

FIGURING THE FLORAL



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GLYNDOR GALLERY





FIGURING THE FLORAL

JULY 21–DECEMBER 1, 2019

DERRICK ADAMS

NICOLE AWAI

BAHAR BEHBAHANI

CHRISTIAN RUIZ BERMAN

SANFORD BIGGERS

CECILE CHONG

MAX COLBY

ABIGAIL DEVILLE

VALERIE HEGARTY

CHRISTOPHER K. HO
AND KEVIN ZUCKER

DIANA SOFIA LOZANO

NATALIA NAKAZAWA

EBONY G. PATTERSON

BUNDITH PHUNSOMBATLERT

LINA PUERTA

SIMONETTE QUAMINA

DAVID RIOS FERREIRA

ALEXANDRIA SMITH

KATHERINE TOUKHY

LINA IRIS VIKTOR

WILLIAM VILLALONGO

SAYA WOOLFALK

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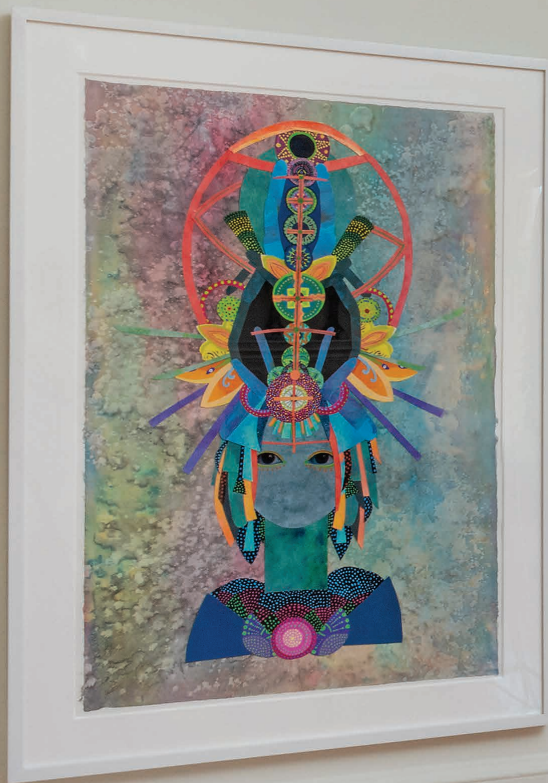
A FLOWER'S LIFE CYCLE of budding, blooming and pollinating, as well as the process of decay, strongly echoes the human condition. The exhibition *Figuring the Floral* features artists who apply this symbolism to their work—touching on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, aging and other facets of identity. Exhibited amid Wave Hill's flourishing gardens, the artworks on view resonate with the living flora on the grounds—enhancing the exhibition with visible and tangible connections.

While floral imagery is often associated with decorative art and femininity, *Figuring the Floral* subverts these notions. Instead, artists complicate such limiting interpretations by relating these natural forms to deeper reflections on self and society. For thousands of years, across cultures, meanings have been attributed to flowers in art and language, from Persian miniatures to the Christian bibles. The Turkish custom of *sélam* was a method of coded communication used by harem women, based on rhyming words with objects.

Victorian-era floriography was rich in metaphor: daffodils symbolized new beginnings, daisies signaled innocence and tussie-mussies held pointing downward were a sign of rejection. With a strong influence of Calvinism in the seventeenth century, Dutch vanitas paintings featured a variety of objects symbolizing the fragility of human life and inevitability of death. Promoting a moral code in opposition to earthly pleasures, Vanitas pictures often featured beautifully rendered flowers with subtle signs of impending decay.

This exhibition brings together artists who create new symbolism, some using flowers to alter or obscure the human form and others working in more abstract or literal modes of depiction. The work includes collage, drawing, painting, photography, sculpture and an outdoor installation amidst the living foliage of the gardens.

In the north gallery, Sanford Biggers, Ebony G. Patterson, Simonette Quamina, Lina Iris Viktor and Saya Woolfalk unpack relationships dealing with colonial and social histories, personal memory, fantasy and the otherworldly. Also touching on these themes, Christopher K. Ho and Kevin Zucker's work is installed in the reception area stairwell.



In the middle gallery, Christian Ruiz Berman, Cecile Chong, Diana Sofia Lozano, Lina Puerta, Bundith Phunsombatlert, David Rios Ferreira, Cecile Chong and Katherine Toukhy visualize immigrant experiences and aesthetics of cultural uprootedness or cross-pollination. Chong's large-scale sculptural installation is on view in the stone circle down the hill from Glyndor House.

In the south gallery, Derrick Adams, Nicole Awai, Bahar Behbahani, Max Colby, Abigail DeVille, Valerie Hegarty, Natalia Nakazawa, Alexandria Smith and William Villalongo use floral imagery to explore various topics, including class, gender identities, domestic spaces and the aging human body.

Though employing different strategies in object creation, these artists utilize flower imagery and floral metaphor to explore the struggles and transformations of the human condition. Experienced collectively in the context of Wave Hill's lush, summer gardens, these works cultivate new, significant narratives of identity.

Our thanks to the artists, additional lenders and facilitators: Burning in Water, Carolina Nitsch Gallery, Lesley Heller Gallery, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, LMAKgallery, Marianne Boesky Gallery, and Susan Inglett Gallery, all in New York, NY, and Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Chicago, IL.

— EILEEN JENG LYNCH* AND EMILY ALESANDRINI* WITH JENNIFER MCGREGOR

* Catalogue entries





DERRICK ADAMS

Born 1970, Baltimore, MD
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Figure Walking into the Light 24, 2018
Acrylic paint, pencil and fabric on paper
24 x 18 inches
Courtesy of the artist

In his kaleidoscope-like, geometric portraits, Derrick Adams explores narratives of the black experience, critiquing the impact of popular culture and its preconceived notions while commenting on self-image. Adams creates environments that reflect daily life and social ideals through association with certain objects, textures and colors, such as patterned fabrics. In this work, the multi-fractured, subtly smiling figure with a side braid appears in a traditional portrait profile. The realistic depiction of the flora, specifically daisies, on his shirt contrasts with the pixelation of his facial features. The background, divided into two shades of grey, perhaps hints at a bifurcation within the figure's psyche—a “double consciousness.” The title, imagery and composition allude to the figure's spirituality and the light-filled, stained-glass windows of cathedrals, in a way that breaks free of the control exerted by religious institutions and social or political hierarchies.

NICOLE AWAI

Born 1966, Port of Spain, Trinidad
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Vista 9: Flashback – Now You See Me Pounce!, 2016
Acrylic paint, nail polish, resin, molded plastic form, bubble wrap, polyester netting, construction foam, metal angle line, graphite and ink on synthetic paper
29 x 19 x 12 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Lesley Heller Gallery, New York, NY

Drawing from her Caribbean and American experiences, Nicole Awai incorporates the anthurium flower in her sculpture to comment on gender and sexuality and to explore the overt and excessive sexualization of people of color—particularly black bodies. Floral imagery is juxtaposed with figures, focused on body parts, such as legs, for which women are often objectified. Native to tropical areas, the anthurium flower, known as the “painted tongue” or “laceleaf,” grows from Argentina to northern Mexico and in the Caribbean. It is a common houseplant and often grown for its vibrant colors and ornate leaves. As a multimedia artist, Awai uses a variety of materials to examine cultural appropriation, stigma and history.



BAHAR BEHBAHANI

Born 1973, Tehran, Iran
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Eram, 2019

Oil, acrylic, crayon and marker on canvas

72 x 54 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Iranian-born multidisciplinary artist Bahar Behbahani uses water and garden imagery as metaphors for political and poetic landscapes. Her intricate, highly layered paintings map human-made aquatic structures built to hydrate gardens. Reflecting on these water features as places for meditation and contemplation, Behbahani considers the relationship between water and borders; invasive and native species; and rivers as paths for human and plant migration. She examines horticultural history and incorporates the philosophy and design of Persian gardens into her creative practice. In this painting, she depicts the Eram garden, one of the most significant historic Persian gardens. In the midst of the garden, a nineteenth-century mansion built in the Qajar era once housed the Asia Institute, a formative center for the study of Iranian art, architecture and archaeology founded by the American scholar Arthur Upham Pope in 1928. “Eram” in Farsi means

paradise or heaven. The loosely painted flowers throughout the work refer to the various flora—not necessarily specific ones—planted in these gardens under the influence of the garden’s sociopolitical history. Behbahani is elaborating on these ideas—specifically tracking visible and invisible water systems, in a generated@wavehill outdoor project that opens on September 15.



CHRISTIAN RUIZ BERMAN

Born 1982, Mexico City, Mexico
Lives in Westport, CT

Kami #3-Para Jairo, 2017

Acrylic, oil, macaw feathers, chain, and laser cut wood on panel with artist frame
22 x 29 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Mexican-American artist Christian Ruiz Berman responds to personal histories of migration and adaptation, creating a multimedia painting that engages with memory, fact and fiction. For the artist, feathers act as brushstrokes in works such as this one—a tribute to murdered sea turtle conservationist Jairo Mora Sandoval, who was protected leatherback turtle nests in Costa Rica. Berman features the purple flowers *Mansoa alliacea* (garlic vine), which grow in Costa Rica as well as in other tropical rainforests in Central and South America. Blooming amid a tangle of rope, these flowers have medicinal properties, drawing connections with healing and preservation.



SANFORD BIGGERS

Born 1970, Los Angeles, CA
Lives in New York, NY

Quo Vadis?, 2019

Antique quilt, textiles, gold leaf, acrylic, spray paint and charcoal
43 x 34 inches, 47 ¼ x 38 ¼ inches framed

Private Collection

Image courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, NY and Aspen, CO. Photo Credit: Object Studies

Sanford Biggers is inspired by diverse cultures encountered during his adolescence in Los Angeles and travels throughout the world. He creates multi-disciplinary artwork, drawing on symbolism found in hip hop, Buddhism, political landscapes, art history and other sources. In this piece, Biggers juxtaposes various textiles, floral Japanese fabric and seventeenth and eighteenth-century American quilts, adding his own sewn, painted and drawn marks. According to popular folklore, these quilts were used by enslaved people to carry coded messages and directions on the Underground Railroad. The featured lotus flower is considered a symbol of purity in several Asian cultures. The title *Quo Vadis?* is a Latin phrase that translates to “Where are you marching?” and also, according to Catholic legend, refers to an instance when Saint Peter seeks redirection. By manipulating the quilts and thus altering their messages, Biggers prompts the viewer to consider what knowledge has been abandoned or forgotten, embellished or obscured throughout history.

CECILE CHONG

Born 1964, Guayaquil, Ecuador
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

EL DORADO - The New Forty Niners, 2019

Plastic, plaster, encaustic, fiberglass-reinforced resin and paint
Approximately 16 feet in diameter
Courtesy of the artist

Located on the overlook to the south of Glyndor House

Promoting ideas of transformation, immigration and community, Cecile Chong’s *EL DORADO - The New Forty Niners* is a public art installation traveling to each of the five boroughs of New York City. The project pays tribute to the 49% of New York City households that speak a language other than English. In the Bronx iteration, 100 floral “guagua” sculptures—many which have bloomed into a floral motif—are installed outside, within the stone circle just below Glyndor House. The sculptural forms are based on swaddles, the age-old practice of wrapping infants in blankets in various cultures. Suggesting a contemporary archeological site, visitors are invited to make a pilgrimage down the hill to view this grouping. Adapting to each site, the project has also been exhibited in Lewis Latimer House Museum in Queens in 2018 and Sunset Park in Brooklyn in 2017. Chong participated in the 2017 Winter Workspace residency, and returns to lead an encaustic workshop on September 15.





MAX COLBY

Born 1990, West Palm Beach, FL
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

TOP SHELF:

Bled, 2018

Crystal, wood and plastic beads; sequins; found fabric; trim; fabric flowers; polyester batting and thread
10 ½ x 10 ½ x 11 ½ inches

Flight, 2019

Crystal and plastic beads, sequins, found fabric, trim, ornaments, plastic flowers, polyester batting, thread and glass stand
8 x 8 x 14 inches

Bliss, 2018

Crystal and plastic beads, sequins, found fabric, trim, polyester batting and thread
6 ½ x 6 ½ x 9 inches

Spectral, 2018

Crystal and plastic beads, sequins, found fabric, trim, fabric flowers, polyester batting and thread
10 ½ x 10 x 12 ½ inches

BOTTOM SHELF:

High Style, 2018

Crystal and plastic beads, sequins, found fabric, trim, faux fur keychains, pins, polyester batting and thread
14 x 14 x 13 inches

Flush, 2019

Crystal and plastic beads, sequins, found fabric, trim, fabric flowers, polyester batting and thread
9 x 9 x 12 inches

Cadmium Wilt, 2018

Crystal and plastic beads, sequins, found fabric, trim, fabric flowers, polyester batting and thread
12 x 12 x 16 inches

All works courtesy of the artist

Through lush, detailed work in embroidery and textiles, Max Colby reframes traditional notions of domesticity, power and gender through a queer and non-binary lens. Colby's brightly colored, phallic sculptures may remind viewers of the cacti and succulents found in Wave Hill's Conservatory. Embellished with beads, sequins and other adornments, they playfully explore non-normative identities. Touching on Christian ceremonial iconography, the artist reclaims, transforms and reconstructs domestic objects from the mid-twentieth century to subvert historical patriarchal systems of violence and offer enticing, vibrant, tactile, queer alternatives.

ABIGAIL DEVILLE

Born 1981, New York, NY
Lives in Bronx, NY

And the Migrants Kept Coming..., 2019

Assemblage, bricolage, mannequins, heirlooms, accumulated debris
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

Abigail DeVille's work confronts racial and economic disparities faced by people of color and reclaims marginalized histories in her work. Often sourcing found objects and local materials, she creates new and alternative narratives deeply rooted in history, especially that of New York—the hometown of both the artist and several generations of her family. This work, created as a sister piece to *Invisible Women*, 2012, evokes a human presence as a nod to those who have been forgotten. DeVille employs detritus as a medium—using recycled or experienced objects as “the archeological evidence of the present moment”—a way of “honoring our ancestors with the material of the now.” DeVille incorporates the belongings of her grandmother, including her gardening hoe at the Marble Hill Houses in the Bronx, as well as flora—dried palm fronds from South Carolina—that serve as a tribute to the victims of racially-charged violence. The tools further allude to the beleaguered people whose invisible labor was integral to the development of the domestic, agricultural and industrial landscapes of the US. The mirrors reference

the history of “yard work”—elaborately decorated yards and gardens of African-Americans in the South, where adornments draw connections to religion, the land and the past. For instance, the “all-seeing eye” of diamond-shaped stars represent divinity. Throughout the exhibition, the mirrors also invite contemplation by reflecting the visitors, the works in the exhibition and the grounds seen outside the windows. The title of this work is taken from Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series, specifically panel 60. DeVille draws a parallel between African Americans moving out of the South a hundred years ago—DeVillev's grandmother's family was part of the great migration—and today's ICE raids and criminalization of immigrants.





VALERIE HEGARTY

Born 1967, Burlington, VT
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Vanitas Rebirth, 2018

Magic-Sculpt, wire, oil paint
19 ½ x 22 x 15 inches

Childhood Home: Mom's Bedroom Wallpaper, 2018

Paper, latex and acrylic paint, tyvek and glue
63 x 42 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Burning in Water, New York, NY

Valerie Hegarty addresses themes of memory and place through paintings, sculptures and installations that mimic early American history aesthetics. Engaging with historical American objects in a process she calls "reverse archaeology," Hegarty's highly tactile, anachronistic work appears both contemporary and excavated. Her sculpture, *Vanitas Rebirth*, depicts an uprooted and decaying plant with red and yellow blooms that reference the aging human body, inevitability of death, and perhaps, a regeneration. In *Childhood Home: Mom's Bedroom Wallpaper*, Hegarty recreates her mother's floral bedroom wallpaper. In a process of pasting painted layers and then peeling away sections of the work, the artist meditates on familial history, fading memory and the aging and loss of those we love. The depiction of wallpaper resonates both with the history of Glyndor as a private residence and with women's restricted, domestic roles in twentieth-century American society.

CHRISTOPHER K. HO and KEVIN ZUCKER

Ho: Born 1974, Hong Kong

Zucker: Born 1976, New York, NY

Live in New York, NY

Perfect Heir II, 2019

Floral escutcheon, stand, pedestal, digital prints

Escutcheon: 42 x 30 inches

Five framed prints: 24 x 29 ¼ inches each

Courtesy of the artists

Christopher K. Ho and Kevin Zucker incorporate flora from the grounds in a shield of dried flowers, commenting on genealogy, breeding and intermarriage. The work engages with issues of class, traditions of heraldic imagery and implications of legacy, and the dried flowers speak to the preservation of memory and genealogy through its material transformation from once-living flora. In each iteration of *Perfect Heir*, the artists pair unlikely images together, such as that of an inanimate with a living object, based on their "visual, conceptual, and temperamental traits," to develop a heraldry-based, multi-generational ancestral chart that ultimately forms a unique, "perfect heir." Here, Ho and Zucker explain that "a decorative cinderblock and an anthurium (flamingo lily) are refined through breeding in other images, as well as through occasional intermarriage with cousin images." This process references the cross-pollination of plants from various countries, migration and, consequently, human uprootedness. The floral escutcheon and tournament shield refer to Armor Hall in Wave Hill and the medieval collection at the nearby Cloisters in Upper Manhattan. Christopher Ho was a 2019 Winter Workspace artist. He returns with Kevin Zucker to lead a garden walk with horticultural interpreter Charles Day on July 27.





DIANA SOFIA LOZANO

Born 1992, Cali, Colombia
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

SubRosa, 2019

Foam, aqua resin, fiberglass, pigment, wax and flocking

24 x 18 x 18 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Colombian-American sculptor Diana Sofia Lozano creates enlarged floral accessories to comment on and explore gender signifiers in the context of conflict, trauma, psychology and popular culture. Reflecting on female identity and her own cultural history, Lozano sculpts nameplate earrings, tropical fruits, weapons and other objects of significance to her family's story of immigration. The artist's work constructs a parallel between embellishment and camouflaging, proposing that accessorizing is a means of assimilation within a chosen or imposed identity. *SubRosa*, translated from Latin as "under the rose," is used in English to denote conversations held in secrecy. The oversized hair clip hangs high like a bloom from a canopy, an elevated artifact, performing a version of its conventional function. Its form is all that remains of a narrative of self-decoration, and its looming presence is now indicative of concealed meanings: the rose as a symbol of Catholic devotion, youthful feminine fertility and a history of colonialist consumption and commodification in Central and South America.

NATALIA NAKAZAWA

Born 1982, Charlotte, NC

Lives in Queens, NY

Language of Birds, 2019

Jacquard-woven tapestry, feathers, shisha embroidery

71 x 53 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Natalia Nakazawa uses paint, textile and social practice throughout her work in the fields of education, arts administration and community activism. Nakazawa examines the shifting definition of language, biodiversity and immigration in her work. In the digital collage *Language of Birds*, obscured figures exist among geometric and floral patterning. The artist draws from architectural motifs, which often incorporate nature, from Europe and the Middle East. She examines how selected floral imagery appears across various cultures and is reproduced in patterns and textiles that are distributed worldwide. The lost faces of the figures hint at the century-long gap between the completion of the text and the imagery in the manuscript Nakazawa references. With fringe and feathers lining this highly



dense tapestry, Nakazawa creates an imagined window, conflating past and present.

EBONY G. PATTERSON

Born 1981, Kingston, Jamaica

Lives in Chicago, IL

reach..., 2018

Cast glass, synthetic, silk and dried flowers, jewelry in powder-coated steel case
37 x 32 x 25 inches

Series of 10 unique variants

Courtesy of the artist and Carolina Nitsch, New York, NY

Promoting civil awareness through examination of body politics, Ebony G. Patterson explores the notion of gardens—real and imagined—in relationship to postcolonial spaces. Her work alludes to the garden as a site and a metaphor for, or extension of, the body. The sculpture consists of a free-standing case without a cover that contains frosted glass hands reaching and grasping for flowers—creating a tableau of beauty, mourning and loss. Incorporating pageantry and subtle splendor, the jewelry-adorned fingers hold silk and dried flowers in a deep velvet case. Reflecting on gardens as natural but cultivated landscapes and on the colonial histories with systems of agency and demarcation, Patterson comments on race, class and gender inequalities experienced by people of color and of the working class. This work embodies Patterson's interest in memorials and utilizes the language of vanitas paintings that symbolize the transience of life and futility of earthly pleasures. In *reach...* she depicts the "last act, a last reach before death, a last act of defiance, inspired by what is coming." Examining beauty, class, race, violence and death, the work exhibits a human presence in an unattended garden—a metaphor for a grave. Patterson continues, "We come to pause, to bear witness, and to acknowledge..."



BUNDITH PHUNSOMBATLERT

Born 1972, Bangkok, Thailand

Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Sunny Garden in Blue: Stories from the Caribbean to Brooklyn

Archival digital print on paper, 2018–present

14 ¼ x 20 inches each, 17 x 22 x ¾ inches each framed

Courtesy of the artist

Bundith Phunsombatlert shares stories of six immigrant seniors from Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and Guyana. In this ongoing project, Phunsombatlert asks participants to share a flower or plant that has had a significant or symbolic presence in their journey to the United States. He then depicts that plant or flower with scientific details alongside drawn portraits of the participants. Inspired by Anna Atkins' 1843 *British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions*, the first book illustrated with photographic images, Phunsombatlert's *Sunny Garden in Blue: The Stories from the Caribbean to Brooklyn* connects and creates dialogues between the immigrants' stories and the original cyanotype book to add something that was absent. Originally from Thailand, Phunsombatlert creates intergenerational, engaging work to grapple with new identities in the era of globalization.





LINA PUERTA

Born 1969, Englewood, NJ
Lives in New York, NY

Broccoli Crop Workers (Farmworker Tapestries Series), 2017

Pigmented cotton and linen pulp, lace, velvet, sequined fabrics, Aztec (Otomi) embroidered collar, trims, appliqués, velvet ribbon, fake fur, feathers, gouache and chains

41 x 46 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Raised in Colombia, Lina Puerta grapples with ideas of control, consumerism, femininity, sexuality and artificiality. Her work comprises mixed media, such as clay, wood, fabric, artificial plants, paper and recycled items, exploring the relationship between nature and the body. Inspired by the decorative motifs of colonial-era European tapestries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Puerta's work references the oppressed workers and harmed environment inherent in profiteering. One of seven highly textured, mixed-media tapestries created in response to the 2016 election and inspired by immigrant Latino agricultural field workers around the United States, *Broccoli Crop Workers* makes geo-political statements through floral motifs. The workers are seen from behind and within a bedazzled, lacy, feathered frame. Amid the velvet and sequins, a line of text cited from National Public Radio reads: "Improper exposure to pesticides harms 10 to 20 thousand agricultural workers every year...the people who harvest America's food." Puerta's work also incorporates imagery of fruit and flowers that represents the cycle of nature. The leaves of the broccoli plant subtly allude to its flowers, acknowledging that the plant is best harvested when the buds are closed. Puerta was a 2013 Wave Hill Winter Workspace artist.

SIMONETTE QUAMINA

Born 1982, Ontario, Canada
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Confirmation in Victoria's Regia, 2018

Graphite and monoprint on paper

36 x 72 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Simonette Quamina combines large-scale drawing, printmaking and collage to explore themes of memory, family and nostalgia. Having grown up in Saint Vincent and Guyana in South America, the artist noticed many cultural and social changes. Reflecting on the body-like fragility of her material, Quamina cuts, sands, tears, gouges, embosses and glues paper, which is then rubbed extensively with powder graphite that both reflects and absorbs light. The artist works exclusively in monochromatic graphite to explore the material's potential to resonate with the subject of her creative practice—her memory. In this piece, the blooming water lily recalls the beauty possible when we surpass the muck that weighs us down. Quamina depicts *Victoria amazonica*, Guyana's national flower, which was named after Queen Victoria, pointing to the British colonial history. The flowers also allude to her family's involvement in gardening. Uneven, carved-out edges of the black water, along with the floral imagery, resonate with Wave Hill's Aquatic Garden, where these flowers flourish in the summer and early fall.



DAVID RIOS FERREIRA

Born 1982, Bronx, NY
Lives in Jersey City, NJ

Do things my own way darling, 2018
Gouache, screen printing ink and collage on paper
44 x 61 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Drawing from coloring books and animation, carnival costume and mask-making, David Rios Ferreira's diptych tangles and confuses structures of power and tools of communication. *Do things my own way darling* depicts a figure carrying a large bundle of wrapped objects—stand-ins for artifacts found in African spirit bundles—intertwined with hibiscus flowers. The hibiscus, the artist notes, is often associated with the Caribbean, as well as with Western notions of the exotic or "other." In this collaged juggernaut, he merges children's pop culture with postcolonial images on Mylar and paper to create an "in-between reality...that signals how the body both bears and transforms historical memory." David Rios Ferreira was a 2018 Wave Hill Sunroom Project Space artist.



ALEXANDRIA SMITH

Born 1981, Bronx, NY
Lives in New Rochelle, NY

Procession to the Rooting Place, 2013
Acrylic, glitter and contact paper on panel
48 x 48 inches
Courtesy of the artist and LMAKgallery, New York, NY

Mixed-media artist Alexandria Smith interweaves characters, symbols and landscapes to explore hybrid identities, domesticity and sexuality. Using humor and figural imagery, Smith investigates relationships between psychology and physical space. Legs, hands and pigtails suggest girlhood, coming-of-age narratives and experiences of black identity. In *Procession to the Rooting Place*, a figure bound in a white garment sits on the floor in a surrealist domestic space as smaller forms promenade to or from the being's opened legs. The figure's head, a minimalist orange and yellow flower—a marigold in a simplified geometric shape—resonates with the floral wallpaper in the foreground. Though it appears to be a portrait hanging in the space, none of these figures display faces or identifying features. Smith reflects on birth and death, womanhood and domesticity through ambiguous symbolism coupled with the floral imagery. In this work, she also cites various art historical and literary references, including the *Birth of Venus* and Toni Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye*, about a young girl's yearning to belong even amidst fear and loneliness. The artist notes that the black glitter in her work signifies the 1960s cultural movement "Black is beautiful."



LINA IRIS VIKTOR

Born 1987, London, England
Lives in New York and London

Second, 2017–18

Pure 24-karat gold, acrylic, ink, gouache, copolymer resin, print on cotton rag paper
52 x 40 inches, 63 x 51 inches framed

Courtesy of the artist and Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Chicago, IL

British-Liberian artist Lina Iris Viktor employs alchemy, ancient symbolisms and cosmic science in a blue, black and gold color palette to visualize the mythic divine. In a process that combines performance, photography, sculpture and painting, Viktor creates iconic, spiritual female forces to encapsulate all living flora and fauna within the “dark matter” of the universe. In *Second*, Viktor portrays a reimagined Libyan Sibyl, an ancient foretelling figure and icon of the eighteenth-century abolitionist movement. The artist revives the figure of the prophetess to reflect on the colonialist founding of the Republic of Liberia and global implications of “blackness.” In the work, a winged Sibyl pinches a three-petaled flower, a reference to blooms painted in Chris Ofili’s series *Within Reach*, depicting themes of paradise, freedom and unity.

Wrapped in West African fabric, Viktor’s Sibyl looks and points beyond the picture plane amid a gilded interior adorned with abstracted, vibrant flowers, leaves and sunburst patterns.

KATHERINE TOUKHY

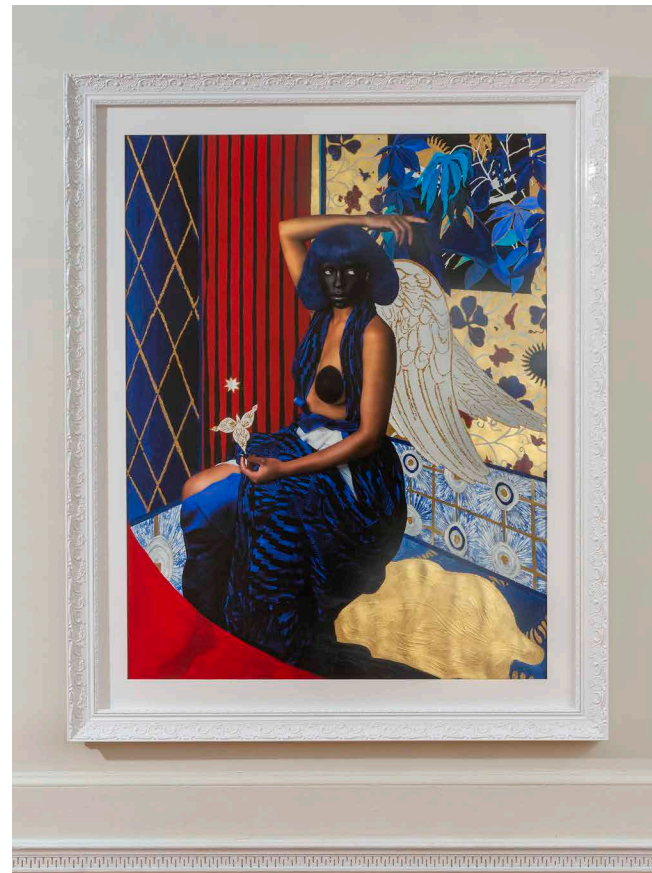
Born 1976, Warwick, RI
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

For Nadia Murad, 2018

Watercolor, acrylic and collage on paper
19 x 37 inches

Courtesy of the artist

As a US-born, Egyptian artist of the Coptic diaspora, Katherine Toukhy creates figurative cut-outs, paintings and installations to explore themes of repression, liberation, gender and migration. Severing and layering the female form with dynamic patterns and color, Toukhy navigates cycles of violence within diasporic, transcontinental experiences, including US terrorism policies post-9/11. Toukhy created this work as tribute to Nadia Murad, a Yazidi woman captured by ISIS and forced into sexual enslavement until escaping. In 2018, Murad was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her activism against the ongoing displacement of and violence against her people (a minority culture in Iraq) since the US invasion of 2003. In this depiction, the body’s torso becomes a landscape, or in the artist’s words “a garden of fragments.” Toukhy was drawn to Murad’s story as it adds complexity to the issue of women’s rights under dictatorships in the Arab world where US military invasions have occurred. The artist’s work reflects on the transformative power and resiliency of women as well as of nature.





WILLIAM VILLALONGO

Born 1975, Hollywood, FL
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Brother, Brother, 2019

Acrylic, cut velour paper and pigment print collage
39 7/8 x 39 3/8 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Susan Inglett Gallery, New York, NY

Navigating the politics of historical erasure, William Villalongo grapples with traditional notions of blackness and dualities such as male/female, visible/invisible and mythic/political. In *Brother, Brother*, he combines a masculine figure with cutout floral silhouettes, reflecting on the seeds and regeneration of the African diaspora. The artist came to the medium of velvet from his mother's collection of velvet paintings. Though typically considered kitschy, the material holds a luminescent and elegant visual tradition in Dutch Baroque painting and, in the case of Villalongo's work, provides a textured blackness that conveys a cosmic depth. The artist cuts the velour paper and inserts images of geodes, meteorites, butterflies, west and central African masks—all objects of power, beauty and transformation—sourced from auction catalogues, magazines and the internet. Using African sculptures taken out of Africa and housed in Western institutions and collections, Villalongo reflects on the circulation of these images as signifiers of displacement, resiliency and healing. Viewed as an ensemble, the composite elements create an animistic, chaotic, cosmic figure gazing back at the viewer, asserting a living connection to the inner beauty of all things.

SAYA WOOLFALK

Born 1979, Gifu City, Japan
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Elements from a Cabinet of Anticipation, 2019

Mixed media, paper, beads, plastic, fabric
5 works: 24 x 10 x 8 inches each

Untitled #6 from the ChimaTEK series, 2015

(shown on page 2)

Mixed media collage on paper
45 5/8 x 32 3/4 inches framed

Courtesy of the artist and Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY

Saya Woolfalk examines human relationships to nature through a fantastical and otherworldly lens, employing floral imagery to represent a hybridity that transcends cultural and conceptual limitations. *Elements from a Cabinet of Anticipation* comprises five sculpted heads painted and adorned with abstracted floral imagery. With motifs loosely based on lived and imagined experiences, the artist examines identity in the context of healing and trauma. The work on paper depicts an Avatar from The Empathics Life Product System, which hails from the corporation ChimaTEK, a mythical company that creates products which physically and spiritually transform consumers. The Empathics are fictional, female, plant-human hybrids who transcend the limitations of racism, ethnocentrism and sexism in a parallel world. The Empathics have bodies with extra arms, spines or heads, and their skin is covered with flowers, lace, pearls, butterflies and various symbols. The artist explores possibilities of anthropological, social liberation through radical imagination. Woolfalk was a 2015 Wave Hill Winter Workspace artist.





PUBLIC PROGRAMS

SUMMER EXHIBITIONS OPENING

SUN, JULY 21, 2:00-4:30PM

GALLERY TO GARDEN WALK: FIGURING THE FLORAL

SAT, JULY 27, 2PM

Tour the exhibition with artists Christopher K. Ho and Kevin Zucker and Wave Hill Senior Horticultural Interpreter Charles Day. Then venture out into the gardens to see some of the flowers that the artists use symbolically to express representations of identity.

ARTISTS AND CURATORS TALK

SAT, OCTOBER 5, 2PM

Tour the exhibition with artists and curators.

ENCAUSTIC WORKSHOP WITH CECILE CHONG

SUN, SEPTEMBER 15, 10AM-1PM

Explore the ancient technique of encaustic painting with exhibiting *Figuring the Floral* artist Cecile Chong. Using hot beeswax infused with pigment, combine natural materials from Wave Hill with your own personal curios to create a sentimental scrapbook or artistic time capsule.



Wave Hill

675 West 252nd Street
Bronx, NY 10471
718.549.3200
wavehill.org
#wavehill

Wave Hill is a public garden and cultural center in the Bronx overlooking the Hudson River and Palisades. Its mission is to celebrate the artistry and legacy of its gardens and landscapes, to preserve its magnificent views and to explore human connections to the natural world through programs in horticulture, education and the arts.

Senior Director: Jennifer McGregor
Curator of Visual Arts: Eileen Jeng Lynch
Curatorial Fellow: Emily Alesandrini
Gallery Greeters: Patrick Alston and Sonja John
Graphic Design: Melanie Roberts Design
Photography by Stefan Hagan:
pages 2-5, 11-16, 18, 25, 27-28

COVER
DERRICK ADAMS, *Figure Walking into the Light*
24, 2018. Courtesy of the artist.

INSIDE FRONT COVER
MAX COLBY, *Flight*, 2019. Courtesy of the artist.

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