

SIGMUND ABELES

United States, b. 1958

Conundrum

2004

conte on crayon on paper

Abeles captures a figure in slumber in an intricate realm that toys with a multiplicity of dualities, exploring the tension between privacy and public exposure as well as delving into the latent carnal mechanisms with domesticity. The viewer is transported to a celestial room, representative of both entrapment and liberation as the edges of the room appear to extend infinitely; a lightly drawn corner reveals that this limitless sensation is simply an illusion. Abeles' usage of negative space to puncture the puzzle crafts a sense of intrigue - were the pieces displaced from a perfectly completed image, or have they yet to be reunited to their final form? This element of fragmentation is found in the nude subject's contorted position; the body is not on display but rather evokes self-tactility. Although her physical vessel is entirely exposed, the contents of her dreams and the lucid language of her visions are unattainable to the viewer.

Gift of the artist

Union College Permanent Collection 2004.4

KATRINA ANDRY

United States, b. 1981

***The Jungle Bunny Gave You Fever, The Only Cure is to Fuck the Bunny.
She Wants It.***

2011

mixed media, ed. 1/6

A woman stands with hands on her hips, establishing a gaze that looks just beyond the viewer. Tree branches and vines rest on the top of her shoulders and fall downwards to entangle two caucasian men who appear mesmerized by her features. Andry selects peacock feathers, a typically masculine mechanism of attraction, to subvert gender norms as the plumage opens at her hip region, warding off the touch of the men below and their emulating blinking, omnipresent eyes. The woman's face and her bunny ears are painted red while the rest of her body contrasts this tonality. Here, Andry subverts reductive stereotyping of Women of Color as hyper-sexualized beings. She does so literally, portraying the woman as a *Jungle Bunny*, a common slang term used to describe women of color as animalistic and sexual beings by utilizing natural symbols such as a banana and snake resting on the figure's shoulders.

Purchase of the Union College Permanent Collection
Union College Permanent Collection 2016.7.1

GRETA BIEG (Class of 2015)

United States

Detachment

2015

photograph, digital photograph, lithograph, charcoal

A woman floats in the center of the work, her gaze reaching upwards. She appears serene as a jellyfish encases her body, her arms entangled in some of the tentacles. In the middle of the piece, several tears or rips of the material conceal the woman and blurs the line between reality and fantasy and obscures some of her anatomical features. The weightlessness that Bieg grants both the creature and the woman allows for a reframing of the veiled danger that the jellyfish possesses. The synergy of the armed subjects nods to the multilayered depth of womanhood, shifting between sensitivity, protection, transparency, and privacy. Ultimately, Bieg crafts a photograph that becomes a vehicle of resistance, resilience, and a soft, eternal survival.

Gift of the artist

Union College Permanent Collection 2015.15

ROSE DUMBRIGUE (Class of 2016)

United States

Dreamgirl

n.d.

lithograph, ed. 2/4

Dumbrigue echoes the works of German collage artist Hannah Höch as she conveys a subject akin to a member of The Supremes. As she glances off into the distance, the subject's body sits motionless, caressed by shadows and glimmers of light. She protects her body by drawing one knee up to meet a tattooed band around her left bicep. Dumbrigue highlights the body of the celebrity as an entity that is consistently gazed at by those passing by. However, Dumbrigue cultivates a realm where the celebrity body can command space with no societal restrictions. The Dreamgirl is able to dream freely.

Gift of the artist

Union College Permanent Collection 2015.31

ROBERT GRAHAM

United States, 1938-2008

Untitled (from the *Figure/Table Series*)

1975

screen print on paper, ed. 23/35

Graham cultivates an endless void where the corporeal form comes into fruition through a series of gestures and physical movements. As some figures attempt to escape the boxes they are placed, others sit motionless in contemplation. Each movement, realized or unrealized, is ambiguously felt within the fractured boxes. With an abundance of negative space, the silhouettes of each subject reveal to the viewer the most basic symbolic elements of the human body.

Gift of Arnold I. Burns '50 and Felice Burns
Union College Permanent Collection 1639

MARISOL (Maria Sol Escobar)

France, 1930-2016

left of flatscreen: *Untitled, No. 3*

right of flatscreen: *Untitled, No. 5*

both from *Untitled Suite, No. 6* series

1978

six-color lithograph, ed. 28/100

Venezuelan-American artist Marisol Escobar pictures two feminine subjects embracing. As Escobar layers new colors or printed glimpses of either figure with each lithograph, she allows the nature of these bodies, and in turn, sexuality, to take form over time. As the motion of this embrace is ambiguous, Escobar utilizes this vagueness to possibly convey the sexual body as an entity that struggles to emerge in our current culture. As hands grasp the figures, some their own, and some emerging from the blank-white void, Escobar's vibrant pop-art colors allow the vibrancy of sexual politics to appear in personal intimacies. As the Suite expands from piece to piece, the lithographs themselves appear to inhale and exhale as the echoed wake of erotica heaves ceaselessly and without bounds.

Gift of Dr. Ira S. Jaffrey

Union College Permanent Collection 2107 (left), 2109 (right)

ALFRED NADEL (Class of 1956)

United States

Skin, Clothes, Artist, Model

2007

mixed media on paper

Nadel pictures six figures in this mixed media piece that appear to push and pull the viewer in and out of the frame. As the bodies in this piece erotically and sensually dress and undress, they come to harness elements of a sculpture emphasized through the drapery of the bodies. Nadel's bodies lack consistency, allowing the gazes of these figures to capture dialogues of beauty standards, body dysmorphia, and gender constructs. Nadel's work appears unfinished, further pushing the form of the body as endlessly changing and evolving, physically and figuratively.

Purchased for Union College Permanent Collection
Union College Permanent Collection 2007.9

TOYIN OJIH ODUTOLA

Nigeria, b. 1985

Birmingham

2014, ed. 13/20

four-color lithographs with gold leaf on Somerset satin paper

Printed by Tamarind Press

Odutola carves this intricate triptych - a composition containing three integrant images - to emphasize the infinitely multifaceted nature that lies within a singular being. Odutola disrupts standard depictions of basic perception by reinventing the typical portrait, preferring to use multiple frames to capture the figure's entire essence. Each portrayal of the same figure shifts and evolves through varying emotions and gestural positioning. The motion of the subject causes luminescence to emanate from their body. Odutola's subject appears to be lost in thought, and although they make eye contact with the viewer in the central piece, they also hold a secret portion of their identity against their heart in the form of a red necklace, sacredly withheld from the audience.

Purchase of the Permanent Collection

Union College Permanent Collection 2017.7.1 UCPC

RENÉE STOUT

United States, b. 1958

The Spirit of Marie Laveau

2009-2015

lithograph

Stout bestows ethereality, ephemerality, and magnetism upon Marie Laveau, a 19th century Creole voodoo practitioner, herbalist, and midwife. Hailing from Louisiana, Laveau's regal gaze is direct and unwavering, indicative of her undeniable spirit of power, agency, and intellect. A crimson shade falls upon Laveau's right eye and a spectral blue halo emanates from her afro, only to be interrupted by an emerging snake. Laveau's detailed ornamentation alludes to both her divine, mystic connection to nature as well as her significance in high society. In reclamation of the biblical canon linking women to tempting serpents, Laveau exists in a void where ancient symbols of misogyny are articulated on her own terms.

Purchase of the Union College Permanent Collection
Union College Permanent Collection 2015.8

JOEL-PETER WITKIN

United States, b. 1939

Blackman, Rome

1996

from *Songs of Innocence and Experience*

c. 2004, trade edition 498/915

Publisher: 21st Editions, Leo and Wolfe Photography, Inc.

Witkin is known for creating dark, controversial voids within his work that often deal with death and the human form. However, *Blackman* pictures a Black body that appears to claim space defiantly and effortlessly. As two statuesque figures emerge around the Black body in the baths, they appear paralyzed or paused in a moment of movement. The facial features of the figure on the left are erased by the artist as he reaches out of the frame, perhaps to wash his shoulder, or to reach for some undefined object. While the white figures are more clothed than the central figure, their faces are covered as well, leaving their identities hegemonic. Although the central figure is exposed, he has an undeniably autonomous aura as he looks at the viewer directly, aware of his surroundings that are left undefined to us, subsequently locking the audience into his gaze. The ambiguity of movement within this mysterious setting evokes feelings of innocence and vulnerability as well as strength and perseverance.

Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Schaffer Library, Union College