

Mildred Howard

Collective Memory



September 26, 2014 — January 4, 2015

FRESNO ART MUSEUM COUNCIL OF 100 | 2014 DISTINGUISHED WOMAN ARTIST



MILDRED HOWARD, 2013
Magnolia Editions, Oakland, CA
Photographed by Don Farnsworth

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2014 DISTINGUISHED WOMAN ARTIST

Curated by Lizzetta LeFalle-Collins

Fresno Art Museum | Fresno, California

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PARENTHETICALLY SPEAKING, IT'S ONLY A FIGURE OF SPEECH, III, 2011/2014 [Fig. 1]



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Council of 100 Acknowledgements

The Council 100 Distinguished Woman Artist Exhibition, now in its twenty-eighth year, continues because of the commitment of the Fresno Art Museum Board of Trustees and Staff, who are competent and dedicated to providing flexible and practical support, and keeping exhibition standards high. We acknowledge Kristina Hornback, Associate Curator, with heartfelt thanks for her devotion to this year's exhibition.

This 2014 Distinguished Woman Artist catalog, which was funded by the Fresno Art Museum along with the Council of 100, is the first edition of a digital catalog. I would like to acknowledge graphic designer, Kristi Carlson, for her professionalism and excellence in creating a digital catalog worthy of this award.

As Fresno Art Museum Council 100 president, I want to express my gratitude to the Executive Board of the Council 100 for their skilled and persistent efforts and to the loyal membership, both new and longstanding, for their tenacious perseverance in honoring women's contributions in the visual arts. They are the hidden work force behind this annual celebration.

Lastly, but most importantly, I want to acknowledge Mildred Howard our 2014 Distinguished Woman Artist, for her dedication and commitment to her work, her spirit and her creative ability to transform her vision into reality.

Truly, it is the efforts of many individuals, over many years, which add significance to this time-honored tradition.

Pamela Akin
Fresno Art Museum Council 100 President

September 2014

Fresno Art Museum: Council of 100

The Fresno Art Museum was the first museum in the United States to devote a full year of their exhibition schedule, 1986/87, exclusively for women artists. Fresno was a fitting place to do this, since, in the early 1970s, Judy Chicago brought attention to women artists when she taught the first feminist art class in the country at California State University, Fresno.

In order to finance the cost of this year of exhibitions, it was necessary to match a grant for \$25,000. Robert Barrett, Executive Director of the Museum, suggested the means to raise the funds: to enlist 100 women from the community, each of whom would donate \$250 to the Museum for this project. Weekly meetings were scheduled to inform the invited women about the project and their involvement with it. The group would be called the Council of 100. Over one hundred women participated and many of those women continue to support this program today.

The year of exhibitions drew national attention and interest and culminated in a three-day symposium in May 1987. The symposium brought together an important group of artists, art scholars, critics and museum directors from across the country. This national interest and recognition of the Fresno Art Museum and its program for women artists continues today through the efforts of the Council of 100.

The energy created by that year of women artists' exhibitions, as well as the symposium, was so stimulating for the Fresno Art Museum audience that the Council of 100, headed by Virginia Farquhar, decided to keep its role alive at the Museum by expanding its mission to include the following objectives: to select an outstanding woman artist annually and present an exhibition of her work at the Fresno Art Museum, publishing a catalog/brochure documenting that exhibition, and to set up a series of lectures throughout the year featuring outstanding women artists from the Fresno region and beyond.

The program was initiated in the spring of 1988, and has since honored the following internationally recognized artists with the annual Distinguished Woman Artist Award and Exhibition:

1988 June Wayne	1997 Claire Falkenstein	2006 20th Anniversary: Eighteen Profiles
1989 Helen Lundeberg	1998 Jo Hanson	2007 Gwynn Murril
1990 Ruth Weisberg	1999 Inez Storer	2008 June Schwarcz
1991 Viola Frey	2000 Angie Bray	2009 Joan Tanner
1992 Ynez Johnston	2001 Ruth Asawa	2010 Kathryn Jacobi
1993 Betye Saar	2002 Ruth Rippon	2011 Amalia Mesa-Bains
1994 Rachel Rosenthal	2003 Nancy Genn	2012 Arline Fisch
1995 Ruth Bernhard	2004 Olga Seem	2013 Ann Page
1996 Bella Feldman	2005 Junko Chodos	

The caliber of these honorees has elevated the status of the Council of 100's Distinguished Woman Artist Award and has brought the Fresno Art Museum well-deserved national recognition from many organizations including the National Women's Museum in Washington, D. C.

At the End

at the end
of every sentence
a period
occupying space
as molecular energy

a point to make
another point
in space the end is
the beginning
of another end

recurring cycles
occupying space

& death being
only a period at the
end of a sentence

earth

a point
that starts
another point

& at the end
there is a space
to begin again

always space
at the end to
begin again

Quincy Troupe



Foreword

Mildred Howard's award-winning work has represented the themes of memory, time, and place through prints, assemblage, sculpture, and installation for over thirty-five years. This emphasis on temporality and location has contributed to an alternative chronicle of community, historical, and family narratives through sites such as the house, church, cemetery, railroad, and garden. In each of these sites, her use of discarded materials in massive volume has created a sense of wonder, sorrow, and longing. Howard's work reveals a materiality and formality that express both the vernacular and domestic.

From her earliest works, Howard begins with the "architectural remainders" as she calls them. Using discarded windows through which her transparent memories are shown, Howard creates a lens into the historic past. The faded images of family mementos of loss and memory begin to establish her structures as she moves from a private reverie to a public declaration. Moving to the storefront church and its call and response, the artist creates the sense of congregation. As her structures gain scale they rely on the multiplicity of objects. Bullets, ceramic eggs, metal taps, brass hands, silver utensils, globes, even railroad ties multiply in her installations. Over and over again, Howard assembles the massive accrual of material and metaphor. The artist establishes the common spaces of community in shacks, bottle houses, slave homes, shotgun houses, and storefronts, even railroad buildings. Through the strategies of her choice of images, references, and locations, Howard can be said to sight/cite/site the histories of Black struggle. In her sophisticated use of material volume, accumulation, and serialization, she symbolizes the vast numbers of African Americans lost in the violence of segregation, wars, poverty, and resistance in this country. In a sense, the artist is building the historical and spiritual foundation for architecture of memory, struggle, and resilience.

Through the transformation of quotidian objects, Howard has captured both the public and the personal narrative. Voicing little known histories of Black communities, she has developed a powerful presence in public art. Howard moves us across the memory of Black life in all its vicissitudes. As an internationally known artist, she has developed a global perspective that traces the African heritage and diaspora in the New World. Her ongoing interests in language and music have been a part of this global and public record.

Howard has not been content to reveal only the historical past, but in a Janus-like strategy, she has linked the past to the present. The imagery of the archival Civil Rights Era and current hip-hop musical figures are brought together through the technique of chine-collé that builds layers of history. These prints give us a sense of afterimage that presents a "voicing" of the songs of freedom and fury. These images move us forward with contemporary commentary anchored in the struggles of the generations. In this way, Howard stays true to her commitments to community and language from her largest installations to her delicate penimenti of graphic redemption. This exhibition brings together a vision of her poignant and powerful work and helps us to see the meaning of art dedicated to poetic justice.

Amalia Mesa-Bains

Co-Director of the Department of Visual and Public Art, California State University, Monterey Bay



Listen
still water run deep
if you make it to the other side
to the other side.....
shall be waiting

A SALUTE TO SOJOURNER, 2001 [Fig. 2]

Mildred Howard: Collective Memory

Composed of thirty-three mixed media works, *Mildred Howard: Collective Memory* presents portrait-like assemblages that serve as selective snapshots elevating the lives of women and providing historical perspective to their struggles. Through these mixed media portraits and other works made with repurposed materials, Mildred Howard deftly bears witness and brings to life a variety of narratives in Black folk culture born in the southern United States. Howard assembles objects into dramatic mixed media sculptural forms layered with harmonies and multiple meanings that often reference prose and poetry or suggest metaphors. For example, in an early work titled *A Salute to Sojourner* (2001) [Fig. 2], a pedestal sink supports an open book, a first edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Uncle Tom chose to remain enslaved, but many slaves resisted, enduring alligator-filled rivers and creeks on their treacherous journeys to freedom. A toddler's little black foot, pierced by alligator teeth, poignantly highlights the dangers that whole families faced to win their freedom. Howard explained to me that *A Salute to Sojourner* was produced after experiencing the alligator-infested swamps surrounding the Indigo Plantation in Charleston, South Carolina. The work, she says,

draws an invisible line through history, tracing a parallel between two abolitionist figures: the extraordinary courage of Sojourner Truth's fight for women's equality and suffrage [...] and the bravery of Harriet Tubman, who risked her life to help enslaved families escape from places like Indigo Plantation some thirty years later. Although separated by history and geography, these women actually had similar backgrounds, and both strove fearlessly for freedom and empowerment in an extremely hostile climate.

In other works, such as *Rev. Willie T* (1984) and *Faith, Hope, and Charity* (1997), Howard incorporates elements of the belief systems Black Americans employed as a means to offset the negative impact of racism and struggles for survival.

Many of the works included in this exhibition are influenced by Surrealism, particularly by Man Ray and André Masson's use of the female form, and especially their use of mannequins. *Brown Legs* (2007) [Fig. 9] features a caged Mrs. Butterworth's syrup bottle that recalls Masson's *Mannequin from Surrealist Street* (1938). Brown legs extend from the bottom of the cage, calling question to her race—an ongoing debate. Another Howard work that echoes Masson's mannequins with heads encased in birdcages is *Caged Bird Song, Scream, Shout I* (2001) [Fig. 11]. This piece was also inspired by Maya Angelou's poem "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." Howard gave visual form to the stanzas that described the caged bird's "narrow

cage," his "bars of rage," as "he sings of freedom" denied. The viewer sees a Black man's head encased in a birdcage supported by four sledgehammers forming a stand that rests on a stone base. Whatever the circumstance of his imprisonment, the bird is a universal symbol of freedom, which in this work rests in the palm of a hand that protrudes away from the wall, as if pondering why this man is not free. In this work and in many others, Howard raises questions but doesn't offer answers.

Much of Surrealism deals with absence, loss, or missing parts. Howard's *Switchin' in the Kitchen* (2013) [Fig. 3] takes its name from a rare release of a 1958 single recording by the same name, written and sung by Don Covay, also known as Pretty Boy. The record is attached to the wall with a black forearm and hand extending outward as if moving to the music. In the portrait *Laila Ali* (2010) [Fig. 10], fragmented attributes of baby bottles coupled with red boxing gloves take the place of the female boxer's absent physical form. In *High Heels Turning Heads* (2007) [Fig. 8], acrylic high heels are attached to wooden shoe forms supported by a gritty well-worn construction worker's glove cast in bronze. Howard presents these two typically stereotypical images of gender designations to underscore the flirtatious and sometimes uncomfortable encounters faced by women as they walk down the street. Taken together, this trio of works challenges views of women's identity, empowerment, and power. In *Méret* (2007) [Fig. 12], Howard pays homage to Méret Oppenheim, one of Man Ray's models and one of very few female sculptors working in the male-dominated Surrealist movement. In this work—inspired by Oppenheim's *Object (Le Dejeuner en fourrure)/Object (Breakfast in Fur)* (1938), featuring a teacup, saucer, and spoon covered with Chinese gazelle fur—Howard combines a stitched chessboard made of faux fur with silver salt and pepper shakers for chess pieces.

History of the United States with a Few Missing Parts (2007) [Fig. 4] raises the issue of lost histories, falsehoods, and exclusions in the larger story of American history. Though her subject matter is serious, Howard's thoughtful works can also be humorous at times, as in *Skillet to the Frying Pan: Sitting Black* (2001) [Fig. 7], which offers a witty depiction of a conversation with self—through a small mirror on the bottom of the skillet. The work is at once reminiscent of the folk idiom "the frying pan calling the kettle black"—an accusation of hypocrisy—and the West and Central African power reliquary known as a Nkisi, a vessel that features an embedded mirror to unknown worlds.

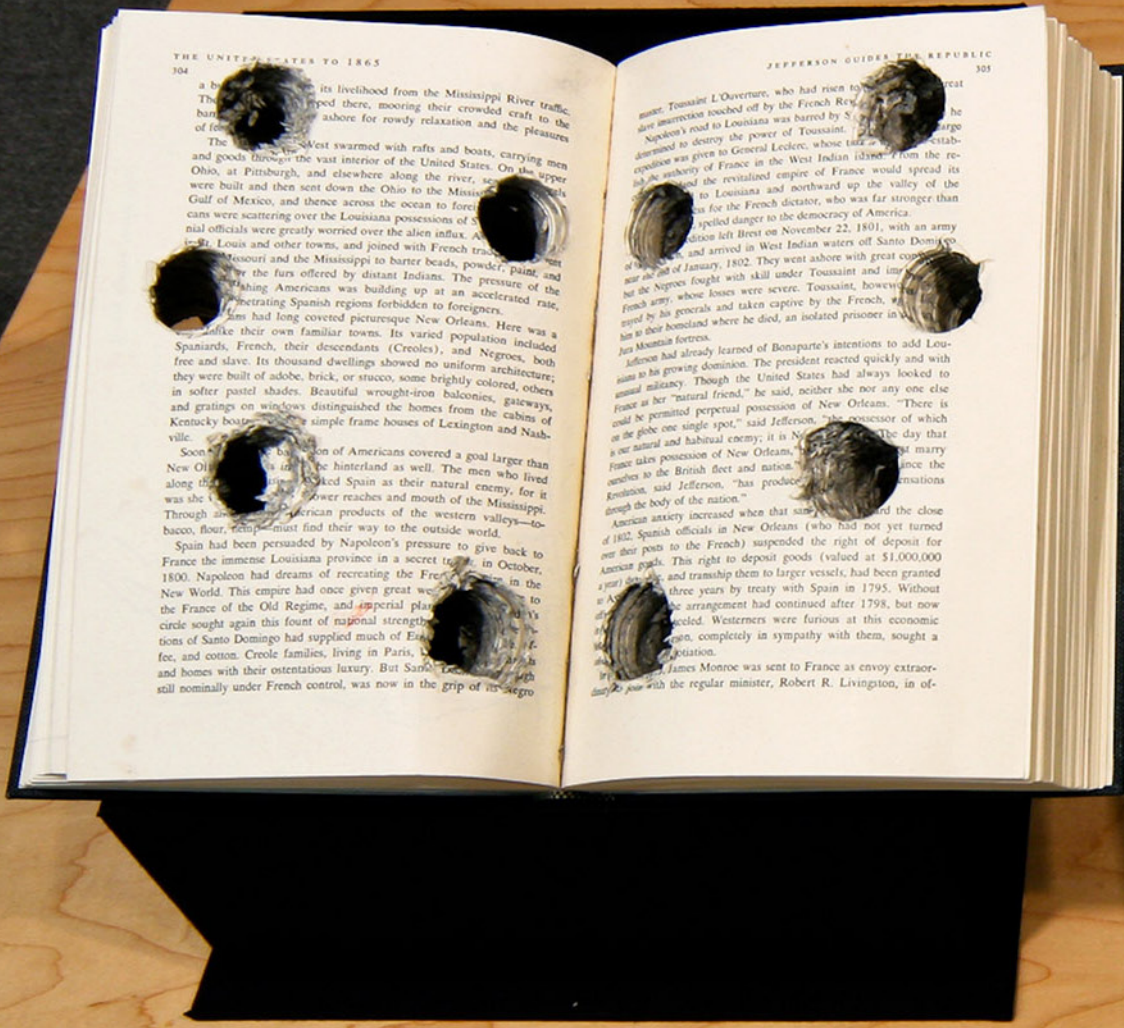
The reflective qualities of glass and mirrors are well suited for inviting memoir and biographical transformation through narrative. As favored mediums, Howard's multiple glass houses can be viewed as reliquary objects that invite one to remember. *Memory Garden, I* (1989), a small hand-built version of her larger walk-in bottle houses, is based on Black vernacular shotgun houses. The amber bottle house also explores how refractions of light change the emotional impact in enclosed spaces. Howard works and reworks the theme of hand-built house structures, and although the recent houses seem to concentrate more on their architectural fabrication, compelling and often contradictory cultural issues remain

about family, history, and access. Many of the houses constructed since the late 1980s are collaborations between Howard and architects. *A Different Story* (2012) [Fig. 13] is modeled after the modern beam and glass construction homes of builder Joseph Eichler that dot California communities. Howard was drawn to these houses for their construction, but also because Eichler made his homes available to Blacks at a time when it was not popular to sell homes to them in neighborhoods that were considered “white.”

The visual interplay of light is again accentuated in *You Are Here, We Are Here*, (2010/2014) [Fig. 15], composed of outdated and altered globes. Individual globes are covered and repurposed in various ways—*On the Rebound* [Fig. 18], the globe has become a basketball resting in a red hoop; *Forever Green* [Fig. 17] is covered with green AstroTurf; while *Dishing It*



SWITCHIN' IN THE KITCHEN, detail, 2013 [Fig. 3]



a b... its livelihood from the Mississippi River traffic. The... there, mooring their crowded craft to the... ashore for rowdy relaxation and the pleasures of...
The... West swarmed with rafts and boats, carrying men and goods through the vast interior of the United States. On the upper Ohio, at Pittsburgh, and elsewhere along the river, settlements were built and then sent down the Ohio to the Mississippi, and thence across the Gulf of Mexico, and thence across the ocean to foreign markets. The... canners were scattering over the Louisiana possessions of... nial officials were greatly worried over the alien influx. Americans in... Louis and other towns, and joined with French traders in... Missouri and the Mississippi to barter beads, powder, paint, and... the furs offered by distant Indians. The pressure of the... Americans was building up at an accelerated rate, and... Spanish regions forbidden to foreigners.
... like their own familiar towns. Its varied population included Spaniards, French, their descendants (Creoles), and Negroes, both free and slave. Its thousand dwellings showed no uniform architecture; they were built of adobe, brick, or stucco, some brightly colored, others in softer pastel shades. Beautiful wrought-iron balconies, gawneys, and gratings on windows distinguished the homes from the cabins of Kentucky boatsmen and the simple frame houses of Lexington and Nashville.
Soon... the ambition of Americans covered a goal larger than New Orleans... the hinterland as well. The men who lived along the... led Spain as their natural enemy, for it was she who... power reaches and mouth of the Mississippi. Through... American products of the western valleys—tobacco, flour, hemp—must find their way to the outside world.
Spain had been persuaded by Napoleon's pressure to give back to France the immense Louisiana province in a secret treaty in October, 1800. Napoleon had dreamed of recreating the French empire in the New World. This empire had once given great wealth to France in the France of the Old Regime, and imperial planning... circle sought again this fount of national strength. The... of Santo Domingo had supplied much of Europe with coffee, and cotton. Creole families, living in Paris, had... and homes with their ostentatious luxury. But Santo Domingo, though still nominally under French control, was now in the grip of its Negro

... Toussaint L'Ouverture, who had risen to... the... Napoleon's road to Louisiana was barred by... to destroy the power of Toussaint... determined to give to General Leclerc, whose task... expedition of France in the West Indian islands... the revived empire of France would spread its... to Louisiana and northward up the valley of the... for the French dictator, who was far stronger than... spelled danger to the democracy of America.
... left Brest on November 22, 1801, with an army... and arrived in West Indian waters off Santo Domingo... of... and the Negroes fought with skill under Toussaint and... French army, whose losses were severe. Toussaint, however... by his generals and taken captive by the French, was... to their homeland where he died, an isolated prisoner in... Jean Mounier fortress.
Jefferson had already learned of Bonaparte's intentions to add Louisiana to his growing dominion. The president reacted quickly and with unusual militancy. "Though the United States had always looked to France as her 'natural friend,'" he said, "neither she nor any one else would be permitted perpetual possession of New Orleans. 'There is on the globe one single spot,'" said Jefferson, "the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy; it is New Orleans. The day that France takes possession of New Orleans, she shuts herself up to the British fleet and nation. The... since the Revolution, said Jefferson, "has produced... through the body of the nation."
American anxiety increased when that same... and the close of 1802. Spanish officials in New Orleans (who had not yet turned over their posts to the French) suspended the right of deposit for American goods. This right to deposit goods (valued at \$1,000,000 a year) had been granted to Americans by treaty with Spain in 1795. Without... and trampling them to larger vessels, had been granted... three years by treaty with Spain in 1795. Without... the arrangement had continued after 1798, but now... decided. Westerners were furious at this economic... completely in sympathy with them, sought a... negotiation.
James Monroe was sent to France as envoy extraordinary... with the regular minister, Robert R. Livingston, in of-

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES WITH A FEW MISSING PARTS, VOLUME I AND II, 2007 [Fig. 4]

This chapter will try to deal with some of these social developments and controversies, both as they took shape in the 1920's and as they carried over into the 1930's. The atmosphere of the latter decade, under the impact of depression, differed sharply from that of the 1920's. Economic issues inevitably became of dominant concern for a people plagued and harassed by dwindling opportunities for employment. In spite of want and distress, however, the social and economic development were slowed down rather than halted. The new social issues were in some ways stimulated by the depression, and the economic concepts of many of the new concepts was accentuated by the depression in the economy.

RESTRICTION OF IMMIGRATION

The passage of a literacy test over President Wilson's veto in 1917 brought the immigration issue to a settlement. While the tide of alien arrivals had completely subsided during the war, the desire of hundreds of thousands of Europeans to escape their own ravaged countries soon threatened an influx greater than that of the early years of the century. Nearly a million immigrants crossed the Atlantic in 1921. The demand grew for more effective restrictions. The new measure was a literacy test.

The result of this agitation was the adoption of a law to restrict a specific annual total for all European immigrants and to limit the number to be accepted from each country through a carefully devised quota system. The scales were weighted in favor of the "old immigration" from northwestern Europe as opposed to the "new immigration" from southeastern Europe in the traditional belief that the people from the former countries could be more easily assimilated. It was argued, as it had been in the days when the literacy test was under consideration, that immigrants from Great Britain, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries would strengthen the forces of Americanism, while those from Italy, Poland, and other eastern European countries would dangerously weaken them.

The legislation carrying this policy into effect, far and away the most important of the entire period, originally provided for specific quotas for each country based on the number of its nationals in this country, first as of 1890 and then as of 1909. The National Origins Act of 1924, however, set up a more complicated system, to go into effect in 1929, that altered the former immigration policy ever since. This law established a quota of 150,000 for all immigrants

from Europe and gave each country of origin a quota based on a proportion of this figure corresponding to the proportion of persons of such national stock in the American population as of 1920. This meant in practice, for example, that the quota of the United Kingdom was 43 per cent of 150,000, or approximately 65,000, on the ground that 43 per cent of the people of the United States were of British stock. The annual quota from Italy was 10 per cent since it was estimated that only about 4 per cent of the population of Italian racial origin. Immigration from Latin America was restricted by the new restrictions. The act of 1924 was a ban on entry of non-Caucasian stocks, a provision directed primarily at the Japanese.

The results of this legislation were seen in an immediate drop in immigration: to about 164,000 in 1925 and to an average of less than 100,000 annually in the 1930's. In terms of previous history this brought the tramatic passage to a virtual end. There were many years between the two world wars when the number of aliens leaving the United States actually exceeded the number arriving. This affected basic problems of growth and the character of the population. The problem of the melting pot had been solved by refusing to add new immigrants. The proportion of foreign-born in the country was steadily decreasing, and the problems involving conflicting loyalties and other aspects of the immigrant problem disappeared.

The inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty, towering over New York harbor the oft-quoted lines written by Emma Lazarus:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to be free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Now the door was all but closed; America no longer welcomed the "huddled masses" of the Old World. A great epoch in our national history, the peopling of a continent by European immigrants, had come to an end.

★ ENFORCING PROHIBITION

Paralleling the early drive to control immigration during the Progressive era there had also been, as we have seen, a powerful movement for prohibition, not unaffected by the immigration issue. New immigrants on national drinking habits. This issue reached its climax. After ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment, the Volstead Act



PERCHED, 2010 [Fig. 5]

Out [Fig. 16] is covered with camouflage, suggesting global “boots on the ground” combats. In another work, *Perched* [Fig. 5], Howard uses the Old Crow icon of a favored southern U.S. distilled sour-mash whiskey shared by both northerners and southerners during the Civil War. The black crow in suit, top hat, and white spats stands on a red miniature trunk along with a globe resting on top of a black turned wooden support with a three-prong foot also painted with white spats. The Old Crow and turned wood support take on similar visual characteristics: one an abstraction of the other. This 2010 globe series speaks to the illusion of space, location, and dislocation but also to the impact of how globalization affects and reshapes our daily lives. Howard has written about why she is attracted to these globes:

[I] used the globe (and to a lesser extent, the frame) as a ready-made object, which is already invested with meaning and fraught with historical contradiction. I began to use globes as touchstones for considerations of globalization, identity, and the multiple “surfaces” of our world. For example, in the work from which the show’s title was derived, I built a large Rococo-style frame, big enough to “frame” the viewer standing next to it, and installed a large mirror ten feet away. Between the mirror and the frame, I positioned a globe dating back to at least 1910; the divisions (or lack thereof) in countries depicted on the globe are fascinating, with archaic designations like French Congo in Africa and Persia and Arabia in the Middle East. The viewer is confronted with one’s own reflection as well as that of a miniature and antique representation of the world, all contained within a large, ornate, and artificial frame.

There is Nothing That Does Not Exist (2010) [Fig. 14] includes three globes on a clear glass table. The globes reflect through the glass and simultaneously form shadows on the wall behind them. The work begs the questions “Where am I?” and “Where are we?” Howard shares, “The viewer becomes aware that while we live on the surface of the same sphere, the ways in which we construct meaning, divide territories, and assume identities on that sphere are constantly being remapped and reframed by various shifting powers, conflicts, and points of view.”

In the installation *Parenthetically Speaking, It’s Only a Figure of Speech* (2011/2014) [Fig. 1], Howard designed handblown glass editing marks while she was an artist-in-residency at the Museum of Glass, Tacoma and the Pilchuck Glass School both in Washington state. Oversized handblown glass editing marks and musical notes represent the passage of time, a recurring theme in Howard’s work. Based on the poem “At the End” by Quincy Troupe, a frequent poet collaborator with Howard, the work is also a metaphor for the circular nature of questions—when one is answered, another arises.

Early in her career, Howard transferred images onto various surfaces, ranging from glass windowpanes to three-dimensional objects, using mono and digital printmaking. In her

most recent series, she contests the printed words in books, printing images over them. An example is *Island People on Blue Mountain* (2013) [Figs. 19 & 20] in which she tore maps and pages from a set of ethnographic books on the people of Africa and the Pacific Islands for use as printing paper. Using mapped pages from these old volumes, she selects individual pages and prints images of indigenous inhabitants, thereby placing them in the territories as individuals and highlighting their personhood, rather than allowing them to remain anonymous.

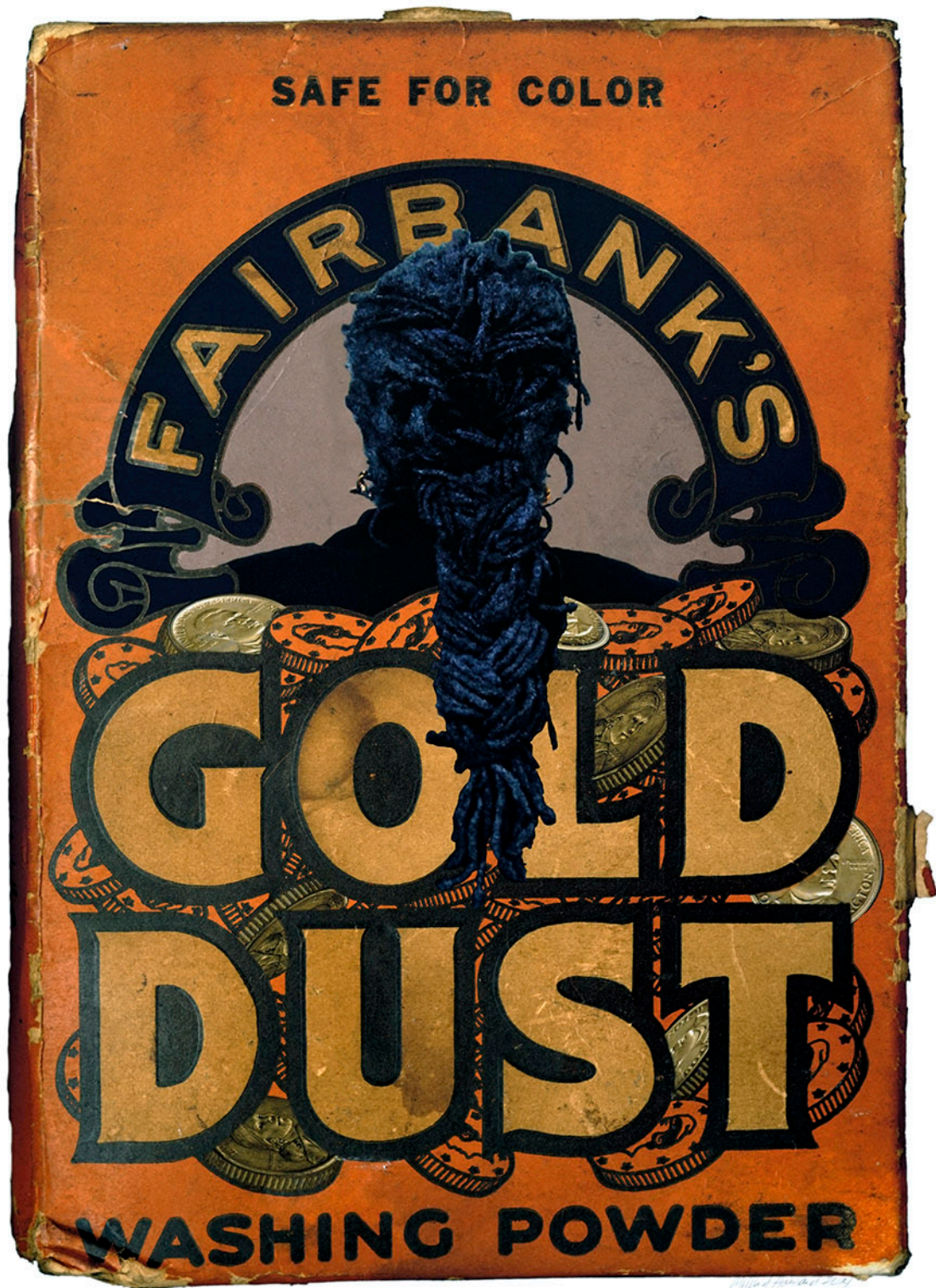
As she has always done, Howard continues to strengthen the voice and presence of Black women in the art canon by inserting herself into her narratives. Her recent works are a series of prints published at Magnolia Editions in Oakland, California and Sharks Ink in Lyons, Colorado. In the 2010 series *Cartography del Cuerpo*, a mixed media digital print series of self-portraits, Howard scanned her breast on a map surface and fashioned and sealed buttons in a grid pattern on top of the scanned images, while exposing the maps beneath—accentuating one of the results of globalization, the rapid dispersal of cultures throughout the world. In another set of self-portraits, *The Other Side of the Coin* (2014) [Fig. 6], Howard inserts her own portrait in place of the image of the “Gold Dust Twins,” Dusty and Goldie, that graced packages and ads for Fairbank’s Gold Dust Washing Powder products from as early as 1892. She flips the old image on its head by challenging such racially demeaning images, even turning her back on the viewer in one print so that all they see is her long dreaded braid.

“It all goes back to my beginning, [...] Changing the meaning to make it something different,” said Howard when I asked her about her new 2014 chine collé series on hip-hop artists, *Millennials & XYZ* [Figs. 22, 23 & 24]. Hip-hop/rap artists are printed on faded newspapers from the 1940s such as the *Los Angeles Tribune* (a newspaper for the upwardly mobile Black community). Newspapers were once a major mode of communication for Black communities in the United States. In a sense, this series is a conversation between the newspaper, that mainly addressed the needs of specific communities of Black people, and contemporary Black hip-hop artists who invented a rhythmic language to musical beats for a diverse generation that has impacted the world and demanded recognition by disrupting the status quo.

Howard’s provocative assemblages, installations, and prints function as alluring fragments of memory. This compelling exhibition offers viewers an irresistible invitation to walk with her as she gathers, assembles, and reconfigures objects to reveal complicated and layered stories based on vignettes of her own life experiences inspired by history, poetry, and art.

Lizzetta LeFalle-Collins, Ph.D.
Guest Curator

Lizzetta LeFalle-Collins is a freelance curator, writer, art historian, and Principal of LeFalle/Collins Projects, a curatorial firm.



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN, II, 2014 [Fig. 6]



SKILLET TO THE FRYING PAN: SITTING BLACK, 2001 [Fig. 7]

Afterword

Over the course of a number of decades, Mildred Howard has established herself as an artist capable of making no end of sophisticated and deeply nuanced interventions. An abiding attachment to the ways in which we perceive and construct history lies at the core of her multi-disciplinary practice. Concurrently, her work stimulates us to new understandings of the contemporary world around us and our place within it. Howard's preferred method of approaching her work—whether individual construction, installation, or public art—is to utilize the found image and the found object as a central component of her practice. In this regard, her singular art practice has utilized photographs drawn from her family albums through to all manner of objects reflective of the evolving nature of 20th and 21st century history, culture, and popular culture. In so doing, she is able to fashion intelligent and critical comment on that most fiendishly enigmatic, yet unavoidably important state of being that we refer to as identity.

Mildred Howard mines multiple histories—be they her own, her family's, her community's, or her nation's—in order to fashion new interventions that cogently reflect on those histories. Consider, for example, her use of that most everyday of objects, the glass bottle. Immediately, when considering Howard's fascinating bottle houses, the most perceptive amongst her audiences will call to mind references to glass bottles, usually of colored glass, that were traditionally used in the making of bottle trees, associated with hoodoo and historically found in the southern United States, amongst communities of African Americans. In turn, considerations of hoodoo or conjure lead us to reflect on manifestations of traditional African American folk spirituality that represent a fascinating and arresting amalgamation of West African, European, and Native American spiritual traditions. Reflections on these things will, in turn, lead perceptive audiences to all manner of histories of slavery and abolition, even as audiences marvel at the formal and spatial dimensions and luminosity of Howard's astonishing bottle houses.

We have much to thank Mildred Howard for, particularly the ways in which so much of her art focuses on such potent subject matter, rich with symbolism, enabling her to create installations and other works of profound aesthetic and cultural significance.

Eddie Chambers

*Associate Professor of Art in the Department of Art and Art History (African Diaspora),
University of Texas, Austin*

Where poets use words and musicians

use notes, I use objects and images in my work

to generate a music that is visual and tangible. These objects function as mediums in both senses of the word—not only as artistic materials, but also as intermediaries between the audience and their history, surroundings and memories, both individual and collective. Like the rhythm of poetry or the vibrations of music, I would like my artwork to be accessible to anyone, regardless of race, class, or language. There is a universal history—including an ongoing cycle of displacement, migration and self-reinvention—that impacts everyone on this planet, regardless of time or place. The emphasis on issues of borders, territory, and identity in my work ultimately serves to direct attention toward the absurdity of our divisions. Beyond race or gender, age or wealth, it is crucial to preserve that which unites us: our shared struggles, our fragile environment, our common humanity.

— Mildred Howard

Plates



HIGH HEELS TURNING HEADS, 2007 [Fig. 8]

BROWN LEGS, 2001 [Fig. 9]





LAILA ALI, 2010 [Fig. 10]



CAGED BIRD SONG, SCREAM, SHOUT I, 2001 [Fig. 11]





MÉRET, 2007 [Fig. 12]





A DIFFERENT STORY, 2012 [Fig. 13]



THERE IS NOTHING THAT DOES NOT EXIST, 2010 [Fig. 14]





YOU ARE HERE, WE ARE HERE, 2010-2014 [Fig. 15]





DISHING IT OUT, 2010 [Fig. 16]



FOREVER GREEN, 2010 [Fig. 17]

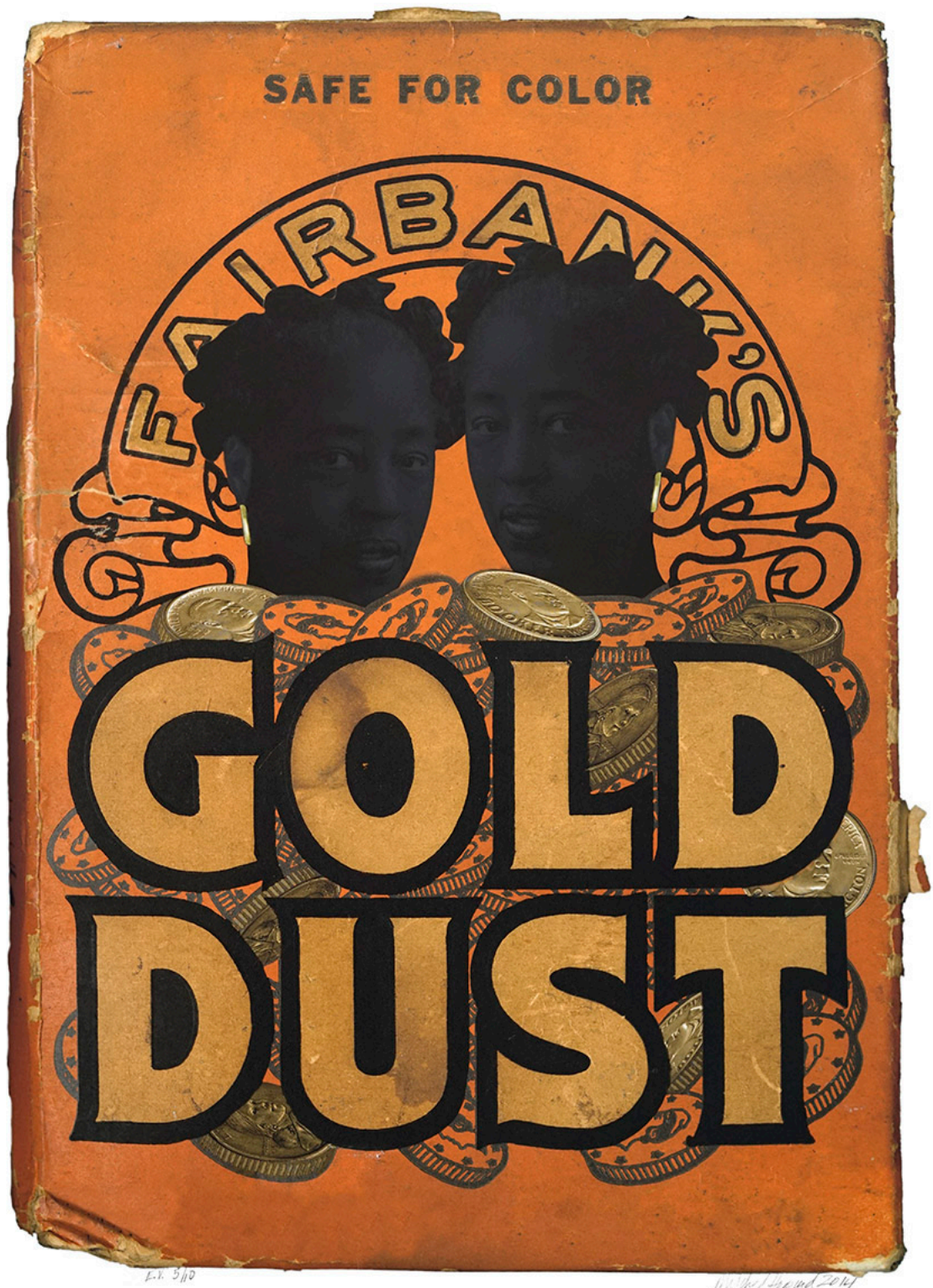


ON THE REBOUND, 2010 [Fig. 18]





ISLAND PEOPLE ON BLUE MOUNTAIN, I, 2012 [Fig. 19]



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN, V, 2014 [Fig. 21]

NAACP HEAD TO GO TO WAR THEATRES

Congress Hears Of 99 Negroes' Exploits

LOS ANGELES
Tribune

Vol. 3—No. 34 Monday, October 11, 1943 5c per copy; phone 4215 S. Central, Los Angeles California



OLD IT'S NEW—The incident surrounding this photographed incident is two weeks old in fact, but this is the first time it has been made public. It is the story of a young man, George Washington Carver, who was killed in action during the war. His mother, Mrs. Carver, is now in a nursing home. The photograph shows her with her son's body, which she has kept for many years. The incident is a touching example of the sacrifices made by Negro soldiers during the war.

...et By and By" . . .
It totter in and lay it on us—Yes? Oh, no you or someone as wise, once said, "The world and. Please pay now; I don't want to have all over h—". And he can say that again! If you're a subscriber, reform your ways to 4215 S. Central, phone AD 9190.
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... the Board of De-
... tional Association,
... Africa, Sicily, and
... the War area, in
... and. The an-
... and he will observe
... treatment of Negro
... in their relations with
... and peoples of other
... Angeles to address the
... congress which met at
... week-end. White talked
... on "The Negro and the
... freedoms" to a large audi-
... Another highlight of the
... meeting was the presentation of
... awards to William Pollard, new
... association field secretary here,
... William Duckett and the Rev. J.
... I. Coston for their work in the
... recent NAACP membership drive.
... White who has been connected
... with the NAACP 25 years, has
... traveled more than 400,000 miles
... in the United States and Europe
... for the Association, and has in-
... (Continued on Page 2)

THE COLOR OF THE NEWS

By L. W. Lomax Jr.



It is frankly an impertinence for readers to expect a message from a particular columnist week in and week out without respite. The indifferent attention they give to what represents his sweat, toil and tears, and some desperate scraping of the bottom of the pot justifying an occasional re-creancy. That takes care of the readers; but the accused space has to be filled which has been allotted you as a columnist, so you throw in something from—say, G. H. Shaw's "Everybody's Political What's What":

Then there is the question of miscegenation in the color bar. Sometimes it has no sterilizing effect. It has been said that a Chinaman's wife never leaves him no matter what her nation or color may be, and that of the finest children in the world are produced by the marriage of Chinese laundresses to Irish colporters. A harshly scientific observer, however, there is some ground for the belief that the tropical and subtropical climates where black and brown-skinned peoples multiply replenish the earth, not only the Whites, they call it. In fact, it is now difficult to find a thoroughbred aborigine, and the white Islanders that are nearly all half-bred. In the Japanese, who do not miscegenate. In the descendants of our specially respectable section, a million and a half strong, after a hundred years. They should be kept up the Cape Cod peninsula. It is strongly recommended that they be kept up the Cape Cod peninsula.

Here are some of the social possibilities of the future. Jamaica, and New Zealand, have overlapped the color bar. There is no legitimate place for them. Their parents are domestic. It is proposed that Queen Elizabeth the Terrible, the case was not so good as the income or class. They might be sent to the other side of the world, but either they would have to be sent else I ran would now be known.

I am not suggesting here that we should tolerate what is called "tolerate" hardly Free Anything that is advantage to the general welfare. What is that when child life is recognized as a permanent part of the collective life as well as a transition of the individual, and in legally constituted conditions under public auspices at the public expense, numerous conditions which we now attach to permanent domestic unions. I am myself for the marriage between two quite amiable people who finally parted in the friendliest fashion, and no more of another after spending years together, without sharing one another's last. They and their three children need an emotional household it was not an atmosphere of good music and dancing, but as an example of parental conduct and develop children it was no less than been trying ever since to get on.

The filler above takes up the "Political What's What" is a guide through the book and is a pudding. Despite the fact that "What's What" is instructive and

From Other Columns

(Continued from page 10)

V. THE POWER OF EXAMPE

1. The white people are in a mess and the Negro people will be in a mess as long as they try to keep up with white people.
2. When the Negro people will have found out of their mess by evolving a type in harmony with the ideas of St. Augustine the white people will no longer be on Negro people but will look to Negro people.
3. When the Negro people will look to the Negro people.
4. The Negro people will fall over white people.



11

Milind Journal 2014

Mildred Howard: Collective Memory

1. **Rev. Willie T**, 1984
Mixed Media on wood
68 x 29 inches
Courtesy of Jennifer Norland
Photo by Mildred Howard
2. **Memory Garden, I**, 1989
Amber bottles, painted wood, and glue
27 x 28 x 31 inches
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
3. **Faith, Hope, and Charity**, 1997
Mixed Media triptych
29 x 18 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
4. **A Salute to Sojourner**, 2001
Mixed Media assemblage
23 x 12 x 12 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
5. **Caged Bird Song, Scream, Shout I**, 2001
Mixed Media assemblage
74 x 48 x 32 inches
Courtesy of Terry Gardner
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
6. **Brown Legs**, 2001
Mixed Media assemblage
47 x 24 x 10 inches
Courtesy of Tia Stoller
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
7. **Skillet to the Frying Pan: Sitting Black**, 2001
Iron skillet, wooden stool, and mirror
61 x 12 x 12 inches
Courtesy of Bruce Wilcox
Photo by Kija Lucas
8. **High Heels Turning Heads**, 2007
Bronze, wood, acrylic, heal, glue
7 x 15.75 x 9 inches
Courtesy of Margy Boyd
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
9. **Méret**, 2007
Mixed Media assemblage
7 x 22 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
10. **History of the United States with a Few Missing Parts, Volume I and II**, 2007
Mixed Media assemblage
36 x 24 x 12 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
11. **Cartography del Cuerpo, II**, 2007
Mixed Media print with buttons, edition of 5
39.5 x 30 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Donald Farnsworth
12. **Cartography del Cuerpo, III**, 2007
Mixed Media print with buttons, edition of 5
39.5 x 30 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Donald Farnsworth
13. **Laila Ali**, 2010
Mixed Media assemblage
56 x 22 x 14 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
14. **There is Nothing That Does Not Exist**, 2010
Mixed Media assemblage
35.5 x 72 x 6 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
15. **You Are Here, We Are Here**, 2010-2014
Gilded frame, mirror, circa 1905 globe, pedestal, text installation
96 x 96 x 10 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
16. **Perched**, 2010
Mixed Media assemblage
56 x 19 x 10.5 inches
Courtesy of the Artist and Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
17. **Dishing It Out**, 2010
Mixed Media assemblage
16 x 21 x 13 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
18. **Forever Green**, 2010
Mixed Media assemblage
21 x 30 x 30 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim



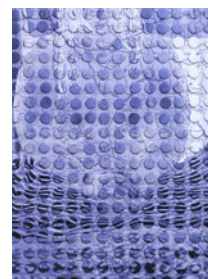
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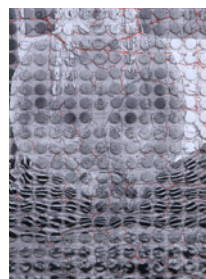
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11



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... Catalogue of the Exhibition

19. **On the Rebound**, 2010
Mixed Media assemblage
22 x 14 x 17 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
20. **Parenthetically Speaking, It's Only a Figure of Speech, III**, 2011/2014
Installation—hand blown glass-oversized punctuation marks, and a poem, *At the End*, by Quincy Troupe
Dimensions vary
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim, Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, WA and Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA
Photo by Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA
21. **A Different Story**, 2012
Clear glass bottles and Mahogany frame
25 x 39 x 28 inches
Courtesy of the Artist & Gallery Paule Anglim
Photo by Gallery Paule Anglim
22. **Switchin' in the Kitchen**, 2013
Mixed Media and bronze triptych
Dimensions of triptych vary
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Raymond Holbert
23. **Island People on Blue Mountain, I**, 2012
Chine collé with pochoir and sliver leaf
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of Steven Thomas & Patricia Curtan
Photo by Bud Shark
24. **Island People on Blue Mountain, V**, 2012
Chine collé with pochoir
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of Sharks Ink
Photo by Bud Shark
25. **Island People on Blue Mountain, IX**, 2012
Chine collé with pochoir, copper leaf, and collage
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of Sharks Ink
Photo by Bud Shark
26. **Island People on Blue Mountain, XI**, 2012
Chine collé with pochoir, copper leaf, and collage
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Bud Shark
27. **Island People on Blue Mountain, XVIII**, 2012
Chine collé with pochoir and gold leaf
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Bud Shark
28. **The Other Side of the Coin, II**, 2014
The Other Side of the Coin series, Variation 2, 2014 (framed in black)
Digital print on handmade Awagami paper:
29.5 x 21.625 inches
unique (from a varied edition of 10)
Printed/published at Magnolia Editions
Printer Tallulah Terryll
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Donald Farnsworth
29. **The Other Side of the Coin, V**, 2014
The Other Side of the Coin series, Variation 2, 2014 (framed in black)
Digital print on handmade Awagami paper:
29.5 x 21.625 inches
unique (from a varied edition of 10)
Printed/published at Magnolia Editions
Printer Tallulah Terryll
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Donald Farnsworth
30. **Millennials & XYZ, #II**, 2014
Chine collé
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of Sharks Ink
Photo by Bud Shark
31. **Millennials & XYZ, #V**, 2014
Chine collé
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of Sharks Ink
Photo by Bud Shark
32. **Millennials & XYZ, #VI**, 2014
Chine collé
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of Sharks Ink
Photo by Bud Shark
33. **Millennials & XYZ, #XIII**, 2014
Chine collé
21 x 15.75 inches
Courtesy of the Artist
Photo by Bud Shark



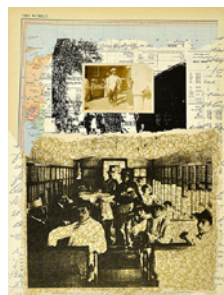
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Mildred Howard Bio

Berkeley-based artist, activist, teacher, Mildred Howard has conducted programs and exhibitions internationally in locales ranging from England to Latin America, Egypt, and Morocco. Her highly visible public art can be seen throughout the greater San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. Her numerous awards include an Anonymous Was a Woman Fellowship; the Joan Mitchell Fellowship; the Reader's Digest Traveling Fellowship to Oaxaca, Mexico; two Rockefeller Artists Fellowships to Bellagio, Italy; and an NEA Grant in Sculpture. Howard's artwork is included in collections of the Young Museum; Oakland Museum of California; San Jose Museum of Art; Wadsworth Atheneum Hartford, Connecticut; Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; Washington State Arts Commission; United States Embassy, Morocco and Gabon, and the San Francisco Arts Commission.

In 2011, the City of Berkeley proclaimed March 29th "Mildred Howard Day." In 2012, Howard was inducted into the Alameda County Hall of Fame and received San Francisco's prestigious Silver SPUR Award. Howard continues to work and exhibit internationally. In 2013, her sculpture *Parenthetically Speaking* appeared at the Arsenal Venezia in Venice, as part of the Arte Laguna Prize. She is represented in San Francisco by Gallery Paule Anglim.

solo exhibitions since 2000

- 2015** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 2014** Fresno Art Museum Council of 100, Distinguished Woman Artist Award Exhibition, Fresno, CA
Sculpture Garden, Xavier University, New Orleans, LA
- 2013** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 2011-12** *Clear Story*, Palo Alto Art Center, Palo Alto, CA
Parenthetically Speaking, It's Only a Figure of Speech, International Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA
- 2010** *New Work*, Gallery Paule Anglim San Francisco, CA
- 2008** *To Honor Teaching*, Solano Community College, Fairfield, CA
Nielsen Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2007** *New Works 2007*, Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 2006** *In the Line of Fire/Crossings*, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX
Nielsen Gallery, Boston, MA
Santa Rosa Junior College, Santa Rosa, CA
- 2004** *Crossings*, Townhouse Gallery, Cairo, Egypt
Private Eye, Public Me, Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 2003** *Switchin' in the Kitchen*, Margaret Porter Troupe Projects, Harlem Arts Salon, New York, NY
Three Shades of Blue, San Francisco, CA
Walcot Chapel, Bath, England
- 2002** *Do We Have the Right to Remain Silent*, Nielsen Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2001** *Mildred Howard*, installations, constructions, assemblages. Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 2000** *Open Sentence*, installation and constructions. Louis Stern Fine Arts, West Hollywood, CA

commissions/public art

- 2014-17** Alameda/Contra Costa Transit District, Artistic Enhancement for the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Stations
- 2010-14** San Francisco General Hospital, Acute Care Unit, the San Francisco Arts Commission, San Francisco, CA
Successor to Agency to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure
- 2011** Public Art, Sacramento International Airport, Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, Sacramento, CA
- 2010** Public Art, Robbie Waters Pocket-Greenhaven Library, Sacramento Public Library, Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, Sacramento, CA
- 2008** *125 Mason Street Family Housing Project* in conjunction with the Glide Foundation, GEDC and Millennium Partners, San Francisco, CA
The Next Key Project, Homeward Bound, of Marin Novato, CA
- 2007** *Project Artist* in conjunction with DCE Planning and The City of Oakland, Artists working *Signage & Lighting*, Port of Oakland, Mildred Howard/Walter Hood & Hood Design
- 2004-05** *Project Yes!*, Alameda County Arts Commission in conjunction with Alameda County Social Services Agency and Castlemont High School, Oakland, CA. Collaboration with Johanna Poethig
- 2002-03** *Black Bird in a Red Sky*, Museum of Glass, Tacoma WA. Installation, Red glass house and 700 resin apples floating in a reflection pool.
Fillmore Street Bridge Project, twenty glass panels with text. San Francisco Arts Commission in conjunction with the San Francisco City and County Redevelopment Agency, San Francisco, CA.
- 2000-01** *Locks and Keys for Harry Bridges*, bollards, benches, lighting, and trellises, Design Task #1, Mildred Howard. Yerba Buena Garden Central Block 1 Artist and Architect Consortium (Mildred Howard, James Turrell, Walter Hood & Hood Design, Cheryl Barton & Associates) for Millennium Partners/WGB Ventures, Inc. & the San Francisco City and County Redevelopment Agency, San Francisco, CA
- 2000** *Salty Peanuts*, permanent installation. San Francisco International Airport Expansion & the San Francisco Arts Commission, San Francisco, CA

grants & awards since 2000

- 2014** Council of 100 Distinguished Woman Artist Award, Fresno Art Museum, Fresno, CA
- 2012** Silver SPUR 2012 Award
Alameda County Hall of Fame, Inductee
- 2011** City of Berkeley proclaimed March 29, 2011 as Mildred Howard Day
Artist in Residence, Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA
- 2010** Artist in Residence, Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, WA
The Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Bellagio, Italy
- 2007** Creating a Lasting Legacy Project, Joan Mitchell Foundation
Rockefeller Study & Conference Center, Bellagio, Italy
- 2004-05** Joan Mitchell Award
- 2003** Sculpture Fellowship, California Arts Council, Sacramento, CA
Emma O'Brien Distinguished Visiting Professor, Scripps College, Claremont, CA
- 2001** Flintridge Visual Artist Award, Pasadena, CA
Certificate of Congressional Recognition, Congresswoman Barbara Lee and the African American Museum & Library at Oakland
- 2000** Fellowship, Anonymous Was A Woman Foundation

collections

American Embassy, Libreville, Gabon
California State Bldg., San Francisco, CA
Crocker Museum of Art, Sacramento, CA
CU Art Museum, University of Colorado, Boulder, CA
Elihu M. Harris State Office Bldg., Oakland, CA
Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas de Managua Plásticas, Managua, Nicaragua,
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
Hampton University, Hampton, VA
Highland Hospital, Oakland, CA
Kaiser Permanente Corporation, Oakland, CA
Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center, San Francisco, CA
Miami-Dade Public Library System Art Services and Exhibitions Department, Miami, FL
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL
Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA
Oakland Museum of California, Oakland, CA
Palmer Museum of Art, University Park, PA
Sacramento International Airport, Sacramento, CA
Sacramento Public Library, Sacramento, CA
San Francisco Arts Commission
San Francisco International Airport
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA
Rene and Veronica di Rosa Foundation, Napa, CA
Three Guinea Fund, San Francisco, CA
Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT
Washington State Arts Commission, Olympia, WA
Numerous Private Collections

gallery representation

Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA

Curator's Acknowledgement

Mildred Howard: Collective Memory and the online catalogue are the successful result of the efforts of many. As curator of the exhibition, thank you to the Fresno Art Museum Council of 100 for their selection of Ms. Howard as their twenty-sixth Distinguished Woman Artist honoree and to my colleagues Amalia Mesa-Bains and Eddie Chambers for sharing Ms. Howard's and my enthusiasm for the project and for their contributions to the exhibition catalogue.

Opportunities like this renew an artist's faith in a very competitive art world where long-term recognition, especially for one's life in art, is not guaranteed. I am grateful to Pamela Akin, Board President of the Council of 100, for her support and to Kristina Hornback, Associate Curator at the Fresno Art Museum, for her assistance in navigating the curatorial process. It has been a pleasure to work with Kristi Carlson, the designer of this beautiful online catalogue. We thank her for her patience throughout all of our changes.

We are especially appreciative to Paule Anglim and her staff at Gallery Paule Anglim in San Francisco for her ongoing support for Mildred Howard's artwork and her guidance throughout this exhibition process. We also wish to acknowledge and thank the collectors of Ms. Howard's work for lending to this exhibition. Poet Quincy Troupe graciously granted permission to print his poem "At the End" in the gallery. Appreciation is extended to all who assisted directly or indirectly to this exhibition and catalogue and for bringing Ms. Howard's work to Fresno and the broader San Joaquin Valley community.

Lizzetta LeFalle-Collins, Ph.D.
Guest Curator
Principal, LeFalle/Collins Projects

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Mildred Howard, Berkeley, CA

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Nicholas Stone, Berkeley, CA

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