



I am elated to present the **Global Metaphysics of Abstraction II** exhibition featuring works by Sheila Crider and Aziza Claudia Gibson-Hunter of Washington, DC; Tanda Francis and Musa Hixson of Brooklyn, NY; Joe Overstreet of Manhattan, NY; and Ronald Walton of Petersburg, VA.

Metaphysics, as the branch of philosophy that deals with the concept of Being, the objective of this exhibition was to present artists who are in a dynamic process of exploration. Engaged in creating works that globally and locally, relate to the African American community at large.

The artists included in this show are inspired by nature, the universe, and/or social and political topics coupled with a powerful aesthetic drive to create. The expansiveness of their forms are grounded in non-traditional as well as conceptual approaches to abstract drawing, painting, watercolor, and collage based processes.

Many thanks to the East Hawaii Cultural Center, the University of Hawaii at Hilo, and Professor Michael D. Marshall, Art/PARTS Department Chair for their continuing support for this exhibition and residency project.

Lamerol Gatewood
Exhibition Curator

**GLOBAL
METAPHYSICS
OF ABSTRACTION**

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Contemporary abstraction can be a shorthand depiction of real life driven by material and process—in this case, whitewashing deteriorating reed fence with paper pulp to conceal and highlight its flaws, a metaphor alluding to the nation’s historic relationship with people of color. Referential titles contextualize the objects to speak beyond aesthetics evoking both an intellectual and visceral experience of the work.

Fencing Out Color, 2018

abaca and cotton pulp, Japanese paper, ink, recycled reed fencing

#14 large format: 20" x 16", series 1 - 8

#3 small format: 9" x 10", series 1 - 10

Almost Human, 2018

screen print with graphite, coloring pencil, oil stick, vinyl cord, acrylic medium, cotton quilt batting

#33 12 panels, 15.5" x 15.5"

SHEILA CRIDER

Give Life, 2018

acrylic on paper

#15 6'2" x 9'7"

Vessel, 2018

acrylic on canvas

#19 9'11" x 6'3"

My work creates a dialogue of personal and collective identity in relation to society and the things we build around us. I am motivated to create figuratively as a direct means of communicating emotionally and physically to a wide range of viewers.

I present my work as a moment for viewers to pause and look within and confront face to face what often goes unseen. My inspirations are found in cultural history, nature and geometry and the tension created by combining these contrasting elements. Living primarily in urban western cultures I seek to create environments incorporating nature and the human form as an opportunity to engage, interpret and learn from the act and outcome of creating.

TANDA FRANCIS

My multidisciplinary art explores the correlations existing between repetitive codes of information uncovered in scientific research and the various structural patterns, which occur in our everyday environment.

MUSA HIXON

My process-oriented practice incorporates the complexities of painting, wrapping, automatic writing, cutting, scoring, tying, weaving, and nailing. Combining various materials with existing found objects; my art reflects assemblage, sculpture and large-scale immersive installations.

Recurring motifs in my practice are the elliptical forms and spheres often repeated organically in nature. I attribute my interest in these forms to their structural sustainability and therefore prevalence in the universe.

I also believe that my art implies a lyrical collision of these binary worlds, resulting in visual interpretations embodying such formal elements of composition as; surface, depth, mark making and balance.

Anthropological trends in human behavior are another core concern of mine. Evidenced by a subtle reference to symbolic, materials, imagery and objects interwoven.

Bruh Future Past Code, 2019

#30 burlap, acrylic, 49" x 44"

Sun Dream, 2010

#27 wood, soil, acrylic, 18" x 12"

The Other Times, 2018

#17 wood, acrylic, charcoal, 24" x 18"

Untitled, 2019

#6 felt, ink, 48" x 41"

AZIZA CLAUDIA GIBSON-HUNTER

As a child, I remember elderly Black women saying "That girl/boy got potencha...(potential)". Their heads would nod between a knowing smile. They could look at young people and see that there was a spectacular energy inside of that person, which would surely reveal itself in time, and on occasion. In physics, potential energy is stored energy. It is a force that can be tapped, and shared. Perhaps the attack on people of color is a manifestation of the fear of that potential. It is a fear that is as old as America itself. Those who believe in freedom can access our "potencha": our talents, gifts, knowledge, skills, know-how, discipline, tenacity, and will...POTENCHA! We can pull from this vitality, using it for vigor, stamina, unifying, healing, giving, sharing our very best to guide and protect ourselves/ each other.

We can organize ourselves with the discipline of Harriet Tubman and all those working the Underground Railroad, as clandestine as the thousands of ancestors, who lived in the Great Dismal Swamps of Virginia/North Carolina, with the strategic intelligence of those many lawyers who worked on the Brown vs. the Board of Education case, and with the precision of the Deacons of Defense. This series is my interpretation of the beauty and force of one's potential.

The "POTENCHA" Series
colored pencil, oil sticks,
charcoal, graphite

Artist # Our #

#9 #13

#11 #28

#14 #10

#15 #11

#16 #29

#17 #12

#18 #7

#19 #8

#20 #9

#27 #31

RONALD WALTON

Ronald Walton was born in New York City and is currently a resident of Petersburg, Virginia and a part time resident of Brooklyn, New York. He attended Brooklyn College and has been acclaimed for his creation of the “Rollcubistic” style of portraying human form.

My technique of painting encompasses the use of round sphere-like balls patterned to form a humanistic figure. The use of color combinations and depth creates a lavish and illuminating affect. My early works feature collages showing the mean streets and the reality of hard economic conditions characteristics of the Civil Rights Era. Since the late 1970’s, My work has grown more surrealistic and manifested my “Rollcubistic” style.

My work show imprints Pollock and Romare Bearden. I create new work, regardless of mood. “Art should be practiced in good, bad, high, or low spirits,” says Walton. He is multidimensional in his approach and works in pen and ink and pastels and oils. After nearly three decades of producing and exhibiting both nationally and internationally, I am working to express “cultural pluralism” through art.

- American Drama #1**
- Energy LG #20**
- Ginger Root #32**
- The Line Up #22**
- The Motherland #4**
- Connection #21**
- Confetti #23**
- No End Insight #16**

all pieces: 2018, paper / oil on board,
40" x 36"

JOE OVERSTREET

I began working when I was four or five years of age in my birthplace—Conehatta, in Newton County—a very isolated, rural place about 70 miles south of Philadelphia, Mississippi. There were very few people who lived there, and so it was almost a complete and natural world.

I was painting seriously by the time I was in Oakland in 1946. I had my first one man show in 1956 at Cousin Jimbo’s Bop City on Fillmore Street in San Francisco. I used to go there after hours because I liked to listen to the great Jazz musicians. More than anything the musicians were improvising and that and improvisation in abstraction are similar. I still find my way into and with my painting. Abstract thinking affects my work, minimal ideas. But I don’t think it is about Abstract Expressionism, because I don’t like “isms” anymore.

Conceptual work inspires me and the reason is that it is free. And I also work in and from nature and nature inspires me. My best bet is looking at God and the inspiration of nature . . . Plants, trees, the ocean and looking at the universe, believing in the universe, always looking for God in everything. I am also working with light and transparency in a different way. I am concerned with time... and the time we are living in. I am trying to understand how things change; how time changes.

My practice is also in a sense like other African American abstract painters of my generation in that I use tools and materials in a different way. I have searched to make my work and thoughts, although conceptual, relevant to the experience of Black people. Every painter struggles to make a visual language; each painter writes or looks for his own vocabulary. I have looked for mine through geometry and nature over a period of 55 years since 1963.

Door of No Return
watercolor, from the
Goree Series

Artist #	Our #
#19	#24
#20	#26
#21	#5
#24	#25
#25	#18
#29	#2