

OPEN THE WALL

News & Views from JUST LOOKIN' GALLERY

Published for Ethnic Art Lovers Everywhere

Spring 1999



Notes From:

HERE
&
THERE

We want to thank all you folks that visited our booth at the **National Black Fine Art Show** in New York City. We're sorry we didn't have more time to spend with each of you. For our readers that didn't get a chance to attend, mark your calendars

for next year. The quality of work, variety of artists and general ambiance of the show was first class. It was wonderful to see works by Elizabeth Catlett, Aaron Douglas, Henry O. Tanner and all the other artists from the early part of this century. These were the 'pioneers' that paved the way for all future generations of ethnic artists. ❖ Exciting things are happening for **James Denmark**. Four of his pieces were included in the Hewitt Collection on public display in North Carolina and he's got a great new limited edition print "Gardenia." ❖ Bell South commissioned **Gilbert Young** to create a piece for Black History Month. Titled "Drum" it began airing in thirty national magazines (including American Visions) in February. Gilbert was also a feature artist in Upscale's February issue. ❖ **Michael Brown's** newest sculpture "Wrapsody" debuted at Art Expo in New York. He's already sold 40 of the edition of 70! If you haven't seen it on our video tape, call for photos. ❖ **Melvin Clark** has two pieces, "Acoustic Quintet" and "Bass Player" featured in the April issue of Jazz Times magazine. His style really personifies musical triumph. ❖ We have two wonderful **Keith Mallett** studies, "Precious Love" and "Three Sisters." Both pieces were published this March. Northwestern University Hospital just purchased four of Keith's paintings including "Circle of Pride." ❖ **Grace Kisa** is painting fantastic impressionistic landscapes and a new series of abstracts that show her versatility. ❖ Not satisfied just doing wonderful watercolors, **Margaret Warfield** has created hand sculpted masks. They're impossible to describe so you'll just have to see them close up! She was a featured artist at Walt Disney World in February and her new 55 screen serigraph "Exceptional Women" just came out. ❖ **Ron and Adelle Witherspoon** (Rondell) were among the many fantastic artists honored by inclusion in the 'Black New York Artists of the 20th Century' at the Schomburg Center in NYC. ❖ By the time you read this, the new series of **Joe Holston** etchings we just received

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Joseph Holston, Jr

Finding one artist that can skillfully manipulate multiple mediums and paint both realism and abstract expressionism with equal aplomb is rare. Joe Holston has the ability to interpret the world in many ways and different art forms. His early use of realism in the 1970's resounded with perfect treatment of light and shadow. Each painting spoke volumes about the human condition with a subtlety of strokes and shading. It was during this period that people began noticing his talent and his worldwide reputation grew quickly.

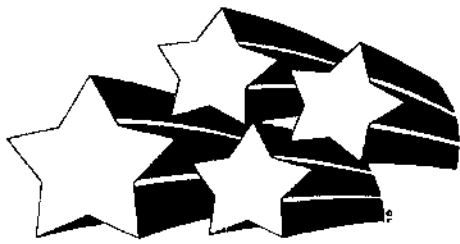
But Joe was always exploring new vistas and manipulating new mediums. Perhaps the fact that his formal art training came late allowed him to not feel restrained in developing new styles.

Joe credits a trip to Tanzania in 1976 for helping to develop his cubist visions. We believe they were there all along. The early 1980's marked his beginning forays into less representational, more abstract work.

Long an expert in methods of engraving, Joe has an especially nice touch with aquatint - a demanding process. His Nassau series is one of my favorites, still realistic but with overtones of the experimentation that was brewing. He remains one of our best living printmakers.

The early nineties saw his involvement into the master expressionist that he now is. People that started buying art at this time have seen mostly the abstract and cubist side of his creativity. Art lovers that claim to only like realism are drawn to his work. His gouaches, in particular, radiate the warmth and genius of Joe Holston.

What's next on the horizon? With typical understatement Joe says wherever the spirit takes him.



Tomorrow's Masters?

So many artists have joined the **Just Lookin'** family this past year - we thought we would briefly introduce a few of them.

Kenny Robinson - painting pointillism with oil pastels gives Kenny's work a really unique look and textural quality. His graphites will grab you with their simplicity.

Calvin Coleman - very promising water-color artist. His work has a quiet intensity.

Selma Glass - acrylics, paper sculpture and glass are just some of the mediums Selma has made her own.

Alonzo Saunders - skillfully combines patterned fabric and great painting in works that beg to be touched.

Buchi Upjohn - scribing and handcoloring copper plates to create three dimensional pieces; this Nigerian artist combines African symbolism with contemporary colors in wonderful ways.

Mario Robinson - one of the best young portrait artists on the scene. His pastels burst with emotion. Featured in current issue of Upscale Magazine.

Kevin Holder - We lost touch with Kevin for a few years and we're thrilled to have his expressionistic paintings back in the gallery.

Victor Odoi - Ghanaian artist working primarily in oil and gouache, one of Ghana's most sought after artists.

James Cudjoe - also from Ghana; he paints oil on canvas in an impasto style reminiscent of Paul Goodnight.

ARTY-FACTS

"Come up and See My Intaglios"

Thought I was going to say etchings didn't you? Etchings are part of a family of printmaking techniques created by the intaglio process. Intaglio means cut below the surface. Engravings, etchings, drypoints, aquatints, mezzotints and soft ground etchings are all examples of intaglio. In some processes the lines are cut into the metal plate (usually copper or zinc) by hand; in others they are bitten out by acid. In all cases, these grooves hold the ink that is forced onto the paper in a press that exerts great pressure. This is why all intaglios are distinguished by a platemark; an indented line where the edges of the plate are pressed into the paper.

Various forms of engravings are some of the oldest printmaking techniques. Armorers and goldsmiths developed this technique during the Middle Ages. They expanded on the methods used for making jewelry and began using these same engraving techniques on flat metal plates. Many examples of intaglios still exist from the middle of the fifteenth century. Albrecht Durer was one of the first to employ an acid bath to create etchings. Rembrandt popularized the drypoint style of intaglio and combined cross hatching with standard etching techniques. Let's take each method individually.

Engraving - This is the oldest intaglio process. A sharp metal tool called a burin is used to shave metal slices from the plate so that ink can be held in the incised lines for printing. This method creates the crispest lines.

Etching - This process employs an acid bath that bites into the plate. The plate is coated with an acid-resistant ground. The image is drawn onto the ground with a sharp etching needle. The plate is then immersed in acid. This etches the exposed metal and creates a recessed image in which the ink will sit for transfer to the paper. This method allows the artist more freedom in drawing shapes. The lines are softer than an engraving.

Soft-ground Etchings - These begin, like a traditional etching, with the plate completely covered by a resistant coating. The soft ground never totally hardens; this allows the artist to place objects in the waxy substance. When these items are removed, they leave an imprint in the soft ground. When the plate is dipped into the acid, the acid eats a replica of the item into the plate.

Drypoint - The design is scratched into the plate with a sharp steel needle called a scribe. This tool pushes the metal to either side of the line building up a burr that holds the ink. The lines print soft-edged and heavy. The burrs tend to wear down quickly so drypoints are usually produced in very small editions.

Aquatint - This technique requires the plate to be covered with a finely powdered rosin and heated so that the rosin melts and forms a porous ground that can be penetrated by acid. Large spaces, rather than lines, hold the ink creating a pebble like effect. This method gives the widest tonal range, resembling a watercolor wash.

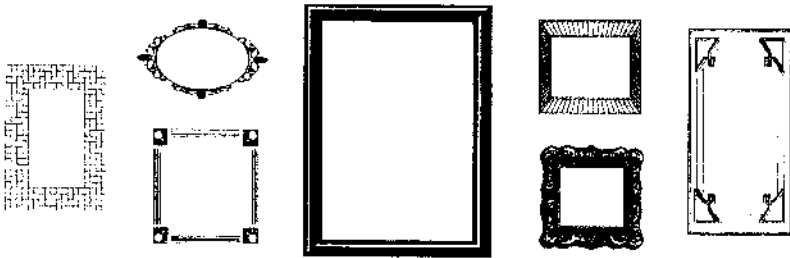
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Hang UPs

My phone has been ringing with great questions from regular readers of this column. I'm going to take this issue to answer the most often asked ones.

How do I decide which pieces to include in a wall grouping?
First - take a really good look at all the pieces you have acquired over your collecting years. Do any of them share a theme? Are several of them the same medium? Relationships in subject matter, texture or medium is a great place to begin a grouping. A wall of etchings will look great; too many abstracts on the same wall can be confusing. Portraits and figuratives group well together.

How do I decide what size pieces to use on a particular wall?
It really depends on the size wall and the pieces of art you have available. How close will you be to the pieces in a room? Are the walls open or is there furniture against them? If you have a small open wall, use a assortment of pieces approximately the same size. Larger walls can take one large and several smaller pieces. Use an odd number of pieces to make a more exciting presentation. Strive for balance, not symmetry.



Which pieces hang where in the grouping?

One of the easiest ways is to pick the largest or strongest piece and use it to "anchor" the grouping. It doesn't necessarily have to hang in the center of the space. Then look for other smaller pieces to complement the anchor piece. Experiment by laying everything on the floor (my favorite way) or by sketching approximate sizes. Study the flow of each piece. Didn't know that your art flowed? Every piece of art has a direction and a weight. If a piece faces center and is equally balanced, feel free to place it anywhere in a grouping. Does a piece face to the left? Hang it towards the right in the grouping. Pieces that face right - hang left. This keeps the grouping smooth. Do several of your paintings have an obvious horizon or a main line of interest which is strongly horizontal? If so, care must be taken with where they are placed. If you only have



"A Brush of Culture"

Get a few friends together and enjoy the latest art in the comfort of your home. We can turn your home into a jazz gallery, show only originals, or bring all types of ethnic art.

All you have to do is invite at least 15 and no more than 50 friends.

Just Lookin' provides invitations, promotionals, door prizes and a great host or hostess incentive package. Call for information.



Home Art Parties



Caught in the WEB!!!

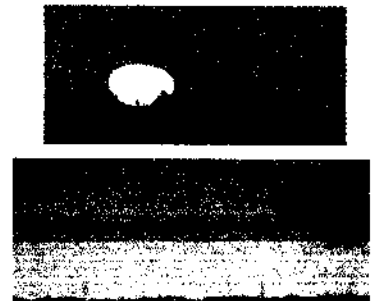
We are busy at work on our website.

Look for us at
www.justlookin.com
around June 1. Just like the gallery, our website will feature a diverse selection of original art by established and emerging artists.

"Color, what a deep and mysterious language, the language of dreams."

Paul Gauguin

one you can use it in a grouping surrounded by pieces that do not have strong horizontal lines. Two with similar subject matter can be used on a small wall one above the other.



Shows & Special Exhibits

May 2

Fundraiser
Fauquier County Scholarship Fund
Warrenton, VA

May 23

3rd Annual Spring Fling

Original Art Lover's Extravaganza
Noon to 7 PM

New Works - New Artists

University Towers
1121 University Blvd West
(between Kemp Mill Rd and Sligo Creek Parkway)
Silver Spring, MD

Mid July - Mid August

"Strength for the Journey"

Maryland State Teachers Assn Bldg
140 Main St Annapolis, MD

Mezzotint - This is also a tonal process. The surface of the plate is roughened by a toothed tool called a rocker. Because the whole plate has been abraded by the tool, if it were printed at this stage it would print a velvety solid black. The light areas of the design are created by scraping and burnishing smooth lines into the plate. These lines will not accept ink, they print white against the black.

Frequently artists will use a combination of these techniques on the same plate to achieve their vision. No matter how the plate is produced, all intaglios are hand printed in the same manner. The plate is inked and the surface is wiped so that ink remains only in the recessed areas. Dampened high-quality rag paper and the plate are sandwiched together and laid onto the etching press. Extreme pressure from the press forces the paper into the incised areas, transferring the image onto the paper. For each print in the edition, the plate must be inked, wiped and run through the press. Often, an artist will handcolor an etching after it is pulled.

It is all this handwork that make intaglios so collectable. They are original graphics created in small edition sizes. The prices are within the reach of all art lovers. They are a great way to begin or add to a collection.

Looking For a Great Gift Idea?

Do you have a wedding, graduation or other special event approaching? Let us create a one-of-a-kind memory box for you. Memory boxes are a three dimensional montage created using photos, invitations, medals, - the possibilities are endless. They are great presents for new babies, graduations, anniversaries and any occasion. We will work with you to create a unique keepsake sure to be treasured forever. If you need some ideas on what items to gather, call and we will send you a list of suggestions.

"I have chosen to paint the life of my people as I know and feel it - passionately and dispassionately. It is important that the artist identify with the self-reliance, hope and courage of the people around him for art must always go where energy is."

Romare Beardon

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may be sold out. If you're looking for a Holston etching, don't wait any longer. ❖ **Melvin King** is busy working on a new seven piece civil rights series "From Montgomery to Memphis." ❖ **Alonzo Adams** is helping to develop the next crop of artists with free art classes to young minority students and scholarships through his foundation. ❖ Two of **Albert Fennell's** most popular pieces, "Cultural Rhythm" and "Heart and Soul," have just been cast as figurines. ❖ **Buchi Upjohn's** handcolored copper pieces are getting a great reception. ❖ We're looking forward to new pieces from **Katherine Kisa** in time for the Spring Fling. If you're looking for one of her musical heritage pieces, come to the show early! ❖ We hope all of you are making plans to join us for our third annual **Spring Fling - May 23.**

Until then, **Happy Collecting**

JUST LOOKIN' 40 Summit Avenue Hagerstown, MD 21740 301 714-2278 800 717-4ART Page4

OPEN SUNDAYS!!!

So many of you have been making appointments on Sundays, we have decided to open every Sunday beginning June 6. Hours will be Noon to 4. Now when you're visiting the Outlets on Sundays you won't need to make an appointment to experience the best selection of original ethnic art in the DC Metro Area.

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