



Rozeal (American, b. 1966)

POD 444, Lynxes and Dropses (Song of Solomon 4:1,9,5:16), 2013

Acrylic, ink, krink and graphite on wood panel

Collection Nerman Museum, Gift of the H. Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation

In her portraits, Rozeal combines several distinct cultural references, including the ganguro, a subculture of Japanese girls who tan their skin and wear bright makeup, blonde wigs, and gold chains to imitate the African-American hip-hop aesthetic. "Bling" accessories punctuate the composition with strands of pearls and oversized gold jewelry. The background includes a screen with speakers, a reference to Rozeal's work as a DJ and performance artist. Titles of the works are loosely based on hip-hop rhymes and specific verses of the Song of Solomon, and we can imagine this couple saying to one another "thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks, thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from mount Gil'e-ad...thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck...this is my beloved, and this is my friend." With the emphatic poses, flat colors and bold outlines, this series of works reflect Rozeal's continued fascination with the ukiyo-e woodblock prints of late-Edo period Japan, in particular the erotic subcategory of shunga prints, although Rozeal emphasizes intimacy over ostentation in her imagery.

Originally from Washington DC, Rozeal (formerly known as Iona Rozeal Brown) earned a BS in Kinesiological Sciences at the University of Maryland in College Park in 1991, and then she graduated from the San Francisco Art Institute with a BFA in 1999 and Yale University with an MFA in 2002. In 2001 she travelled to Asia and in 2005 received a grant enabling her to live for half a year as a guest artist in Japan and during this stay she studied kabuki drama.



Wendy Red Star (American Indian, Crow, b. 1981)
Spring (from the series *Four Seasons*), 2006
 Archival pigment print on Museo silver rag on Dibond
 Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.08

Wendy Red Star's work represents an insider/outsider view that is rich with complexity and contradiction. Born in Billings Montana of Irish and American Indian heritage, Red Star was raised on the Crow Reservation. After graduating from college, Red Star moved to Los Angeles where she was struck by the lack of natural environment. Lonesome for home, she wandered into the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles to explore the American Indian exhibits. She was taken with the dioramas in the museum and was inspired to explore issues of display and authenticity versus representation of American Indian culture in her *Four Seasons Series*. In these pseudo-dioramas, using kitschy wallpaper, blow-up plastic animals, 1970s panoramas of mountains and lakes and artificial plants, the artist assembles a cathartic, mocking look at indigenous life, and she poses wearing her traditional Apsaalooka or Crow regalia. These photographs blur the line between authenticity and Western fantasy. Red Star states, "I don't take art too seriously, so all of it has some sort of humorous aspect to it...The issues with American Indian art are so complex that there is not much I would have to do for social commentary, because the commentary is already there...A lot of my work is anti-romanticism—which usually means just telling the truth."



Wendy Red Star (American Indian, Crow, b. 1981)
Winter (from the series *Four Seasons*), 2006
Archival pigment print on Museo silver rag on dibond
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.07

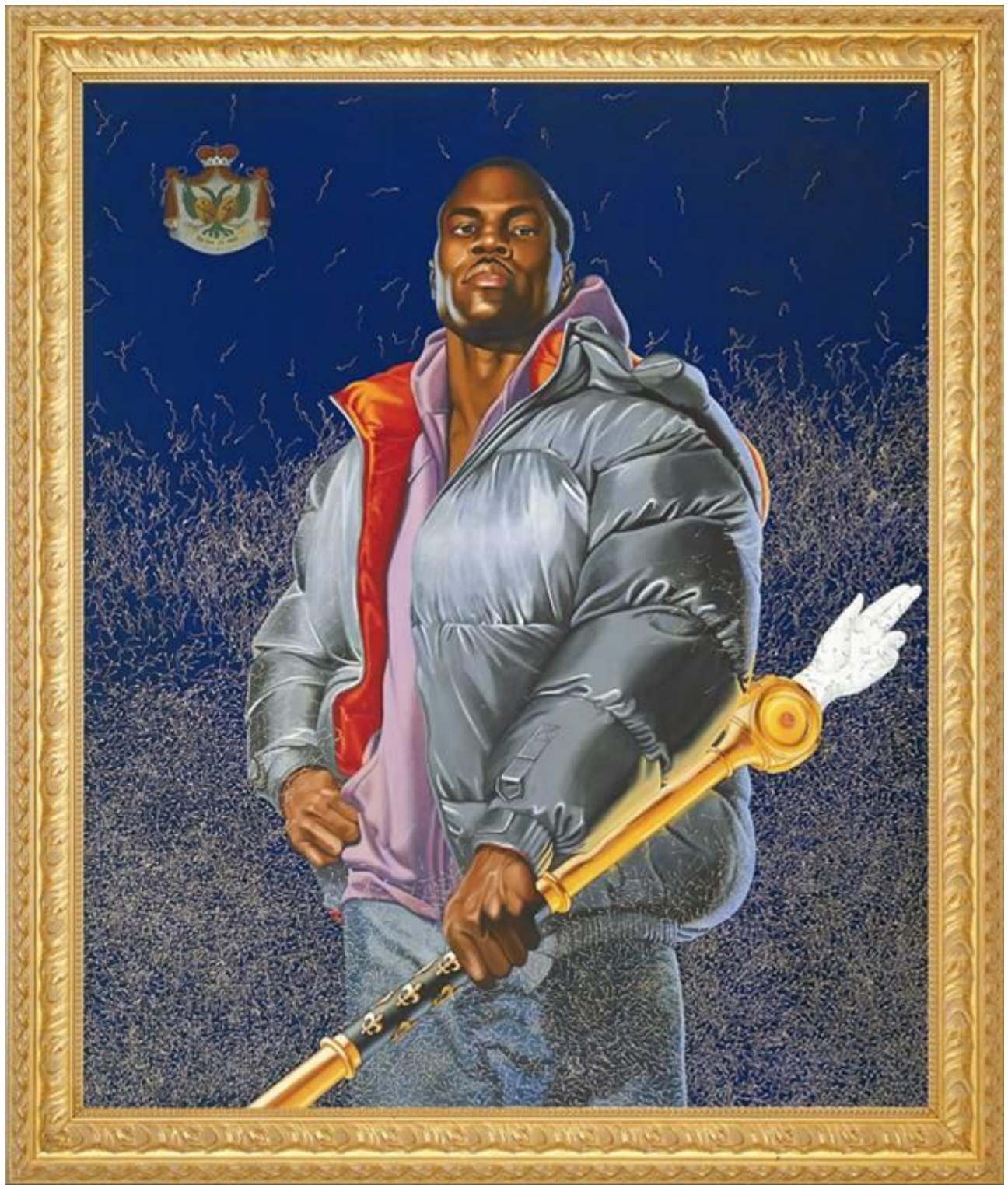
Wendy Red Star received a BA in sculpture from Montana State University in Bozeman in 2004, and an MFA in sculpture at UCLA in 2006. She is an adjunct professor who teaches art at Portland State University, Oregon.



Wendy Red Star (American Indian, Crow, b. 1981)
Fall (from the series *Four Seasons*), 2006
Archival pigment print on Museo silver rag on Dibond
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.06



Wendy Red Star (American Indian, Crow, b. 1981)
Indian Summer (from the series *Four Seasons*), 2006
Archival pigment print on Museo silver rag on Dibond
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.09



Kehinde Wiley (American, b. 1977)
Alexander the Great (Variation), 2005
Oil and enamel on canvas
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.29
Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation

More than serving as mannequins in a fashion ad, the figures in Kehinde Wiley's portraits participate in recreating their own identities. The artist discovers his models on the streets of the city and invites them to his studio, where they browse art history books and select a source image. Wiley then photographs his models in the pose of the original figure, but dressed in contemporary clothing of the models' choosing.

Wiley portrays his subjects as figures of privilege and power, just as Renaissance portraits affirmed the importance of specific individuals. Against a royal blue background, a swarm of silvery sperm creates a decorative surface from which the figure's shoulders, head, and hands triumphantly emerge. The ultra smooth skin and glistening metallic parka are rendered in a meticulous photorealistic style. Wiley's Alexander the Great holds a liturgical staff topped with an ivory hand of benediction and embellished with the French fleur-de-lis. Another symbol of royalty, crest at the top right bears the battle cry of the first Crusades, "le roi le volt," or "the king wills it." With the ornate golden frame, the portrait is an unexpected connection between the French Rococo and the contemporary urban street.

Wiley was born and raised in Los Angeles, and his studio is currently based in New York. He received a BFA in 1999 from the San Francisco Art Institute. After he earned an MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2001, he was a resident artist at the Studio Museum in Harlem.



Dana Schutz (American, b. 1974)

Surgery, 2004

Oil on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004.15

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation

Loosely brushed and radiating glowing warm colors punctuated by brilliant blues and greens, Dana Schutz's depiction of what might initially seem to be an innocent tea party or picnic reveals itself as a disquieting scene when the little girls' actions come into focus: they are performing surgery on a fragmented figure laid out on a table before them. The subject matter and composition resonate with both high art and popular cultural sources: on the one hand, paintings of anatomical lessons and surgery by such masters as Rembrandt and Thomas Eakins, and on the other hand, the children's board game Operation. We might wonder if the figure on Schutz's table is a patient or a victim, and if the standing girls mean to harm or help her. Long blades of grass separate the viewer from the operating theater-cum-Frankenstein's laboratory, and invite us to dissect the narrative for ourselves, keeping a sense of humor while questioning the sometimes brutal social dynamics of young women. The ultimate ambiguity of meaning is key for the artist, who stated, "I embrace the area between which the subject is composed and decomposing, formed and formless, inanimate and alive."

Dana Schutz earned a BFA from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 2000, and an MFA from Columbia University in 2002.



Dana Schutz (American, b. 1976)
Swimming, Smoking, Crying, 2009
 Oil on canvas
 Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2010.01
 Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation

Dana Schutz creates fantastical dreamlands full of terror and beauty, violence and whimsy. Schutz invites the viewer to piece together a narrative within these visionary landscapes. As she says, "I don't write stories in the way a writer would; the situations are very loose. I never want the viewer to have to know the whole story to 'get' the painting." In *Swimming, Smoking, Crying*, Schutz fills the canvas with the grotesque face of an androgynous long-haired figure, presumably female, swimming in water of variegated blues. The wavering outlines of the figure's deformed eyes mirror the waves surrounding them. A bizarrely opaque white tear leaks from one eye, echoing the rigid cylinder of the swimmer's cigarette, still lit despite its evident submersion. Schutz's title and the imagery of an outsize head smoking a cigarette likely nod to painter Philip Guston's cartoonish self-portrait in bed, *Painting, Smoking, Eating* (1973), but whereas Guston's figure lies passively, Schutz's swims vigorously. Despite its open-ended story line, Schutz's image suggests a sense of disaster and despondence, as the woman surges across the canvas, weeping in despair or agony, exhaustion or fear. Like her cigarette, burning in defiance of its watery surroundings, she seems to battle the waves desperately but perhaps futilely.



Dana Schutz (American, b. 1976)

Yawn 2, 2012

Oil on canvas, Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2012.21, Gift of the H Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation

Dana Schutz's painting *Yawn 2* depicts, on its surface, a relatively mundane event: a blond figure wearing a black-and-white striped shirt raises her hand to her mouth to cover a yawn. Schutz describes the figure with her characteristically energetic, gestural brushwork and vibrant color palette, juxtaposed against the quavering, childlike lines that compose the shirt. However, despite the sunny colors and simplicity of the composition, the work suggests a more ominous narrative. The dark, gaping ellipse of the woman's mouth implies that she may intend to eat her own fingers. This connects *Yawn 2* to the larger theme of cannibalism in Schutz's work, exemplified by her *Self-Eaters* series, in which the painter imagines a completely self-sufficient race. The *Self-Eaters* literally eat themselves, and then reconstruct bodies out of their own feces. This cannibalistic theme has a powerful iconographic precedent in Francisco Goya's horrific *Saturn Devouring One of his Sons* (1823).



Kerry James Marshall (American, b. 1955)
Untitled (Altgeld Gardens), 1995
 Acrylic and collage on canvas
 Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 1999.16

Kerry James Marshall's narrative paintings are honest assessments of the social, political, and economic ramifications of his experiences as a black man in America. His paintings often focus on neighborhoods, and his figures are usually painted with dark skin to emphasize their visibility in a world where blacks have historically been invisible to the dominant (white) culture.

In *Untitled (Altgeld Gardens)* Marshall presents a young man in front of a housing project. A boom box plays the lyrics "our day will come and we'll have everything," (recorded by the Ruby and the Romantics in 1963) which is tragic in regards to the actual place called Altgeld Gardens. Marshall's paintings in the series called The Garden Project, pointedly refer to places with names that suggest an idyllic existence which is far from reality. The actual Altgeld Gardens is a low income public housing project on Chicago's southeast side. The site is known for being polluted with hazardous wastes and has the highest cancer rate of any place in Chicago. An organization called People for Community Recovery has lobbied the state and federal government to investigate the high cancer rates in the housing project and their relationship to the hazardous wastes dumped there. AFDC stands for "Aid for Dependent Children."

Now based in Chicago, Marshall was born in Birmingham, AL. He grew up in south central Los Angeles, near the Black Panthers' headquarters, and also lived in Watts, the segregated neighborhood in Los Angeles infamous for being one of the centers of the civil rights struggle. Marshall received a BFA in 1978 and an honorary Ph.D. from Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, CA. Marshall is a MacArthur Fellow, having received one of the famous MacArthur "genius" awards. He is currently an associate professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago. The JCCC Gallery of Art hosted a solo exhibition for Marshall in 1995.



Kenneth Williams (American Indian, Arapaho/Seneca, b. 1983)

Strength to Overcome, 2009

13/0 Czech cut beads (new and vintage), vintage steel cut beads, ermine skins, dyed horse hair, metal bells, smoked brain-tanned deerskin, vintage wood broadcloth, brass beads, vintage glass (basket) beads, satin ribbon, human hair and cotton calico (linen)

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.68

Kenneth Williams spent his early years on his father's Seneca reservation in New York state, where he started observing and experimenting with beadwork. As a teenager, he began to take on bigger, more complex projects with his mother's family of master bead workers at the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. *Strength to Overcome*, a mirror-bag style, is a demonstration of Williams's vision – completed in a very contemporary style, but also with a traditional feel, “I have incorporated several old stock beads. Using vintage materials connects me to the past while I am working in the future.” The depicted figure, based on an old family photo from the early 1900s, is Williams's great-great-great grandfather, Runs Medicine. The image reveals Runs Medicine's strong presence, which led the artist to choose this subject for various reasons, “I loved the way he is dressed; I was bestowed a similar war bonnet upon completion from college, and its power and status is a great honor. For me to be able to carry one as well is humbling.” The title came to Williams after a very difficult time in his life experiencing many untimely deaths, “All of these things affected me deeply. It seemed that by doing this beadwork, I was comforted and it became my avenue to overcome these tragedies...It also ties into the many world-wide losses such as poverty, loss of many jobs among people, bad economic times, war etc. Therefore, this bag is my tribute to strength and hope that we as a Native people and the United States, will have the ‘strength to overcome’ all of these current issues.”

Kenneth Williams earned a BA in Museum studies from The Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 2007.



Kenneth Williams (American Indian, Arapaho/Seneca, b. 1983)

He Was Iconic, 2014

Czech cut beads, vintage beads, 24k gold glass electroplated beads, sterling silver beads, antique metal beads, fresh water pearls, lapis, red turquoise, 14k gold beads, brass hawk bells, brass buttons, human hair, merino wool tassels, handmade French gold metallic tassels, brain tanned smoked deer hide and dupioni silk

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.30 Acquired with funds provided by the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Art Acquisition Endowment at the JCCC Foundation

When describing his work, he said that current pieces manifest “a truly modern style that is still firmly rooted in my traditional upbringing. I have come to focus mostly on fancy bags of all sizes and shapes, including handbags, shoulder pouches, and delicate pictorial purses. I strive to have my pieces tell stories and build memories, not only for myself and my family, but hopefully, also for those new people who I will meet that are attracted to my work.” Williams won Best of Show at the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair & Market in Phoenix, AZ, for this work; the depicted figure is renowned Hopi artist Charles Loloma (b.1921 - d.1991). Loloma’s signature is reproduced in the red vertical zig-zag shape next to the striated edge, and the reverse side of this tobacco bag shows two of Loloma’s jewelry pieces rendered in beadwork.

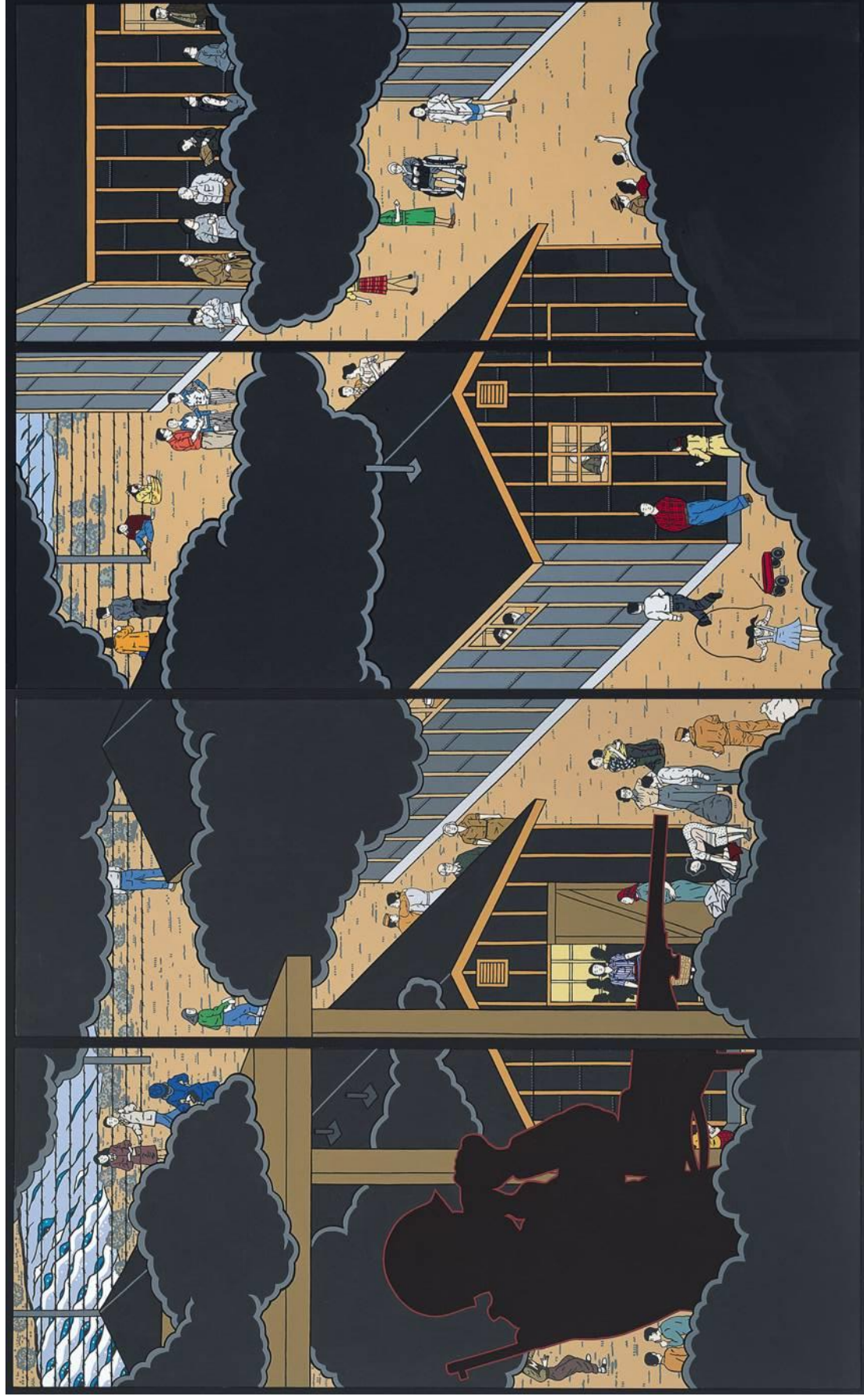
Williams earned a BA in Museum Studies from The Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 2007.



Jackie Larson Bread (American Indian, Blackfeet, b. 1960)
The Cover of the Rolling Stone, 2011
Buckskin, beads, paint and laptop sleeve
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2013.41

Jackie Larson Bread was born and raised on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning, Montana. She has been very influential in the development of illusionary pictorial beadwork, a technique using different graduated shades of beads to create depth. Bread's images are typically hand-drawn and beaded on bags, boxes and other traditional utilitarian items. Regarding *The Cover of the Rolling Stone*, the artist states, "I love taking non-traditional items and embellishing them with a somewhat traditional design." Her inspiration for the laptop sleeve was that "it would be as if someone were carrying a copy of *Rolling Stone* magazine, but the Blackfeet version." The beaded Blackfeet words *Inakasisu Ookotok*, translate to "turn over" and "over rock" – in other words, the rolling stone. Bread explains, "The rest of the text refers to my last name, which in Blackfeet is *Napayin*. Turtle refers to the man I beaded as a Blackfeet icon, not unlike the contemporary icons featured on the real *Rolling Stone*." The front sleeve's designs depict the traditional way that Blackfeet tipis are painted: the red ground at the bottom, straight and flat, speaks of the prairie, and the dots on the red field are fallen stars. Red stripes symbolize the wind moving across the sky; the color blue is historically a favorite of the Blackfeet tribe. The back of the sleeve's design reveals a more traditional Blackfeet parfleche design with the beaded elements referencing the front side's ornateness.

Jackie Larson Bread attended the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, earning her BFA in two-dimensional arts and museum studies, and in 1986 she graduated from the College of Santa Fe with a BFA in painting. She was inducted into the Montana Arts Council's Circle of American Masters in 2008.



Roger Shimomura (American, b. 1939)

American Infamy, 2006

Acrylic on canvas panels

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.15

Acquired with funds provided by JCCC and Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation

We approach the scene from behind the silhouetted watch guard peering into the daily lives of an internment camp, binoculars and rifle in hand. From up in the clouds, we have access to the interior and exterior spaces: people washing laundry, a woman writing at her desk, children playing jump rope, a birthday cake awaiting a wish. With black cartoon like outlines defining flat planes of color, the artist has created a stylized rendition of this community getting on with their lives in spite of their imprisonment, with a neutral palette punctuated by the vibrant colors of their clothing. The diptych format is further divided in two, creating four sections, which also reads like a comic strip, though the subject matter is not a joke. We see in the distance a stream just out of reach beyond the barbed wire, and we share in the artist's clouded memory of a peaceful, yet restricted, childhood day.

Roger Shimomura was born in Seattle's Central District. His first few years were spent interned with his family at the Puyallup State Fairgrounds while permanent camps were being built by the U.S. government. Soon he and his family moved to Camp Minidoka in southern Idaho. After the war ended, the Shimomura family was permitted to return to Seattle, where Shimomura developed his interest in art. He served two years as an artillery officer in Korea, and then moved to New York where he worked as a graphic designer. He received his BA degree from the University of Washington in 1961 and his MFA degree from Syracuse University. Shimomura currently lives and works in Lawrence, Kansas. He taught at the University of Kansas beginning in 1969, and he was designated a University Distinguished Professor in 1994, the first so honored in the history of the School of Fine Arts. Shimomura is also a respected printmaker, and JCCC owns several prints by Shimomura, which are on view in the Carlsen Center's Works on Paper focus area.



Allison Schulnik (American, b. 1978)

Ariel #2, 2012

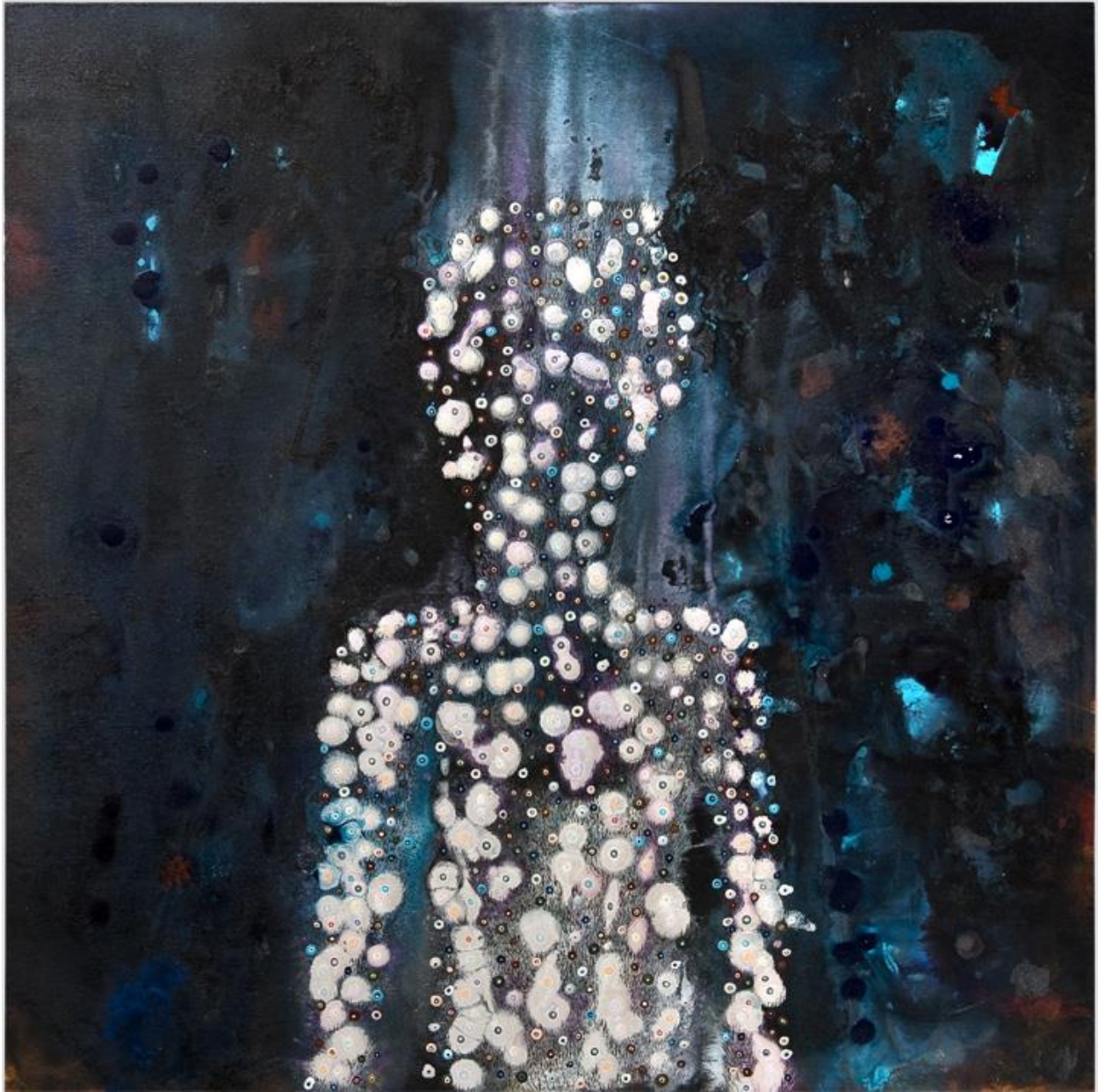
Oil on linen

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2013.05

Gift of the H Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation

With thick paint, Allison Schulnik depicts lonely figures, hobo clowns, skeletons and sailors in hauntingly beautiful landscapes. Some of her subjects might be inherently sweet and innocent, but her tactile mixtures of oils piled onto the surface twist her figures into grotesque nightmarish versions of themselves. For her *Salty Air* exhibition, Schulnik painted a series of mermaids and stated, "they are characters I created that might provide warmth, love and comfort to the sailor...I also think of the Mermaid as a yearning figure." She acknowledges the darker side of Hans Christian Andersen's 1836 coming-of age fairy tale, the version of *The Little Mermaid* in which the mermaid's love is unrequited. Here we see her as a tragic solitary figure, "while everything within was gladness and song, she sat in her own little garden sorrowful and alone." She yearns to be a human, yet she is doomed to dissolve into sea foam as all mermaids do when they die, instead of living happily ever after on land with the prince and sharing his immortal human soul. JCCC also owns Schulnik's 2008 painting *Skipping Skeletons* and her 2011 video *Mound*, which are both on view in the museum's second floor galleries.

Allison Schulnik earned a BFA in Experimental Animation in 2000 from California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA.



Marcus Cain (American, b. 1970)

Soft Bones, 2009

Acrylic, colored pencil, graphite, ink, latex and watercolor on panel

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.84

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation

Soft Bones, an emotive mixed media painting, counters the flat patterns and high-keyed, pulsating colors of Marcus Cain's earlier works, including *Human Beings as Mountains #3*. Cain acknowledges a shifting style in which the darker, painterly palette and amorphous human form of *Soft Bones* enforces a more internalized reading. The figure, composed of coalescing, glowing orbs of light invoking pliable, deconstructed bones and organs amidst a darkly expressive ground of deep blues, blacks, and hints of red, is at once emergent and recessive, existing in a liminal state. Cain metaphorically conceptualizes such figures as undergoing "reconstitution," effecting generative and regenerative growth as they emerge into a "new reality." Whereas the fluid, gestural application of pigment diverges from the flat, linear layers of color and form of Cain's previous works, his signature precision emerges in the figure's internal structure, a colorful pattern of tiny, glimmering spheres appearing in effervescent juxtaposition to the muted, moody ground. Cain describes an inner dialogue of "opposing forces of affirmation and doubt" which manifest themselves in his figures. Conscious decisions regarding color, pattern and texture play into the content. Like portals, Cain's figures exist within multiple planes, offering viewers various points of entry and contemplation.

Marcus Cain earned his BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1998.



Ruud van Empel (Dutch, b. 1958)

World #2, 2005

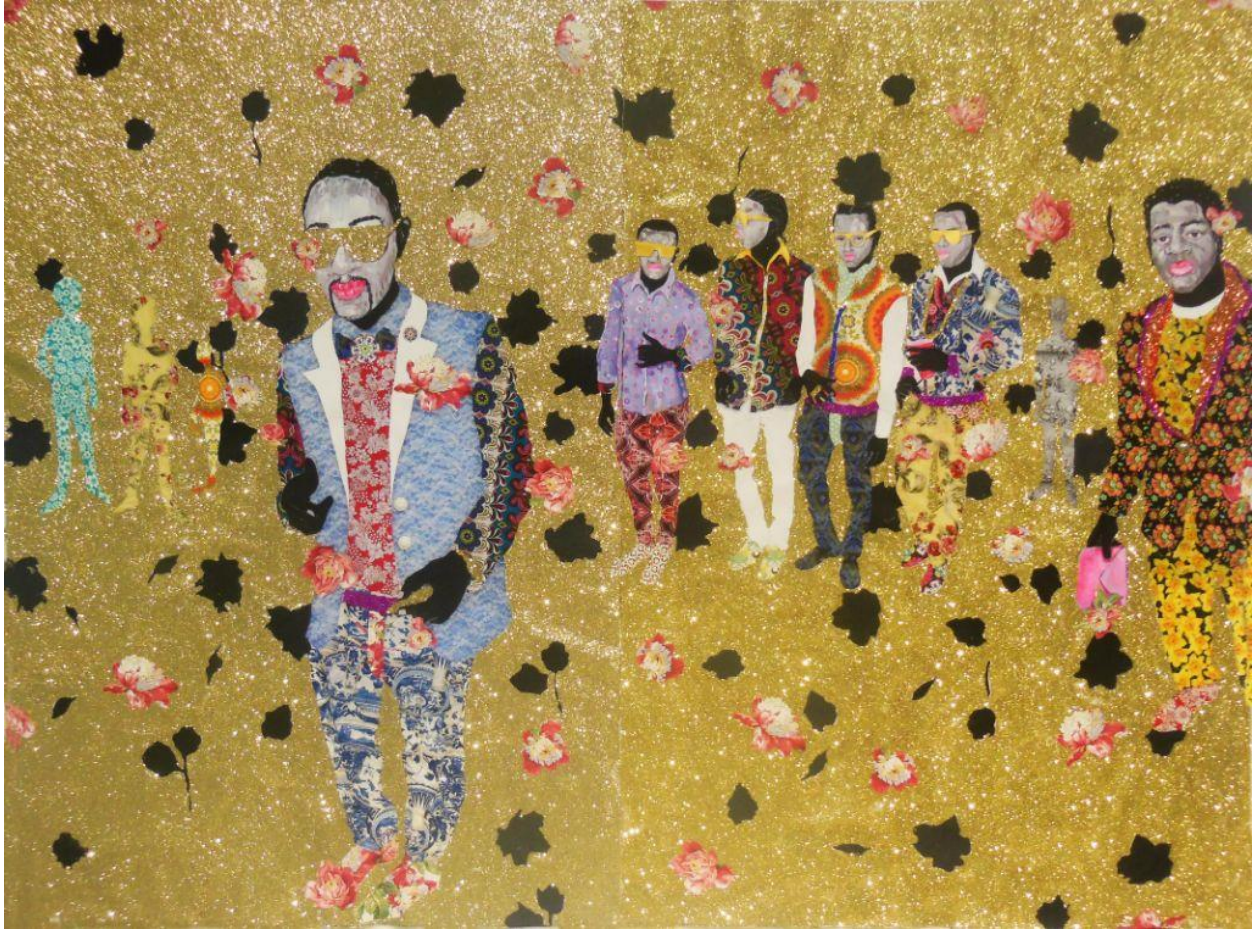
Cibachrome, Plexiglas and aluminum

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005.77

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer and the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation

Amsterdam-based Ruud van Empel specializes in large-format, hyper-realistic images of children in lush tropical environments. He achieves his stunning effects by digitally stitching together photographs he has taken of every individual element in the composition, including plants, flowers, insects and animals. In this way, van Empel can meticulously control and manipulate for aesthetic effect every detail of the final composite image. "I am not satisfied with taking just one picture," he explains, "for me that is mostly interesting from the historical point of view (it captures a moment that is history afterwards), so I create my own world in photorealism." Van Empel's images are often cited for their beauty, a characteristic the artist sees as aligning with their thematic focus on innocence. "When I chose the subject of innocence, I wanted to show its beauty," he says. "Innocence is beauty, and that is important to understand." However, van Empel's images also possess a vaguely unnerving strangeness. His smooth-skinned children passively occupy hyper-real environments that verge on the surreal, and their expressionless faces look out at us with hypnotic stares that have been digitally enhanced.

Ruud van Empel studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Sint Joost, Breda, the Netherlands, from 1976 to 1981.



Ebony G. Patterson (Jamaican, b. 1981)

Untitled Lightz II, 2013

Mixed media on paper

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.03

Gift of the H Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation

Ebony G. Patterson's body of work explores constructions of the masculine image within Dancehall culture. She challenges traditional notions of beauty and gender ideals within so called 'popular black' culture, examining the similarities and differences between 'camp aesthetics' – the use of feminine gendered adornment – in the construction of urban masculinity. In this work from her *Until You See Them* series, Patterson raises questions about body politics, performance of gender, beauty and stereotyping, and body and ritual. By increasing her use of mixed media, her work has become more decorative, decadent, iconic and confrontational. In *Untitled Lightz II*, Patterson's signature, monumental mug-shot portraits have grown into a complex grouping of full figures, starting with sourced images of men from Jamaican party sites. The models pose themselves, and they are aware of the camera without looking directly at it. Notions of the feminine, fashion, pattern, decoration and pastiche abound in this work-on-paper. The busy background provides a curtain of mystery, and the bleached faces are even more visible with the added rhinestone bling. Patterson had a solo exhibition called *dy/nas/ty* featuring tapestries and installation sculpture at the Nerman Museum in 2014.

Ebony G. Patterson received an Honors Diploma in painting from the Edna Manley College for the Visual and Performing Arts, Kingston, Jamaica, in 2004. She earned an MFA in printmaking/drawing from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2006.



Paul Anthony Smith (American, b. 1988)

Ras, 2013

Unique picotage on pigment print

Collection Nerman Museum, Gift of the H. Tony and Marti Oppenheimer Foundation

Paul Anthony Smith investigates familial and ancestral history in his altered photographs, painted portraiture and figurative ceramic sculpture. His work is frequently autobiographical, and through various media, he explores racial barriers and histories within contemporary scenarios. Born in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, Smith grew up in Miami and moved to Kansas City to attend college. Source imagery from the 2010 Haitian earthquake inspired Smith to explore family portraiture; the individuals he painted reminded him of his own likeness, in some cases they resembled his relatives, and by painting the figures, he reflected upon his own life story. Recent work includes busts and full-length clay figures combined with traditional African mask forms. *Ras* is one of his picotage portraits made by pricking the surface of the scanned photographic image with a potter's needle tool in a contemporary homage to African coming-of-age tattoos and scarification. Under the mask lies a depiction of Ras Makonnen Woldemikael, father of Haile Selassie (birth name Ras Tafari), the former emperor of Ethiopia and leader of Africa's struggle for independence from colonists. A cowrie shell crown and headdress render the figure recognizable as royalty, and yet his individual likeness (and gender) is obscured by the Kuba mask design.

Smith earned a BFA in Ceramics from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2010. He received a Charlotte Street Foundation Fellowship in 2013.



Stephan Balkenhol (German, b. 1957)
Man Lying on Platform, 1998
Cedar wood and paint
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2001.06
Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA

After experimenting with minimalism and conceptualism during his art school years, Stephan Balkenhol turned in the early 1980s to carving wood sculptures of human figures and animals. Balkenhol carves his figures by hand and applies paint to define clothes, hair, eyes, and lips, typically leaving the natural color of the wood to stand for flesh tones. Unlike the highly finished bronze and stone sculptures of the classical past, which depict gods or honor heroic individuals, Balkenhol's figures have a rough-hewn quality and represent utterly ordinary people, who simply stand, sit, or, in the case of *Man Lying on Platform*, recline. We are thus invited to identify with them, but they remain separate from us because of their placement on a platform or base – often the remaining log or block from which the figure has been cut – and their scale, which is always either smaller or larger than life sized. Also keeping us at a distance are the figures' neutral facial expressions, which the sculptor deliberately leaves open to interpretation. “I wanted an expression from which one can imagine all other states of mind,” explains Balkenhol, “a point of departure from which everything is possible.”

Stephan Balkenhol studied at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg, from 1976 to 1982.



Asad Faulwell (American, b. 1982)

Mujahidat #11, 2010

Acrylic and paper on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2011.12

Gift of Marti and Tony Oppenheimer, Los Angeles, CA

From a distance, *Mujahidat #11* is reminiscent of the colorful geometric patterns of Moroccan textiles and mosque mosaics, yet with close examination one discerns tiny reproduced photographs around the outer frame and embedded in the circular floral patterns. The three women represented in these photos—Djamila Bouhired, Zohra Drif, and Danielle Minne—were *mujahidat*, fighters with the National Liberation Front (FLN) in the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) against France. Algerian female combatants played an important role in the conflict, yet after their country gained independence they received neither recognition nor equal legal treatment. Faulwell's paintings bring attention to these long ignored fighters, and symbolically elevate them to the status of saints. On the outer edge of *Mujahidat #11*, a news photo of Zohra Drif as she was imprisoned in 1957 is repeated to form a geometric pattern, with a halo painted above Drif's head. In the circular forms appearing throughout the canvas, Drif and Bouhired are highlighted in the middle of floral motifs, and Minne is included near the bottom center. These details, contrasted with the larger visual links to religious architecture and art, speak to the divide between the spiritual and the mundane, and celebrate the female fighters of Algeria.

Asad Faulwell completed his BA at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2005, and received his MFA from Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, in 2008. The Nerman Museum presented a solo exhibition *Pins and Needles* in 2013.



Thomas "Red Owl" Haukaas (American Indian, Lakota, b. 1950)

Dreamer Doll, 2009

Brain-tanned deerskin, brain-tanned moose, cotton, wool, feathers, human hair, porcupine quill, antique pony beads, buffalo hide, antique Chinese coin and metal

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.67

First inspired by his great-grandmother's beadwork, Tom "Red Owl" Haukaas learned the process as a child watching relatives stitch beads onto cloth and prepared hides. He received his first heirloom beads as a young adult with his eyes set on medical school and relatives presented him with beads so that he could make artwork to sell and raise funds to cover his tuition money. Haukaas utilizes the lanes stitch, two-needle overlay and backstitch, three of the most common stitches used by traditional Northern Plains bead workers. Displayed in a found apothecary jar, *Dreamer Doll* demonstrates Haukaas' contemporary take on a traditional art form. In the Plains cultures, it was often the grandmother's responsibility to construct a child's first doll, which was used to teach the girl traditional roles, appropriate dress and cultural practices. Girls were given cradles and sewing supplies with their dolls while boys were given warrior gear, bows and arrows. Dolls representing both genders were used by all children simply for play. "No face" dolls, like *Dreamer Doll*, were created in order to instill humility. More intricate dolls were created for trade and display. Modern versions may be dressed in the traditional style of clothing worn by individuals in the 19th century.

Thomas "Red Owl" Haukaas received an MD in Psychiatry in 1987 from Michigan State University.



Kukuli Velarde (Peruvian, b. 1962)

A La Cholitranca se le Salio el Indio! Savage Aboriginal Bitch, Moche Peru AD 200, 2009

Terra cotta with engobes and wax

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2010.27

Grimacing and shaking her fists, this figure does not look happy. The immediate source of her distress is a striped snake, wrapped around her neck and cutting off her ability to breathe and speak. But the snake personifies something larger—a system that exploits women of indigenous ancestry such as this one, and insults them and treats them as inferiors because of their race. Peruvian-born artist Kukuli Velarde declares her identity with these women and pushes back against racism and oppression with her figurative vessels. "They all have my face," she says, "for I had to become each of them to reclaim ownership and to take the name calling with defiance." Pre-Columbian works in clay are a prime source of inspiration for Velarde, who based this piece on an ancient Moche vessel from Peru. She contrasts the respect accorded pre-Columbian art with the treatment of the artists' descendants, noting "how easy it is to detach the makers from the objects." Velarde has made that detachment impossible with her own works. The Nerman Museum presented this work in her solo exhibition *Plunder Me, Baby*, in 2013. In previous gallery installations, she took an anthropological approach to accentuate the "awakening" effect of the pieces, as if they had been trapped in a display case for many years and just came to life.

Kukuli Velarde earned a BFA from Hunter College, University of New York, in 1992. She also studied at the Academia San Carlos at the University of Mexico.



Jason Garcia (American Indian, Santa Clara Pueblo, b. 1973)
Pair of painted tiles from the Grand Theft Auto Series, 2007
 Mineral and carbon paint on clay
 Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art – JCCC, acc. no. 2007.78

Like several other Pueblo artists, Jason Garcia extends the tradition of storytelling by incorporating comic book imagery in his traditional pottery work. In these two tiles, he also connects these influences with computer gaming (*Grand Theft Auto* is a series of driving games), assuring that his works depict contemporary life. The woman wears a ceremonial *tablita* headdress and detailed traditional jewelry. She leans on a motorcycle in front of a colonial church. The man, also in completely traditional ceremonial regalia with elaborate shell jewelry (even including the small branches tucked into his arm bands), sits on the hood of a car in front of a traditional kiva, from which you can see the ladder protruding at the top. The images emphasize that current day Pueblo citizens often navigate two worlds – one traditional, and the other rigorously contemporary, replete with cell phones, laptop computers, and video games.

The son of recognized potters Gloria Goldenrod and John Garcia, Jason Garcia earned an MFA from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 2013, and received a BFA from the University of New Mexico in 1998. He was the 2007 Dubin Native American Artist Fellow at the School of American Research in Santa Fe, and has participated in many exhibitions and won several awards at the Santa Fe Indian Market.



Molly Murphy-Adams (American Indian, Oglala/Lakota, b. 1977)
New Possibilities Bags: Women Stepping Forward, 2008
Mixed media, horsehair, beads on wool
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.100

Molly Murphy-Adams' pair of bags plays on the traditional Plains art form of twin "possible" bags. American Indian artists in many cultures made bags for a wide variety of purposes, from tobacco bags to flute bags to elaborate bandolier bags. Bags that might be used to carry a variety of objects were named "possible bags." The *New Possibilities Bags* feature individuals from different generations wearing traditional Plains clothing, but on each bag, a woman is depicted having just received her diploma, indicating contemporary American Indian women have many options or possibilities for their future roles in life. These two bags depict a "traditional" family on one bag and a "non-traditional" family on the other. Murphy-Adams credits her mother's assistance with childcare for enabling her to pursue her studies. Recognizing the important role community colleges may play in empowering single-parent families, Murphy-Adams chose these depictions specifically for JCCC.

Traditional bags were usually made of tanned leather, and in the early nineteenth century, American Indian artists decorated leather goods with colored porcupine quills or other natural materials until glass beads from Czechoslovakia became available through trade. Beading is still popular today on clothing, bags, dance regalia, jewelry, dolls and special ceremonial items. Most of the beading on these bags is created with the "lazy stitch," in which five or six beads are gathered at once and stitched down at each end creating rows of color; in one instance Murphy-Adams has staggered the rows to make a zig-zag pattern in the graduate's white skirt.

Molly Murphy-Adams graduated from the University of Montana in 2004 with a BFA and lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.



Virgil Ortiz (American Indian, Cochiti Pueblo, b. 1969)
Horny Toad, 2003
Clay
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.14

Virgil Ortiz holds a preeminent place among contemporary American Indian artists and is also well known as a high fashion designer. This work is part of a series including a monkey and other fantastic characters, all with roots in the historic Cochiti *munos* “storyteller” figure tradition. In the 19th century, 1880s pueblo potters would attend the opera, circus and other strange events European settlers brought to Santa Fe. Artists responded by making these storyteller figures ridiculing the strange performers they witnessed. The art form virtually died out at the beginning of the 20th century, but Virgil Ortiz, along with his mother and sisters, revived the art form, creating an entire circus for the Santa Fe Indian Market in 1998. He states, “It’s important to recognize that Pueblo communities are very much alive and have a level of vitality that speaks to generations of strength, persistence, brilliance, and thriving energy. I have something very important to do before I go. I want to preserve my culture and inspire our youth to accomplish whatever it is they dream to be.”

Ortiz participated in the 2004 JCCC Gallery of Art exhibition *Borderland*.