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## SELECTIONS FROM THE COCHRAN COLLECTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

In the summer of 1988, young art collectors Wesley and Missy Cochran traveled from their home in LaGrange, Georgia to see 1938-1988: *The Work of Five Black Women Artists*, an exhibition at the Atlanta College of Art held in conjunction with the inaugural National Black Arts Festival (NBAF). Featuring works by Emma Amos, Camille Billops, Lois Mailou Jones, Howardena Pindell, and Faith Ringgold, this retrospective exhibition acknowledged and celebrated these artists and their contributions to the field of American art.

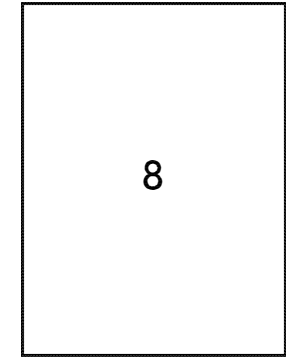
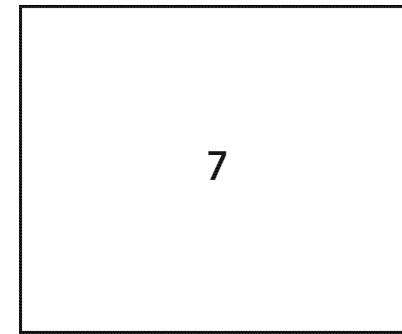
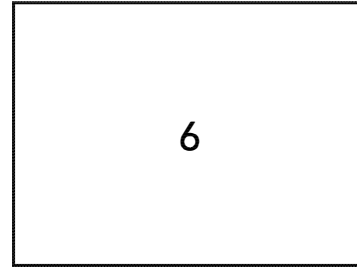
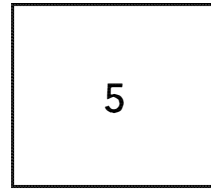
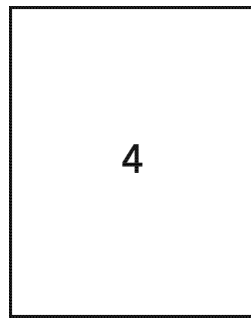
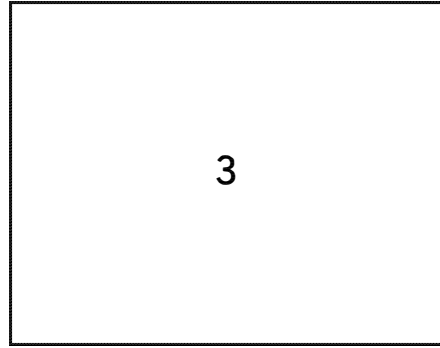
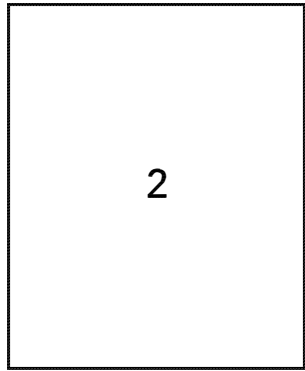
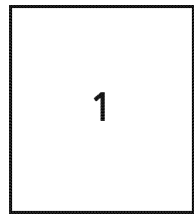
The trip was pivotal for the Cochrans; prior to this moment, works by Andy Warhol and other pop artists comprised the majority of their collection. No strangers to hard work and dedication—Wes worked as a stonemason and Missy taught in the public school system—they decided together to expand the scope of their collection by pursuing works by African American artists. Their goal was to travel exhibitions and make works by Black artists accessible to small museums, cultural and educational institutions, and community organizations throughout the South. Working as a two-person team for the last four decades, they have traveled their collection nationwide. “We always decide, and work, together,” Wes remarked in a 1990 *Art Papers* interview with Mildred Thompson, an artist-educator who would become a close friend. They had amassed almost 100 works by Black American artists at the time of the interview; now, that number exceeds 500.

The earliest acquisitions were guided by Camille Billops after Howardena Pindell supplied the Cochrans with Billops’ phone number at *The Work of Five Black Women*. The Cochrans credit Billops with the curation of their collection. Her friendship came with sound advice about what artists to look out for, what books to read, and what to collect. Through Camille, Wes and Missy met Robert Blackburn, a master printmaker whose diverse Chelsea workshop was a hub for emerging and established artists alike. The Cochrans often acquired work on the spot during studio visits. As they built trust with artists, more introductions came. “We have tried to develop a reputation for being dependable, that our checks don’t bounce and that we keep our promises,” said Wes of this period of personal growth and collection expansion. The title *Together* refers at once to the Cochrans’ collecting philosophy, the guidance of their mentors, and the relationships they formed with artists who became friends.

The collection consists of prominent as well as underrecognized African American artists who explore varied themes reflecting significant social, political, and cultural movements of the 20th century and offers unparalleled opportunities for research and community engagement.

**05.18.24 –  
08.04.24**

In the John Howett Works on Paper Gallery on Level One of the Michael C. Carlos Museum



1  
James  
Lesesne Wells  
(American,  
1902-1993)  
**AFRICAN  
FANTASY**  
1929. Linocut.

2  
Marvin Smith  
(American,  
1910-2003)  
**UNTITLED**  
1934. Graphite  
on paper.

3  
Robert  
Blackburn  
(American,  
1920-2003)  
**UNTITLED**  
c. 1980.  
Monoprint.

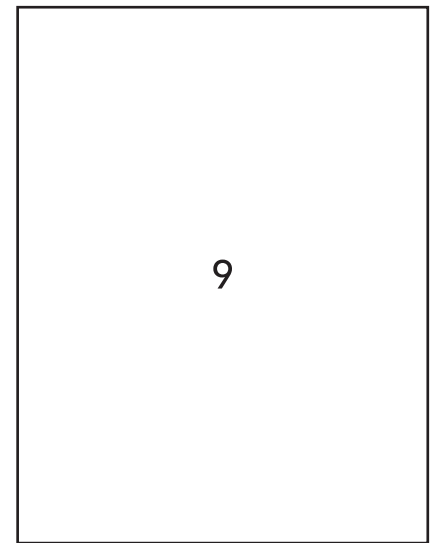
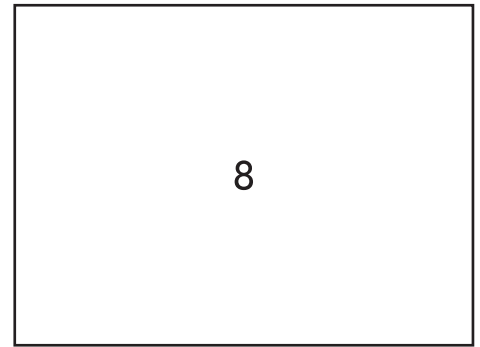
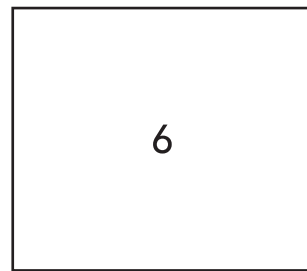
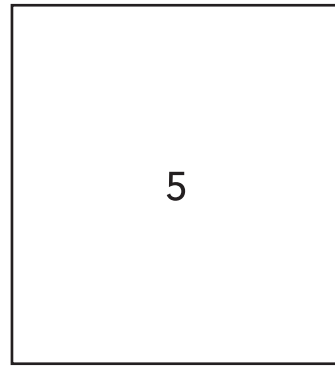
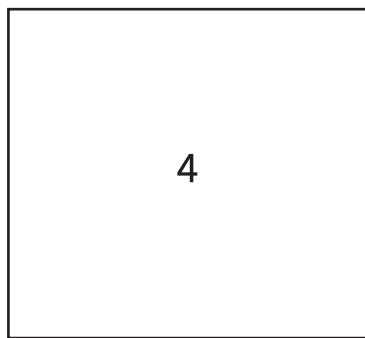
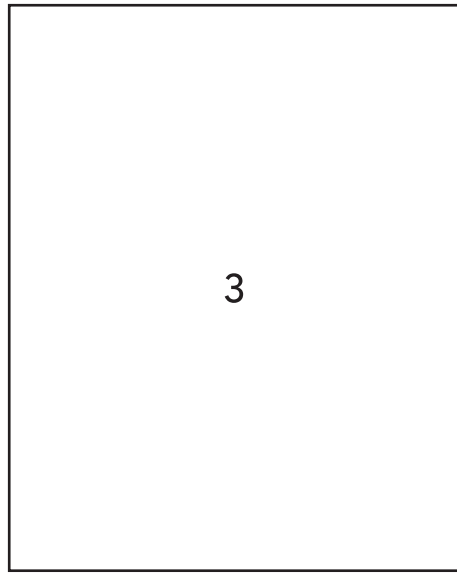
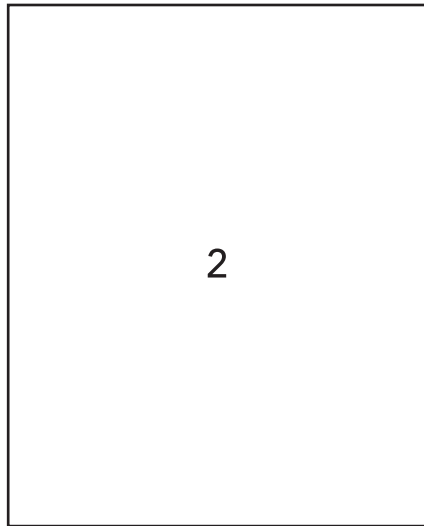
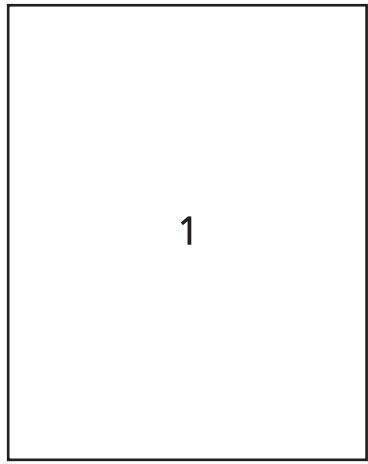
4  
Leon Hicks  
(American,  
b. 1933)  
**LITTLE BIRD**  
1962. Engraving,  
2nd Edition.  
Inscribed  
to Missy.

5  
Alma Thomas  
(American,  
1891-1978)  
**UNTITLED**  
1973. Acrylic  
on paper.

6  
Betty Blayton  
(American,  
1937-2016)  
**SOUL SOUND**  
1977. Monoprint.

7  
Betye Saar  
(American,  
b. 1926)  
**SILVER  
LININGS:  
THE  
UNKNOWN**  
1982. Mixed  
media collage.

8  
Faith Ringgold  
(American,  
1930-2024)  
**NO MORE  
WAR #1**  
1984. Silkscreen.



1  
Mavis Pusey  
(Jamaican-born  
American,  
1928-2019)  
**MOBILE IMAGES**  
c. 1970. Etching.

2  
Elizabeth Catlett  
(American-born  
Mexican,  
1915-2012)  
**CARTAS**  
1986. Lithograph.

3  
Mildred Thompson  
(American,  
1936-2003)  
**DEATH AND  
ORGASM I**  
1991. Etching.

4  
Valerie Maynard  
(American,  
1937-2022)  
**UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS**  
c. 1970. Woodcut.

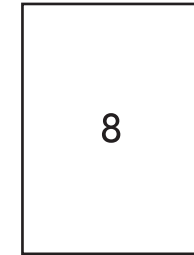
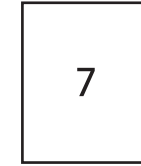
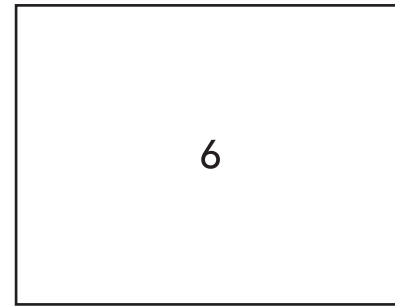
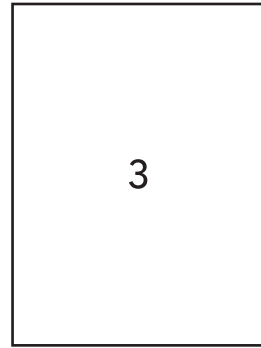
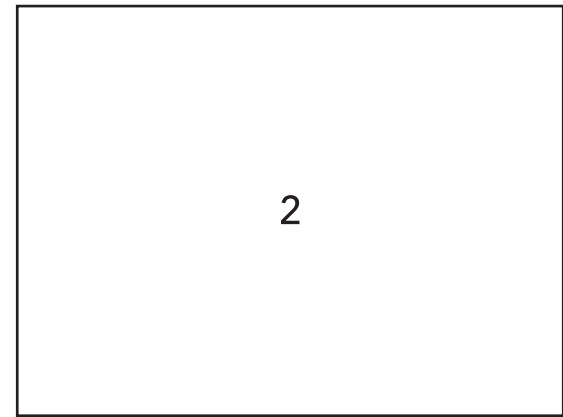
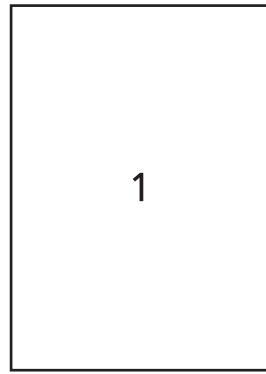
5  
Camille Billops  
(American,  
1933-2019)  
**FOR JAPANESE  
WITH MIRRORS**  
1975. Relief-inked  
intaglio.

6  
Howardena Pindell  
(American,  
b. 1943)  
**ANTARES,  
AUGUST 2001**  
2002. Etching.

7  
Camille Billops  
(American,  
1933-2019)  
**FIGHTER, FIGHTER**  
1990. Etching.

8  
Emma Amos  
(American,  
1937-2020)  
**AMERICAN GIRL**  
1974. Lithograph.

9  
Mildred Thompson  
(American,  
1936-2003)  
**CAVERSHAM  
PRESS, SOUTH  
AFRICA SERIES**  
1999. Etching.



1  
Jacob Lawrence  
(American,  
1917-2000)

**CONTEMPLATION**

1993. Silkscreen.

2  
Sam Gilliam  
(American,  
1933-2022)

**FOR XAVIER**

1990. Screenprint.

3  
Radcliffe Bailey  
(American,  
1968-2023)

**UNIA**

2003. Mixed  
media.

4  
Howardena  
Pindell  
(American,  
b. 1943)

**UNTITLED 36**

2004-2005. Mixed  
media, ink, graphite,  
textiles, paper.

5  
William Pope.L  
(American,  
1955-2023)

**UNEMPLOYMENT**

2004. Ink drawing  
on inside of Tom's  
of Maine Natural  
Moisturizing  
Soap box.

6  
Sonya Clark  
(American,  
b. 1967)

**AFRO BLUE  
MATTER**

2017. Color  
lithography,  
collage, laser  
cutting.

7  
Emma Amos  
(American,  
1937-2020)

**CAMILLE  
AND THE  
CAMEL WALK**

2002. Mixed  
media.

8  
Alison Saar  
(American,  
b. 1956)

**FALL**

2014. Etching,  
chine-collé.