue to transmit frightening images into our dwellings and safe places. Yet, we still have a trust zone to rely on in the pursuit of knowledge through exploration. As this Rauschenberg piece reveals, our dreams are safe as long as human ingenuity is allowed to flourish.



John L. Doyle
American, 1939 - 2010
The Hand of Islam, 1983
Color lithograph
26 x 18 in
66.04 x 45.72 cm
2010.20.9
Gift of Roseann and David Tolan
Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

I am drawn to this piece by its elegant lines, its balance, and its curvatures, which provide me with a sense of peacefulness. These elements are found in Islamic architecture and arabesque decor: the domes, minarets, arches, courtyards, fountains, calligraphy, and mosaics of stylized ceramic tiles. Although Doyle specifically references architecture in Iran, Turkey, Egypt, and Mecca in his notes, Muslims also introduced this beautiful style, which embraces geometric form and esteem for nature, to Andalusia, Spain, between the eighth and fifteenth centuries, and the Spanish later transmitted it to Mexico, Central and South America. The “hand of Islam,” expressed in aesthetically pleasing architectural shapes and scrolling designs that fuse nature, knowledge, and faith, has thus travelled far more extensively across the globe than often recognized.

The curved lines of the Arabic script complement these representations. Surely a culture that has produced such masterful curvilinear beauty must have a complementary curvilinear script. One can hardly imagine it any other way. Yet, a close reading of the Arabic script finds the Arabic word for God, Allah **الله**, written backwards on the domes and the “wall.” At first glance, the other characters appear not to be Arabic letters at all. However, it turns out that they are Arabic words written backwards. According to the artist’s notes, the script should read: “There is no god, save god, and Mohammad is his prophet” in Arabic, which is a Muslim’s statement of faith or *shahadah*. This reversal is due to the printmaking process, which transposes the original piece of art to a mirror image. Since the artist knew such a reversal would be the outcome of the process and since he worked in tandem with the printmaker, it is difficult to interpret the meaning behind his approval for publishing prints with backwards, unreadable script. Did he simply not care if the words were legible? Were the lineatures more important to him artistically than the words? Was he trying to make a point? Given his attention to the details and aesthetics of Islamic architecture (according to his notes), I don’t think he was intentionally making a statement. We might conclude, though, that in 1983 Doyle did not imagine the highly interconnected global society we live in today,

as well as the more diverse American society, resulting from the broader scope of in-migrations post-1980. Neither the Arabic language nor Islam is elusive to the United States today—although even in 1983 both were present among smaller groups of immigrants and African Americans. And so, perhaps he assumed no one would notice . . .

The disproportionately large man’s head upsets the otherwise peacefulness of the piece of art. Furthermore, rather than looking inward at the scene, the man is looking away. What does it mean that he is so enormous and that he is looking outwards? Each viewer will render his/her own interpretations. And while the “world” being represented is Islamic, the man is portrayed by the common western caricature of an Arab, with hook nose and *kaffiyeh*. This Arab could be a Christian or a Muslim or a Jew, although the artwork demonstrates the common association of Arab with Islam and Islam with Arab, even though most Muslims are not Arabs and not all Arabs are Muslims. The artist’s notes are revealing on this point as they indicate the following: “Figure/Saudi—Mohammad was Saudi.” Although the prophet Mohammad was not actually Saudi since Saudi Arabia was not established until 1932, he was born in Mecca, which is now part of that state. It might be inferred then that Doyle was representing a Saudi as a symbol of the prophet. This interpretation, however, exposes my own predisposition. In Islam, images of God and the prophets (Mohammad, Jesus, Abraham, Moses, and so on) are forbidden and depictions of living beings—human and animal—are discouraged (although in fact there is wide variation on this) to forestall idolatry. Whether the artist was aware of this tradition is not clear. Indeed, to me, the human figure spoils the flowing beauty of the piece. These religious and cultural proscriptions alongside the complementarity of faith and reason in Islam explain the sensitivities and appreciations within which Islamic art and architecture developed, with its mathematically precise forms, undulating geometric patterns, floral and vegetal arabesques, and beautiful calligraphy. Doyle’s *The Hand of Islam* represents these well, and even the splendor of Arabic calligraphy survives the backwards script.

*What we view, either in art or life,
is perceived through the filter of experience.
What is seen says more about the
viewer than about that which is on view.*

*Whether we are speaking
about art or life, it behooves
the aficionado to keep an open mind,
but above all else, know thyself.*

Many look to mirrors for reflections of self. I'm just a bit different because I look to art for my reflection. Visual art, poetics and literature, as well as music, serve as reflectors of who I am, from whence I come, and where I might go in this life. Mirrors reflect what is, art reflects what is within.

Jason Florio's print of Moudon Bah, a Gambian village chief, is not just a reflection of a proud man preserving his place in history and time through a photographic image. On its surface, viewed through my naked eye, I see a carefully composed portrait exemplifying the photographic technique of thirds, focal point, light and shadows. I see a man peering around the photographer's backdrop and the silhouette of a woman, and a hanging cluster of what appears to be ears of corn. These are the visuals that are captured by my naked eye.

My mind's eye, however, sees other things that go beyond this visual representation of a powerful man in his element. In the depth of his eyes, I see the strength and instinct for survival of the men in my family—grandfather, uncles, cousins. In the tilt of his head I see the pride of a people with whom I share a bloodline. In the light of his smile I see the resilience and hope of a people who have much to contribute to the future of the world.

Family research reveals that I am a descendant of the Mandinka people from what was the Senegambia region of West Africa. Moudon Bah could be my distant relative, but that is not what draws me to his portrait. What draws me is what I see in me when I view his image.

*My bloodline tells me that I am African.
Cast an eye toward my features
and you will see Africa in me.
My feet may never tread upon the African land
that nurtures my spirit and feeds my soul,
but you will always see Africa in me.*

People turn to art for many reasons . . .
. . . evidence of beauty in the world
. . . proximity to artistic genius
. . . sense of wonder and awe
. . . search for escape from banality

I turn to art for those things as well, but not as they are manifest out there, but as they are manifest in the inner self of the spirit. Where we turn to mirrors to reflect our physical being, we must turn to art to reflect the spiritual being. Viewing art, for this aficionado, is a search for deeper insight into that spiritual self.

*Art is subjective.
Life is reflective.
The light of self-knowledge
clarifies and focuses the image.*



Jason Florio

British, b. 1965

Moudon Bah, Gambian Village Chief, Alkalo,

Kombo Central, The Gambia, West Africa,

2007/2010

Archival pigment print

24 x 30 in

60.96 x 76.2 cm

2011.1.3

Gift of the artist

Collection of the

Haggerty Museum of Art



Antonio Saura

Spanish, 1930 - 1988

Dolores, 1969

Oil on canvas

63 ⁷/₈ x 50 ¹/₄ in

161.6 x 127.6 cm

86.4

Gift of Mrs. Charles Zadok

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

“Los dolores de Dolores”

Ghosts are real. I know this because I have seen one. Many times. In fact, I still feel a few butterflies whenever I walk my students of Spanish literature over to the Haggerty Museum of Art. I feel this way because I know I am about to visit an old friend and I am reminded yet again of who has been secretly residing in the museum’s haunting vault since 1986: the ghostly Dolores, or as contemporary art catalogues prefer, Antonio Saura’s evocative and emotional oil on canvas titled, *Dolores* (1969). The Spanish artist’s shadowy abstract head figure is not merely painted dark charcoal grey over olive green and an uneven mixture of oil and pigment; it is much more. The thick, organic, grainy, three-dimensional and dripping oil on thin canvas transcends modern art. Saura’s gazing object is a steely, harsh, and disturbed personality, an exclamatory skeletal entity whose streaks, scratches, smears, scrapes, scuffs, drips, harsh cleavage, and white gesso peeking through the dark areas all scream primitive, angry, harsh, and disturbed emotions. The earthy and harsh colors—dark green, black, grey, brown, squash yellow, and dripping oily black—all cry out anguish and pain, the literal meaning of the word *dolores* in Spanish. Even after being professionally refurbished in 1989 (just three years after arriving at the Haggerty), the underlying spirit of thick dirt and grime—evocative of the Spanish artist’s time spent in Paris in the 1950s—still remain in the gestural style conveyed by Saura’s monstrous charcoal figure in profile. The heavy, bold, and dark mood projected by *Dolores*—evocative of some of Saura’s classical influences like Velázquez and Goya—may reflect Saura’s own mood shortly after suffering as a teenager from tuberculosis, several operations, and five years confined to a bed. Even though the artist was influenced by Hans

Arp, Yves Tanguy, and the Surrealist movement, an acute autobiographical undertone may be too difficult to discard when observing and absorbing the overpowering sense of fear, frustration, anger, and violence in Dolores’s presence. When I revisit the magnetic Dolores every autumn, her gaze reminds me of Medusa’s, a mystifying spell of feminine rage, power, angst, and destruction. The undeniable aura of anxiety in the texture and spirit of the painting is perhaps best reflected in the events of 1965, when the artist himself destroyed 100 of his own canvases. Is *Dolores* an effigy of Saura’s own personal suffering? Or was it inspired by his wife, Madeleine Augot? Whatever the case may be, the presence of *Dolores* at the Haggerty reminds us that artworks can have complex personalities, haunted souls, and powerful feelings, all very palpable to the casual visitor who gazes upon the artist’s creation.

The inspiration for *The Mocking of Christ* is rooted in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In the New King James Version of the Bible, the following passages of scripture from the book of Matthew powerfully speak to the many ways that Jesus was mocked before and during the time He was nailed to the cross:

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. Matt. 27:27-31

Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, *They divided My garments among them. And for My clothing they cast lots.* Matt. 27:35

And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Matt. 27:37

And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." Matt. 27:39-40

Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Matt. 27:41-44

When I was introduced to this painting based on the style of Anthony van Dyck, what immediately caught my attention was that, unlike other painters or Hollywood versions of Jesus, this painter chose not to depict Jesus as frail, weak, broken, defeated, bruised, and battered. Instead, he used his artistic skills to portray a Jesus who is slightly muscular, with quiet dignity and strength in

the presence of the soldier who looks at him with an expression of mockery, curiosity, and awe.

I was also intrigued by how the painter used dark and light tones in the foreground and background to foreshadow that Jesus's crucifixion was not the end but only the beginning. Although the soldier is painted in heavy, dark shades, Jesus, who dominates the foreground, is painted in lighter, brighter shades. Also, although many of the background elements are painted in dark, muted tones, a subtle touch of light shines through in the background with the addition of a sunset.

The painter's contrasts of darkness and light encourage us to reflect on these words by Martin Luther, "Faith, like light, should ever be simple and unbending; while love, like warmth, should beam forth on every side, and bend to every necessity of our brethren."

As I reflected more on this painting, I am reminded of the following lyrics by James Cleveland:

*When Jesus hung on Calvary, people came from miles
to see
They said, "If you be the Christ, come down and save
your life"
Oh but Jesus, my sweet Jesus, He never answered
them
For He knew that Satan was tempting Him
If He had come down from the cross, then my soul
would still be lost
He would not come down from the cross just to save
Himself
He decided to die just to save me*

These lyrics serve as a reminder that even when we experience being mocked, scorned, or falsely accused, we can feel secure in God's grace, mercy, love, and omnipresence.

Like Jesus, we may have moments when we cry out during our ninth hour, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Matt. 27:46. However, our faith allows us to find comfort in knowing that "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for



After Anthony van Dyck
Flemish, 1599 - 1641
The Mocking of Christ, 1600s
Oil on canvas
42 ¾ x 38 ¾ in
108.58 x 98.42 cm
58.8
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marc B. Rojzman
Collection of the
Haggerty Museum of Art

great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matt. 5:11-12

The Mocking of Christ invites us to consider these words attributed to Mahatma Gandhi:

*First they ignore you,
then they laugh at you,
then they fight you,
then you win.*

Living a Christian life will always have its share of challenges. However, like Jesus, we also know that each of us is called to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matt. 5:16.



Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux

French, 1827 - 1875

Figaro, ca. 1873

Bronze

22 in

55.9 cm

96.3

Gift of Catherine and David A. Straz, Jr. in

Honor of Dr. Curtis L. Carter

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

Figaro, created by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux about 1873, was inspired by three operas of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Pierre Beaumarchais's *The Guilty Mother*. This trio of operas tells the story of a young barber, Figaro, who aids a wealthy count in attaining the hand of Rosine, a beautiful, young maiden, in marriage. As time goes by, the count grows tired of his marriage and attempts to trick Figaro's fiancée, Suzanne, into eloping with him and leaving Figaro behind. In the end, however, the count's attempt ends in failure and the story concludes farcically. The operas' continuously elaborating plot is lightened with frequent comical respites and the gentle music of the Classical era; music which is typified by frolicsome melodies, often portrayed in sonata form.

The impact of this Classical style of music is evident in the graceful and fanciful design of Carpeaux's sculpture. This classy, young Figaro is depicted wearing fine linens and a hat emblematic of the fashion of Rossini's time. He also carries a lute and is surrounded by numerous books, revealing himself as a man of letters and the arts. Perhaps most noticeable is Figaro's elegant and agile pose; once again reflecting the classical style of music. This witty pose accentuates Figaro's charm and sophistication and may also suggest a flirtatious offering to his fiancée, Suzanne.

The character of Figaro remains one of the most beloved operatic figures of all time. This enduring individual encapsulates everything from a bard to a barber, while at the same time presenting imagery reflective of Rossini and Mozart. His story remains an incomparable symbol of the richness and extravagance of the Classical era.

As a musician, I was drawn to this piece because of Figaro's connection to classical music. When viewing this work, I'm transported to the profound experience of performing Mozart or Rossini in the Marquette University Symphony Orchestra. The performing arts have always been a passion of mine. I love having the opportunity to connect my musical insight with the visual arts.

MARILYN FRENN, Ph.D.,
RN, CNE, ANEF, FTOS

Professor
College of Nursing

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10:14-16 (New International Version)

Though Diane Arbus did most of her work in New York City, this early print in what appears to be a more rural part of Massachusetts, is compelling for me because the focus is on the child. Hair asunder, this child looks forthrightly ahead. The background is almost indiscernible, just as the words of Christ compel us to leave behind our worldly clutter, coming to God with the simplicity and trust of a child.

In art and the words of scripture we may find reminders of the simple truths that can set us free. They are reminders I need when the many things I find myself compelled to keep in the foreground drown out this wisdom. May peace be with you!



Diane Arbus

American, b. 1923 - 1971

Child in a nightgown, Wellfleet, Mass., 1957

Vintage gelatin silver print

9 x 5 ⁷/₈ in

22.86 x 14.94 cm

2010.29.1

Museum purchase with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Omar Bittman
by exchange and gift of Michael Parish
Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art



Joachim Brohm

German, b. 1955

Motel, 1983 - 1984/2008

Chromogenic color print

20 x 24 in

50.8 x 60.96 cm

2011.12.3

Museum purchase from the Heller Art Acquisition Fund

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

EDDIE M. GUZMAN

Associate Director, Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program
Educational Opportunity Program

The first thing that jumps out at me when viewing Joachim Brohm's *Motel*, is the stark contrast between the deteriorating condition of the inner city set against the prominent backdrop of the downtown skyline. The broken parking sign, the shattered glass on the sidewalk, and the graffiti inscribed on the wall of the dark building signal a neighborhood beset by crime and vandalism. Observing the man with the plaid shirt, armed with a trash container, looking down at the object possibly thrown to cause destruction, I'm left wondering how often he is out there, cleaning up debris and putting up with all the riffraff.

In addition, the three motel signs convey the sense of desperation. Each sign lurches out at different eye levels, competing to grab the attention of the oncoming traffic. Each offers a different message—the tall sign publicising the cost of \$18 per couple; the midlevel sign adding the words *INN TOWNE*; and the third, attached to the building, highlighting a restaurant and lounge. Each message conjures up images of affordable lodging with the added conveniences of dining and lounging. Those images, however, are ultimately obliterated and replaced by images of seediness, shadiness, and crime.

And then, there is the downtown skyline, just past the railroad tracks, carrying the promise of better tomorrows. This photograph could have been shot in any of the big cities, New York, Chicago, D.C., even our very own Milwaukee (I'm thinking from the corner of National and South 1st, looking north). And while the photo may have been taken in 1984, it could have been shot yesterday.

Driving across the 16th Street Viaduct to work every day and seeing Marquette from just beyond the distance, I think of those folks living in the near South Side and wonder if they look at Marquette in the same way. Having worked with low-income, first-generation students, this photo keeps me grounded as to the hardships and challenges of the students we serve. Growing up living in this type of neighborhood, you look past the present everyday despair and dream of a better life.

JAKE JUMBECK

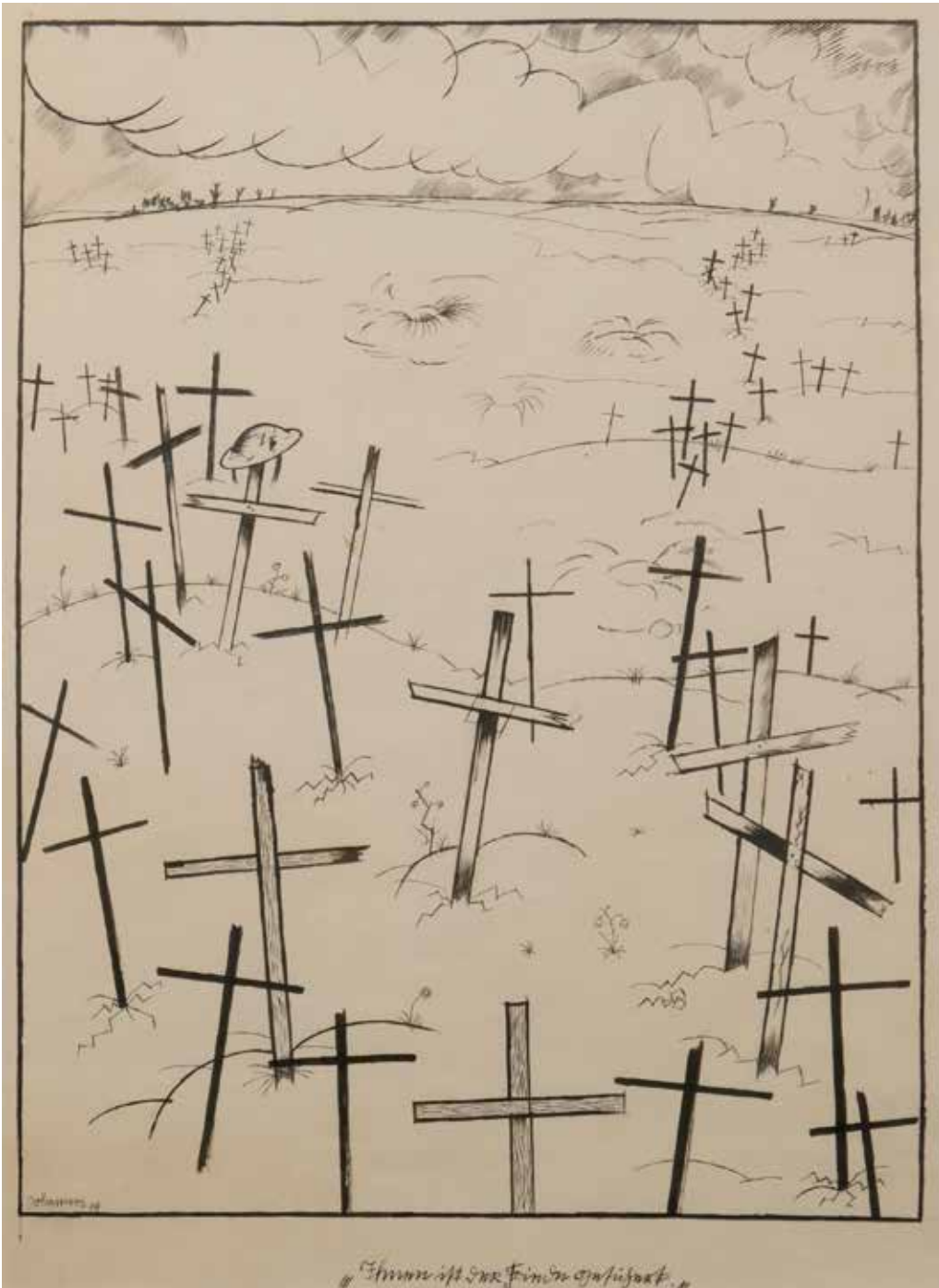
Student, Klingler College of Arts and Sciences
History '14

World War I, according to many historians, is the seminal conflict of the twentieth century. Had the Great War not have happened, many of the conflicts that plagued the twentieth century could have likely been avoided, e.g., the rise of Adolf Hitler, the Communist Revolution in Russia, World War II, the Holocaust, and the Cold War. All of these events have origins that stem from the First World War and its aftermath. An entire generation of men was wiped out due to the brutal nature of the fighting, as the world was introduced to the horrors of modern warfare.

In George Grosz's drawing *Ihnen ist der Friede Gesichert* (*To Them Peace is Assured*), all that can be seen is a makeshift graveyard marking the final resting place of scores of fallen soldiers. Thoughts of brutality and unending suffering are the images immediately called to mind. The landscape is barren and inhospitable, able only to sustain weeds and scattered patches of grass. These random pieces of foliage are the meager signs of what was once possibly a lush and verdant field, reduced now to a virtual wasteland. One simply needs to look at these elements to see the horrors that World War I unleashed upon the world.

The title of this work, *To Them Peace is Assured*, is what truly attracted me to it. While these fallen soldiers no longer have to face the unending suffering that is modern warfare, what was the price they paid for this "peace"? Have they truly found peace? They never again have to pick up a rifle, or go "over the top," or serve long, seemingly unending tours at the front, but the only peace they are definitely assured is that of eternal rest. Many people will never know these soldiers' names or understand the sacrifices they made for their country. The soldiers fought for what they believed in, but their reward seemingly does not meet the price they had to pay. They are forever guaranteed peace, but it is a dubious peace, an undeserved peace that no man should ever have to be assured.

When I look at this drawing, I am reminded of the price that many men have had to pay throughout the centuries. Because of their sacrifice, many other men would be assured the same peace that these fallen soldiers were assured. Certainly they have been granted peace, but at what cost?



George Grosz

German, 1893 - 1959

Ihnen ist der Friede gesichert

(*To Them Peace is Assured*), 1919

Ink on paper

18 ¼ x 12 ¼ in

46.35 x 31.11 cm

2002.23.3

Gift of Marvin and Janet Fishman

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art



Sam Fentress

American, b. 1955

Phoenix (In the Name of Jesus: Used Tires, Brake Service, Fix Flat), 1997

Chromogenic dye coupler print

16 x 20 in

40.64 x 50.8 cm

2010.30.12

Gift of anonymous donor

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

C. SHAUN LONGSTREET, Ph.D.

Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
Visiting Assistant Professor
Department of Theology

This piece is from a run of photographs taken by the artist over a period of more than two decades from across the United States in which he captured expressions of religious sentiment embedded in the American landscape. They are a photographic collection of what he designates a unique American phenomenon: the construction of religious signs made by ordinary people from, and on, common things.

More than the other Fentress photos that I have seen, *Phoenix* causes the viewer to react to a stark contrast between what one might expect from mundane and sacred spaces. The clashing combination of claims to holiness (In the Name of Jesus) within an everyday context (maintenance and used tire sales) presents the viewer an opportunity to observe the fluid boundary between what one can, and could, designate as sacred from what might be considered just ordinary.

What appeals to me most in *Phoenix* is the communication of a personal realization within the photograph. Whereas one might legitimately point to an American tradition of weaving capitalism with spirituality, a common theme within Fentress's collection, I lean in another direction. Even if joining commerce and religion is the intent, the person using the vehicle/sign is still laying claim to holiness. There is something very powerful about invoking the divine in a public space, and the painter of the sign is making the everyday less so. Thus, objects like the van and the person who painted it are neither common nor ordinary. Selling tires, working on brakes, and fixing flats in Jesus's name can be a powerful observance of God for those participating in these activities. Invoking God in all things, the painter of the van ignores class and bourgeois expectations about religiosity. In this sign, the sign painter is expressing citizenship within the kingdom of heaven here on earth.

When students and I work together on reading any expression of religion, we always try to recognize potential issues that arise between those who observe religious expressions and those who are practitioners. There are always consequences when nonparticipants frame the religious practices of others because hermeneutics are acts of power. *Phoenix*, as an art piece, is not dissimilar from a textbook about Buddhism, or a video about charismatic snake handlers, in that it frames someone's religion in a particular, and static, manner. What is included or excluded, and how it is left for the viewer to read, will have an effect on the relationship between practitioner and outsider. As such, to respect and appreciate the value of peoples' faiths, we need to remain cognizant of the limitations and implications of our readings.

I am confident that past classes, upon seeing *Phoenix*, would have asked what it might mean to read the van as an artifact separate from the person who created it. They would likely have raised questions about the tensions created out of a situation wherein a well-educated white man is photographing artifacts of other peoples' faith, people who appear to be working class, possibly illiterate, and/or nonnative English speakers. They would have hopefully asked, too, what it might imply about us if we read *Phoenix* as art. That is, what does it say about both the artist and ourselves when our participation in art is mediated through consuming caricatures of other peoples' expressions of faith? As a starting point, however, *Phoenix* reflects an attempt to communicate a connection between one's everyday existence and the transcendent, and makes a powerful statement about hope, faith, and humanity.

L. CHRISTOPHER MILLER, Ph.D.

Vice President for Student Affairs

I take this painting to be an interpretation of 1 Kings 17:8-16, in which Elijah asks the Widow of Zarephath for a morsel of bread. There's some hesitancy on the widow's part because she has but a little meal and oil with which to make bread for herself and her son, and it is a time of drought. Elijah instructs her, "Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth." (New Revised Standard Version) In many ways this passage embodies ideals I hold sacred—care for others, faith, and sharing—and indeed these ideals are part and parcel of our mission at Marquette.

Care for others is demonstrated through the widow sharing the little she has with Elijah. Both her generosity and faith are rewarded as "The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah." (NRSV) Through this act, the Lord's care for his people is shown as well. Claeissins's painting enriches what the Bible passage communicates. It depicts the child's role in this story—the child sharing bread with Elijah—and in this we can see the story of communion, people coming together to share in the bread of life. The widow must trust in the word of the Lord and in Elijah as the Lord's prophet and, more importantly, she must entrust her own child's well-being to Elijah's prophesy as well.

When I think about Marquette's role in the lives of our students, this painting resonates with me. Parents entrust their children's well-being to us, put their faith in us and our mission to provide for their children's growth on many levels (spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional), just as the widow trusts that she and her son will be provided for. In the same way that the widow and her son provide sustenance for Elijah, our students contribute to our own ongoing development of faith in the world as well. It is through our coming together in mission that we contribute to each other's being in the world. The things we are called to do through mission and faith are not always easy, just as it could not have been easy for the widow to give Elijah her last bit of food, but it is through our connectedness to each other that we find true sustenance.



Attributed to Anthuenis Claeissins

Flemish, ca. 1536 - 1613

The Story of Elijah

Oil on panel

26 ½ x 45 in

67.3 x 114.3 cm

60.3

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marc B. Rojzman

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art



Georges Rouault

French, 1871 - 1958

Bella matribus destestata

(*War, hated by mothers*), 1948

Aquatint, etching and engraving

25 ¹¹/₁₆ x 19 ⁷/₈ in

65.2 x 50.5 cm

58.1.42.1

Gift of Mr. Leonard J. Scheller

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

SUSAN M. MOUNTIN, Ph.D.

Director, Manresa for Faculty
Center for Teaching and Learning

Perhaps it is the title that draws me to this starkly portrayed image, *War, hated by mothers*. Or perhaps it is the Madonna-like characterization of this woman with a toddler perched on her lap in such a protective way that captures my attention. Is she imagining the time when this young lad will be forced to go to a war not of his making, perhaps knowing it is inevitable? We see a building in the background, still intact, but perhaps not for long. Little in this work suggests anything about war, but perhaps it is in the dynamic interplay of black and white as well as the protective embrace of the mother that one reads into, imagines, and reflects on the title paired with the image. The artist is painfully aware of the ravages of war. In the *Miserere* series (of which this work is a part), artist Georges Rouault, an ardent Roman Catholic, focused on human suffering. But *Miserere* means “mercy” and it is out of that call for mercy that the viewer responds, heart in hand.

The style is reminiscent of two other favorite artists of mine. Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) was a German artist who also used simple materials and techniques available in war-torn Germany to chronicle the lives marred by the atrocities she witnessed. Vivid charcoals and manila-like paper (actually anything she could find in midst of the war) were the mediums she used. For her, too, the pairing of mother protecting child was a common theme. War has a deleterious effect on women and children who are often not “at the table” when the decision for conflict is made. Elizabeth Stone once said that having a child “is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body.” No wonder many mothers find their hearts break at the thought of the ravages of war.

Another favorite is Ade Bethune (1914-2002), the most well-known artist of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper. This liturgical artist of renown also used the simple black on white to create woodcut-like portrayals of moments in the life of Christ, the Works of Mercy, and the lives of the saints. Her creativity brought visual images and broke up the columns filled with gray print in the newspaper. Again, her images of mothers sheltering children with their bodies are common.

Bold black lines, areas of white, stark contrast: these catch one’s eye, make one pause, and consider relationships, love, and care even amidst war.

PAMELA HILL NETTLETON, Ph.D.

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I like pink.

Helen Frankenthaler's work has been criticized for using colors that are too sweet. For being too poetic. For being too soft. For being, in other words, too female.

Yet "right out of the gate, Frankenthaler was making history," writes Ted Loos in his Sotheby's blog. Frankenthaler, who refined a technique of Jackson Pollock's, launched the Color Field method of painting in washes of thinned pigment poured directly onto untreated canvas, and influenced Washington Color School founders Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland, was simultaneously guilty of being a woman in an aggressively macho art world.

Frankenthaler wanted no quarter for her gender. "For me," she said, "being a 'lady painter' was never an issue. I don't resent being a female painter. I don't exploit it. I paint."

And viewers look, from their individual perspectives of lives lived either in the privileged center of cultural identity or out on the margins. Those in the center are often ignorant of those who are not, and can find it easy to overlook, dismiss, or minimize the relevance and accuracy of marginalized viewpoints and wisdoms. Those dwelling in the margins, however, tend to see the center clearly. Uncomfortably so. What feels unfamiliar to the center is sometimes then classified as being too much of something—too closely identified with some other race, gender, sexuality, or class. The center might benefit from the occasional application of rose-colored glasses.

It is easy to be blind to the power in pink. To miss the courage present in sweetness. To overlook what is tough and tenacious about beauty. To ignore the fierce, death-defying nature of things that are lyrical.

Unmasking what is hidden and daring to question common assumptions are the tenets of critical thinking, an essential skill for an examined and conscious life and a learning objective for Marquette students. Art teaches this, over and over again, if we look from perspectives not our own and if we remember the world is larger than our own experience. And when we are taught with joy and color and beauty, it is no less profound than angrier, darker lessons.

It's pink.
Deal with it.

Ted Loos, "Making Their Mark: Frankenthaler and Basquiat at Gagosian Gallery," *On the Loos* (blog), April 1, 2013, http://www.sothebys.com/en/inside/BlogHome/Access/on-the-loos/2013/04/making_their_markf.html.

Grace Glueck, "Helen Frankenthaler, Abstract Painter Who Shaped a Movement, Dies at 83," *New York Times*, December 28, 2011, New York edition.



Helen Frankenthaler

American, 1928 - 2011

Flirt, 2003

Color screenprint

27 x 39 1/2 in

68.58 x 100.33 cm

T2010.2.13

Promised gift of Mary and

Michael J. Tatalovich

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art



Lucia Stern

American, 1895 - 1987
Dual Personality, ca. 1945

Mixed media
29½ x 21½ in
74.9 x 54.6 cm
90.10.2

Gift of Mrs. Grace Vogel Aldworth
Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

ELIZABETH OWEN

Student, Klingler College of Arts and Sciences
Sociology '14

Wisconsin artist Lucia Stern was a keen observer of the art of her time. She was strongly influenced by progenitors of twentieth-century modern art including Picasso, Brancusi, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, and Gabo. While *Dual Personality* may not look particularly innovative by today's standards, the work clearly reflects Stern's interest in minimalism and abstraction and her penchant for experimenting with materials. *Dual Personality*, like much of Stern's work, is comprised of simply rendered biomorphic and geometric shapes. Here Stern presents two comingled shapes—one, a drawn outline, the other a solid form. The black outline (drawn directly on the paper), clearly represents a human figure, while the gray form, cut from a mesh-like material and overlaid on the drawn line, is more abstract. The composition seems to suggest a narrative concerning the relationship between mind, body, and soul. The ambiguity of the gender of Stern's abstract figure allows for multiple interpretations of duality and for multiple narratives to play out behind its neutral visage. The fluid gray form might symbolize the mind. The red circle, placed within the gray form, could be seen as a heart revealing the soul. The soul appears to be moving in sync with the mind, suggesting a harmonious interaction between the mind and the soul.

Lucia Stern is an artist that I had little knowledge of prior to my exploration of the Haggerty's online archives. Although the Haggerty houses many of her creations, it is *Dual Personality* that immediately captivated and held my attention. Personal preference, especially when it comes to art, can be difficult to explain and although I'm not usually attracted to abstract art, there is something about the simple presentation of the lone figure that makes me linger. The space Stern creates is tranquil and meditative and it is in that space that I step to ponder the dualities of my own existence. Conflict is an inevitable aspect of life and as I place myself in the mind of the lone figure, I allow myself to contemplate whatever dissonance I'm experiencing within my psyche. I think I can speak on behalf of humanity that we don't always get what we want and what we want isn't always what we need. Sometimes our mind, body, and spirit are telling us different things, speaking simultaneously in loud commanding voices jarring our ability to think deeply and with clarity. Or, sometimes we silence those voices and lead dull, shallow lives void of that deep understanding that comes from profound listening. It takes a brave soul to engage in that kind of personal conversation. I was drawn to *Dual Personality* because I felt like Stern had created a place that anyone bold or daring enough could step into to engage their own mind, body, and soul.

In the Hebrew scriptures the fact of God's interaction with humanity is assumed, but the way in which God relates with humanity is diverse and complex. When teaching the Theology Department's Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament overview course, I try to initiate the students to the rich world of ancient Israel and its relationship with God. One way to begin this conversation is to consider the way in which people experience God—not only in a place from long ago and far away, but in everyday experience. The artist Marc Chagall brings joy and sadness, question and faith, tragedy and peace to his *Bible Series*. Because the story of Israel begins with Abraham, Chagall's etching, *The Sacrifice of Abraham*, is a good place on which to focus these questions.

Does one's walk with God bring light or darkness? This work shows that while on the path with the transcendent, one sees both. Abraham appears grim. His face is partially concealed, but the features that can be seen are oversized, as is he in proportion to Isaac and to the angel—the other two figures in this work. Nonetheless, his own perspective is not downcast; his glance reaches upward, toward the angel. His right hand holds a frightfully large knife, but it is splashed with color: a serene sky blue. I think Chagall well captures the anguish that Abraham must have felt when he heard these words, "And he said: 'Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah. And offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.'" Gen. 22:2 (American Standard Version)

In contrast to the depiction of Abraham, Isaac is full of light. His nearly white, completely stripped body—hands bound behind him—is lithe. He appears calm, reflecting Jewish interpretation that Isaac went willingly to his own sacrifice, pleading with his father to bind him tightly so that he would not accidentally flinch (thereby marring the offering). And, look—that face! It appears repeated in the face of the angel! The angel arrives, as we know from the biblical narrative, in the nick of time to halt God's astonishing command. Why this link between earth and heaven? Is it because Abraham passed the test and was deemed worthy for the covenant to continue through Isaac? Is it because in Abraham's willingness to lose

everything, he received God's assurance that despite all odds, blessing would supersede all sorrow?

The tiniest of all figures in the painting, the ram, is not to be missed. Genesis relates that as a substitute for Isaac, Abraham offered the ram caught in the thicket. Somehow, this tiny life will connect him with God. To be sure, something is lost—the little lamb is innocent. The peace and blessing given to Abraham is yet tinged with suffering.

The Hebrew scriptures begin with the story of creation, in which God saw that its entirety was "very good" Gen. 1:31 (ASV). Disobedience to God's commands entered the world, however; violence grew exponentially. But the story continues; God made a covenant with Abraham so that Israel and the entire world would be blessed. With that blessing, the world is filled with both God's grace and human free will. It is abundant with beauty but also with anguish. It is marked with questions of God's justice. This marvelous etching touches me with its poignancy. I hope it captures my students' interest as well.



Marc Chagall

Belorussian, 1887 - 1985

The Sacrifice of Abraham, 1957

Hand-colored etching

24 x 18 in

61 x 45.7 cm

80.721

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Haggerty

Collection of the

Haggerty Museum of Art



Juan Correa de Vivar

Spanish, 1510 - 1566

The Lamentation of Mary Over the Body of Christ with Angels Holding the Symbols of the Passion, 1539 - 1562

Oil on panel

56½ x 47 in

143.5 x 119.4 cm

58.5

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marc B. Rojzman

Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art

Scenes of Mary grieving over the body of Christ have a prominent and cherished place in Catholic art from the Middle Ages onward. Whereas predecessors were likely to approach the scene more as chroniclers—depicting Jesus, Mary, and those at her side with the deference shown historical figures—Renaissance artists such as Juan Correa de Vivar began to show heightened interest in Jesus, Mary, and her companions as human beings. Grief, despondence, resignation, faith, grace—the great emotions wrapped up in the Passion of Christ—became the subject of these Lamentations, just as spiritual states and emotions became the subjects of Renaissance poetry and drama more broadly.

This work by Correa is all the more noteworthy as a product of a particular place and time within the Renaissance: mid-sixteenth-century Spain. Given Correa's base in Toledo, south of Madrid—a couple decades after Ignatius of Loyola experienced his religious conversion in his Basque homeland—this work shares something of a lineage, or at least a neighborliness, with the Society of Jesus itself. It doesn't take too much imagination to observe in Correa's *Lamentation* an intensity of spirituality and a vivid, dreamlike quality encountered also in the Autobiography of Ignatius, particularly the sections on the spiritually charged months he spent in Manresa from 1522-23. There, exhausting bouts of fasting and prayer ultimately resolved themselves in his formulation of the Spiritual Exercises, his guide for his fellow human souls to use in building a relationship with a God ready to love them as individuals.

Amid the many depictions of Mary lamenting the crucifixion, it is rare to encounter something as vibrant as the heavens bursting with yellow light in this painting. But a similar image *is* encountered in the concluding meditation of the Spiritual Exercises, the Contemplation on the Love of God, in which Ignatius writes, "God's love shines down upon me like the light rays from the sun."

SARAH WADSWORTH, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Director of
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Department of English

At the focal point—slightly off-center—two enormous hands rise Godlike from the sea, lifting a fragile ship against a torn and roiling sky. In the foreground, a woman swims out to sea, her truncated arms extending upward to the waves. At first glance, the hands appear to be hers, the dislocation the effect of refraction. Look again and they seem not to belong to her: the proportions are incompatible, the angles incongruous.

When light waves abruptly change course upon passing from one medium to another, a refracted object may appear enlarged or distorted. A drop of dew magnifies the surface of a leaf; a straw in a glass of water seems to bend. Refraction may dazzle our eyes with rainbows or deceive them with mirages, raising questions about what we know, or think we know. As a visual metaphor in Kara Walker's *no world*, refraction signals rupture, dislocation, the breach between appearance and reality, known and unknown.

The ship in *no world* becomes toy-like in these powerful, oversized hands; the figures on shore shrink to flat black shapes, mere shadows of the people they represent. Without recourse to color, the silhouettes make race legible. The Native American offers a leafy stalk, the European smokes a pipe. The primal scene of our national mythmaking shifts, and we follow the shadowy African figure into the deep. Is she a slave escaping to freedom, or is her only freedom death? And above it all, what vessel rests in those portentous hands—transporter of settlers, trafficker in slaves? Trader in tobacco, taker of lives? Ambiguity, like the shadow of slavery, looms large.

In *Clotel* (1853), the first novel by an African American writer, William Wells Brown makes a similar dislocating shift, coupling the opposing images of two ships that crossed the Atlantic in 1620: "Behold the Mayflower anchored at Plymouth Rock, the slave-ship in James

River." To Brown, the strands of history represented by these "parent" vessels were "parallel lines" corresponding to "good and evil in the New World," one of which must inevitably "come to an end." In *no world*, in contrast, Walker draws our attention to the ways in which these New World histories intersect, fracture, and blend.

Refraction creates illusions, but it can also sharpen one's perception, as when rays of light passing through a lens converge at a precise focal point. Art, too, is a way of refocusing. It asks: What do you see, or see anew, through the prism of imagination? Which lens do you use to look at the world? Half a millennium ago Europeans "invented" the New World (*Mundus Novus*) as a kind of Utopia: a "good-place" (*eu + topia*) but in some sense, too, an impossible, unreal "no-place" (*u + topia*). The New World depicted in *no world* is also, literally, no-place: a world of thwarted possibility in which racism, violence, and greed desolate what F. Scott Fitzgerald's Nick Carraway paints as "the last and greatest of all human dreams." History refracts through the medium of art: bending, breaking, jolting, mending.

New World
knew world
no world
know world



Kara Walker

American, b. 1969

no world, 2010

Etching with aquatint,
sugar-lift, spit-bite and dry-point

27 x 39 in

68.6 x 99.1 cm

2010.13

Museum purchase with funds from Mrs. Martha W. Smith by exchange
Collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art



Dawoud Bey

American, b. 1953

Syretta, 1996

Dye diffusion transfer prints

94 x 48 in

238.8 x 121.9 cm

2008.2

Museum purchase with funds from Ms. Joanna Sturm by exchange

Collection of the

Haggerty Museum of Art

Dawoud Bey has written that one of his earliest encounters with the power of photography occurred when at 11 years old he discovered a book of civil rights movement photographs his parents owned called *The Movement: Documentary of a Struggle for Equality*. He remembered that the visual images “came at me in a rush,” as would later photographs of the victims of the September 15, 1963, bombing of Birmingham, Alabama’s 16th Street Baptist Church. A photograph of 12-year-old bombing survivor, Sarah Collins (Rudolph), who lay in a hospital bed blinded by flying glass, left a lasting impression on Bey, which he posted on his blog, *What’s Going On*. “I was eleven years old when I saw that image of the immobilized little black girl laid out, helplessly scarred and traumatized,” he recalled, “and that image has stayed with me all of these years.”

Bey’s photographs depicting race and urban life owe as much to his childhood exposure to *The Movement* as they do to the influences of Roy DeCarava, James Van Der Zee, and Henri Cartier-Bresson. Context and the images of youth are what make the work of this celebrated photographer stand out among his peers. While context has been crucial to most of his photographic work, whether in the streets of a city, the pews of a church, or in school classrooms, one project, *Polaroid 20 x 24*, stands out for the exchange of context for uncluttered portraiture of his subjects.

Syretta is one of the featured portraits in the series. The subject seems unassuming at first. A teenage girl seated, head propped on a dining room chair. Her expression is solemn, perhaps bored. Her image is captured in six separate pictures, framed to suggest that she has been caught in a moment of solitude through a glass window. Yet *Syretta*’s is a more compelling story. These six photographs were taken with a 20 x 24 Polaroid camera, a 235-pound camera available to

photographers in only a handful of studios. Known to produce photographs with extraordinary resolution, they are large and unwieldy for a photographer to use even with the help of a team of technical experts. *Syretta* would have endured a laborious process to capture her image in six separate photographs. The end result pairs high-quality photographs with the nostalgia of a Polaroid image and its distressed borders. Given the time lapse between each picture taken, Bey conveys *movement* as the subject changes slightly from photograph to photograph. Because of this, *Syretta* is not confined to a single moment in time.

When I consider *Syretta*, I think about Sarah Collins, lying in a Birmingham hospital bed, both eyes patched, the victim of unimaginable horror. Bey and I are of the same generation and we would have been similarly affected by the images from Movement days. Unlike Sarah, *Syretta* is pensive and Bey gives no context to understand what brought her to that moment before the camera in a portrait studio. As audience, we are left to ponder her without benefit of knowing her situation. The way that Bey and his subjects relate to one another seems to be essential to his composition. He once said the act of portrait photography was akin to personal theater where “I become a kind of director, attempting to provoke a credible performance on the part of the subject.” As audience to this personal theater, we work through our own remembrance of a time when we were *Syretta*’s age and consider its meaning.

Susan Chevlowe, *The Jewish Identity Project: New American Photography* (New York: The Jewish Museum, 2005), 49.

Dawoud Bey, *Harlem, U.S.A.* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2012), 6.

Dawoud Bey, “Birmingham on My Mind,” *What’s Going On?* (blog), November 21, 2012, <http://whatsgoingon-dawoudbeysblog.blogspot.com/>.

“20 x 24 Studio FAQs,” 20 X 24 Studio, accessed May 8, 2013, <http://www.20x24studio.com/>.

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