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no place like home

searching

for home



searching for

searching for

HOME



DAWN WILLIAMS BOYD

BEVERLY BUCHANAN

YEHIMI CAMBRON

IN KYOUNG CHUN

RUBY FRANKLIN

RUTH FRANKLIN

RUWAIDA KHDIR

MARQUETTA JOHNSON

CALVIN KIMBROUGH

GRACE KISA

MACEY LEY

MAD HOUSERS

ETHEL WRIGHT MOHAMED

LYNN POLLARD

JESS SELF

JENNIFER SHAW

DANIEL TROPPI

CJ WILLIAMS COLLECTION
loans of work by Clementine Hunter,
Sister Gertrude Morgan, and Bernice Sims

LEILA ROSS WILBURN

JAMELE WRIGHT, SR.

A Project of the Margaret Virginia Philip Endowment

SEPTEMBER 3 – DECEMBER 12, 2020

Online and by appointment

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/searching-for-home-register-to-visit-tickets-118653496803>



Welcome to The Dalton Gallery at Agnes Scott College.

We're so pleased that you've chosen to view our latest or exhibition, "Searching for Home," curated by Dot Moye. This group exhibition features a variety of works, from paintings to sculpture to installations, by more than 20 regional artists, all exploring the themes of "home" and finding a place to belong.

We would like to thank Virginia Philip '61 for her generosity in making this exhibition possible. The Margaret Virginia Philip Art Endowment Fund, which she established in 2006, brings an art exhibit to The Dalton Gallery every four years, with the goal of enhancing our students' college experience. In a time when funding for the arts is disappearing, we are grateful for her support.

Since its opening in 1965, The Dalton Gallery has provided a space on the Agnes Scott campus to showcase acclaimed exhibitions for the Decatur community and beyond. The gallery is proud to host the annual Fine Arts Exhibition for the Decatur Arts Alliance. The gallery also hosts two or three rotating exhibitions a year from regional curators, and an annual student art exhibition. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Please visit daltongallery.agnesscott.org to learn more about The Dalton Gallery and for future exhibition dates.

Enjoy the exhibition!

LEE ZAK

President, Agnes Scott College

We have all searched for home.

DOROTHY MOYE, CURATOR

Davis-Moye & Associates
Decatur, Georgia

We have all searched for home. Some have found it, while for others it is a lifelong quest. In this century the entire interwoven globe has reeled from constant motion to arrested stop—and soon, back again—reacting to displacement—war—pandemic—violence—poverty—danger—climate—upheaval—politics—chaos—nature's whims—disease. As the pendulum swings, some search for an ideal PLACE; others yearn for psychic or spiritual sanctuary. The search may be a physical progress or a journey of the spirit; the seeking may be voluntary or forced; tragic or hopeful. The goal is a better life and safety for ourselves and those we love—the security of HOME. Artists are sharing the quests—giving faces to the seekers—exploring the paths—joining the search. We know when we get there.

The theme of *Searching for Home* was selected in the Before Time, during the spring of 2019. I was invited once again to be the Visiting Curator for the Dalton Gallery, this time for the quadrennial exhibition so generously sponsored by the Margaret Virginia Philip Art Endowment Fund. The donor's own collection of Southern vernacular artwork traditionally set the tone for consideration of a theme. This direction provided room for stories from and about communities notably impacted by life in the 21st century, as these communities journeyed or settled in many and varied ways. *Searching for Home* suggested a universal theme resonating with the human race's everlasting search for safety, security, stability, peace, belonging and beauty.

As we careened into 2020, caution signals that the world was nearing a change appeared for those paying heed. Exhibition plans progressed as artists were confirmed. When the dramatic change did occur and we moved into a Twilight Zone, we perceived the concept of HOME becoming even more important, both as we remained in familiar homes (perhaps searching in place) and as we transitioned to new concepts of home (perhaps on a physical journey).

The artists selected for this exhibition speak to the subject of searches for home with complexity, eloquence, and passion. Their layered conversations are not different from what they were in the Before Time, but our current transitional period provides a larger platform for discourse. In the meantime, we as viewers have expanded time and consciousness to SEE while looking and to HEAR while listening. It is a privilege to hear these voices, see these visions, and share in this journey.



All Through The Night: America's Homeless, 2017
 Assorted fabrics, cotton embroidery floss, buttons. 38" x 61.5"
 Description: One American family readies for bed at home in a cardboard box.



Six Feet of Water: Evangeline, LA 1927, 2016
 Assorted fabrics and laces, cotton embroidery floss, buttons. 70" x 70"
 Description: Politicians survey damage as a farmer is washed away in the Great Flood.

DAWN WILLIAMS BOYD Atlanta, Georgia

All Through the Night: America's Homeless was inspired by the lullaby many mothers sing to their children as they tuck them into bed. It begins "Sleep my child and peace attend thee, all through the night..." evoking feelings of warmth, contentment, and security.

Yet, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, 'on a single night in January 2019, over half a million Americans were homeless.' Though the number has decreased since this piece was created, over 170,000 of those counted

were still families with children under 18 years old. Given the choices of overcrowded, gender-specific shelters or farming their kids out to relatives to keep their families together, many parents, like the family in this piece, are forced to call abandoned buildings, cars, bus shelters or cardboard boxes home.

At the height of the economic downturn of the early 2000s, many well-educated, hardworking Americans found themselves only two paychecks or one health emergency away from living on the street. In the current health and economic crisis, homeless families are

especially vulnerable when even established shelters are potential health hazards due to the inability to maintain "social distancing" and when the lack of a bank account or permanent address may eliminate their access to the economic stimulus that other Americans receive.

Home is usually a place of refuge, the place we come back to when times are hard—the place of safety and security. Throughout history, men, women and children have been forced to leave their homes due to war or political upheaval. Just as often "home" has become uninhabitable due to natural disasters such as wind, fire, or flood.

Six Feet of Water: Evangeline, LA 1927 was inspired by the lyrics of "Louisiana 1927" by Randy Newman, specifically the haunting, plaintive rendition offered by Aaron Neville. The song tells the story of the Great

(Mississippi) Flood of 1927 when, after several months of heavy rain, the Mississippi River overflowed its banks to over 30 feet in some locations. The inundation destroyed the homes and businesses—whether in towns or farms—of almost a million Americans. Many African American plantation workers, after being forced at gunpoint to fill sandbags in the attempt to repair the doomed levees, were then abandoned in work camps with no food or water, while white citizens were rowed to safety.

Among the many social and economic consequences

of this natural disaster was the Great Migration where hundreds of thousands of African American workers from the destroyed river valleys abandoned the agricultural-based economy of the South for the relative security of northern and midwestern inner cities.



**Finding My Way Back Home:
A Textile Odyssey, 2020**
Hand-dyed, printed, and quilted textile. 60" x 48"

Spiral Log Cabin, 2013
Hand-dyed, machine-stitched textile. 70" x 78"

MARQUETTA BELL JOHNSON Stone Mountain, Georgia

During my journey as an artist, I have sought inspiration to create artwork from many sources. I want to be led by a heartfelt idea and to make a difference.

On my quest, I use Color as a way to create a mood of peace and wellbeing, and apply design as a way to make connections with mathematics and science, thereby teaching with my creativity. I have actively shared my family legacy of quilting. But, where do I go from here? This is the question that has become a constant companion when I give myself over to deep thought.

As I look out at the world today through the lens of

my internet, I see many people experiencing sickness, war, displacement, poverty and economic insecurity. It makes me wonder "What is happening to the artists? What about those craftspeople striving to carry on family and cultural legacies?" The answer is that some of them are dying, starving and having to run for their lives, clearly bad conditions for art-making. My ancestral home is suffering and my cultural legacy is being lost. For me it is not enough to just be upset about it; I want to do what I can.

The question rose up again—where do I go from here?

The answer dawned on me suddenly that I can make a difference by using the designs and colors of Africa in a series of artworks that seek to preserve what I can of this cultural legacy in my quilts and collectibles. I am searching for my home by exploring and being inspired by the artistry of Africa. I also intend to include traditional designs loved by my grandmother, like Spiral Husetop Blocks and Pinwheel Blocks. With these quilts, I am inviting the viewer to be amazed by the diversity of African design and I am welcoming them into doors that lead to a wealth of ancient and futuristic imagination.



We Are Here, 2015
Plexiglas, LED light, metal. 36" x 36" x 16"

A Couple 2, 2018
Oil on canvas. 30" x 30"

Come to My House, 2017
Plexiglas and mixed media on paper.
Three pieces, each 8" x 8" x 2"

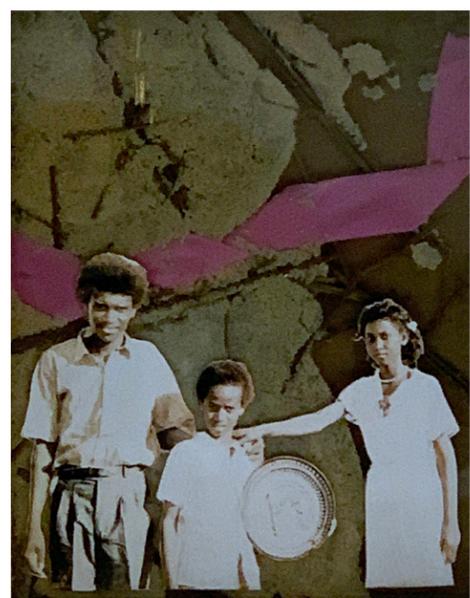


IN KYOUNG CHUN Atlanta, Georgia

I make art in hopes of inspiring people to take action within this troubling sociopolitical climate. My current work depicts the personal and narrative spaces in daily life. While juxtaposing simple forms and familiar objects through painting and sculpture, I aim to create an ideal space where positive energy can arise.

As an immigrant from South Korea, living in the United States has been challenging. Expressing a space where welcoming and intimacy are found is important in my work. While creating, I work to achieve life's optimism and peace even in its most troubled and isolated

settings. I believe discovering and recognizing sweetness in our everyday life is essential; through my art, I channel this fundamental human quality.



Cornfields: Clarkston Series. 2020
Glass, wood, acrylic. 5" x 7"

Mudslides: Clarkston Series. 2020
Glass, wood, mixed media. 7" x 5"

Sands of Time: Clarkston Series. 2020
Glass, wood, mixed media. 10" x 8"

Shawn Vinson, Different Trains Gallery

RUBY FRANKLIN Clarkston, Georgia

This body of work is an exploration of, and somewhat of a longing for, past places, environments, and rituals. The figures portrayed in these portraits are Clarkston residents existing in an imagined or distant atmosphere brought about by thoughts and feelings of a place in time past. With a loose interpretation, the supporting acts in the paintings act as reflections of what home is, even though now that idea may only exist as a memory or feeling. Clarkston, Georgia, has welcomed more than 40,000 refugees over the last four decades, who have now created a new, different kind of home within one

square mile just outside of Atlanta. Over generations the idea of home evolves and drifts, perpetuated by stories and customs. This work is meant to present those attachments centered around a figure to convey the loose and ever-changing concept of identity pushed further by the reality of displacement.



Ellis Island Series 8610, 2020
Charcoal on paper. 30" x 22"

Ellis Island Series 8614, 2020
Charcoal on paper. 30" x 22"

Ellis Island Series 8616, 2020
Charcoal on paper. 30" x 22"

Ellis Island Series, 8617, 2020
Charcoal on paper. 30" x 22"

Shawn Vinson, Different Trains Gallery

RUTH FRANKLIN Scottdale, Georgia

I am an immigrant to this country. I moved here 26 years ago and I now know that you can never go home. Not really. Subtle changes happen over time in all places but when you aren't there to slowly get used to those changes, then what was familiar suddenly becomes unfamiliar. The people you knew are replaced by people you don't know. Houses are built, trees are felled, and the only things that stay the same are your memories and the sky.

I wanted to make a series of drawings about the émigrés who arrived at Ellis Island. Photographs from

the Library of Congress documented these arrivals and I have loosely used those images as inspiration. Old photographs fascinate me in the way they can bend time, allowing you to see things that happened before you existed. You get to share the same window for a moment with these people who were going through something life changing. I wanted to communicate the sense of those immigrants—what was inside them rather than their beleaguered outward appearance. The human condition and our response to it is timeless. I wonder if they also only had their memories.

And the sky.



Hand-carved cookie mold, mid-20th century
Olive wood, 8.5" x 2.25" x .75"

RUWAIDA KHDIR, KHALED GHANNOUM AND THEIR FAMILIES Decatur, Georgia

In 2016, Ruwaida and her husband, Khaled, made the devastating decision to leave their home in Syria for the safety of their children. They left behind a beautiful home, successful business, and beloved family, fleeing with whatever small pieces of their life they could carry, including Ruwaida's cookie mold—the one her grandmother and mother used to teach her how to bake mamool, traditional Syrian cookies. Once in Decatur, Ruwaida used her treasured mold to bake cookies for new friends and neighbors. Anytime the family had visitors, a plate of cookies and cardamom-spiced coffee

were served to show gratitude for the welcome they'd received, even as the rehomed family struggled to make their own food last. Now more settled in America, they are poised to become something else: entrepreneurs through their cookie business called Sweet, Sweet Syria.*

*Source: <https://sweetsweetsyria.com/about-us/>



Family Dinner 2020: The Pandemic Year(s)?
Installation and video. Variable dimensions.

MACEY LEY Atlanta, Georgia

Family Dinner is a full-immersion experience that includes footage of multiple family dinners across the United States, running the length of one full meal. The installation centers around food relationships and the dynamics of family dinners, particularly in the new age of social distancing. In a world just yesterday, where technology provided a false sense of connectedness and perpetuated isolation, it is now the lifeline to protect against it. Family dinners—once a novelty due to hectic lives and social independence—are now regularly scheduled and religiously kept, extending to even the

most removed cousins and remote grandparents. We're sitting down in front of our screens, not to watch TV or post Insta-worthy shots of our restaurant food, but to spend time with each other in the safest and most intimate way we can over home-made meals. And though eating Brady Bunch-style would have seemed absurd last year, it's now the reality show everyone is watching.



Washday (1994)
Paint on canvas. 18" x 22"



These Big Vases, They Is Called Spanish Water Jars (circa 1940s)
Oil on canvas board. 24" x 27"



Tea Party (circa 1940s)
Oil on paper. 19.5" x 23.5"



New Jerusalem (date unknown)
Paint and mixed media on paper. 20" x 27.5"



Hurricane Betsey (1965)
Ink and acrylic on paper. 14" x 15"

CJ WILLIAMS COLLECTION Loaned Works

The southern artists chosen for this exhibition—Clementine Hunter, Bernice Sims and Sister Gertrude Morgan—created their visions from a deep and singular drive. A passion at once compelling and captivating, that still resonates today. While each of these artists started out with little or no training and limited arts support, they have either been featured or are now part of permanent collections in institutions such as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (Bentonville, AR), Philadelphia Museum of Art, New Orleans Museum of Fine Arts, and the Perez

Museum of Art in Miami). In *Searching for Home*, each artist has captured the longing and sense of pure joy in the everyday life. We are richer for their memories.

Charley Williams, CJ Williams Collection, Winter Park, FL.

Bernice Sims [b. 1926, d. 2014, Florida]

The artist's portrayal of washday delights the viewer with colorful quilts and clothing on the line as other items are stirred and scrubbed in large pots. This documentary painting gives us an idea of how much hard work it took to keep the family in clean clothes.

Clementine Hunter [b. 1886, d. 1988, Louisiana]

Clementine Hunter repeatedly said that her paintings were mostly spiritual activities rather than financial ones—something she felt compelled to do. They're called memory paintings because they portray her early experiences.

Sister Gertrude Morgan [b. 1900, d. 1980, Louisiana]

Focusing mostly on the Book of Revelation and claiming that her work came directly from God, Sister Gertrude Morgan depicted New Jerusalem, which she believed would be the capital of the Messianic Kingdom after the second coming of Christ. All her paintings of New Jerusalem depict a large multistory building with open chambers; she positions herself in the composition as The Bride of Christ.

Betsy (spelled "Betsey" by the artist) hit the Gulf Coast in 1965 as a Category 4 hurricane. It breached levees in the artist's hometown of New Orleans flooding neighborhoods, including the Ninth Ward where she lived. Sister Gertrude Morgan's painting recognizes the power of the hurricane.

JERRY CULLUM

Decatur, Georgia

Searching for Home

[notes on an exhibition]

Perhaps we humans have always been ambivalent about home. In the beginning, pre-Paleolithic, we were always on the move; in the last century, the embroidered sampler “Home is where the heart is” contained the perhaps unintended suggestion that perhaps it was the heart that determined what place was home rather than home being the place that drew the heart back to it. “Anyplace I hang my hat is home,” went the 1948 popular song by Johnny Mercer. “Home is where one starts from,” T. S. Eliot wrote in “East Coker” less than a decade earlier, again suggesting that home is not necessarily where one ends up. Even Robert Frost, writing “The Death of the Hired Man” forty years earlier, implied that going home might be a kind of failure. “Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in,” Even in 1905, that was not necessarily a happy fate. As millions of Americans were reminded anew in the great quarantine of 2020, home can be a refuge and a prison, simultaneously.

Salman Rushdie, writing in 1992 about the 1939 movie of “The Wizard of Oz”, commented that L. Frank Baum’s sequels to his first Oz book contained more wisdom than the film’s simple-minded assertion that “There’s no place like home”—“because the truth is that, once we leave our childhood places and start to make up our lives, . . . we come to understand that the real secret of the ruby slippers is not that ‘there’s no place like home’ but, rather, that there is no longer any such place as home—except, of course, for the homes we make, or the homes that are made for us, . . . anywhere—and everywhere—except the place from which we began.”

Dorothy Moye’s *Searching for Home* embodies many of these contradictory or complementary energies in an exhibition of provocative complexity.

Perhaps the first, most obvious, yet most counterintuitive realization the exhibition conveys is that “home” has always been a more diverse place than its residents realize. The realization is counterintuitive because home is always defined by the persons who call it that. Only when confronted by others’ notions of home do the users of the word come to understand the breadth of the concept.

In Kyoung Chun’s “house” sculptures probably incarnate most fully the abstract notion of “home” that most closely resembles a universal wish or emotion—home as “an ideal space where positive energy arises.”

Jess Self’s sculptural pieces represent a coming to terms with the all too frequent experience of a past home in which space was anything but ideal and energy anything but positive. Her forms represent figures burdened by the homes in which trauma took place—the houses that replace or encase the figures’ heads are the weight of a past that must be cast off if healing is ever to take place.

Lynn Pollard’s *Nest* textile piece combines the possibilities that home can be a place “as warm as the warmest hug” but also “as dark and heavy as shackles” and “as fragile as lace,” all represented in color symbolism and complex overlays of weaving techniques.

All of the ambiguities of “searching for home” are exemplified in African American history. Jamele Wright, Sr. seeks to express the breadth and depth of these historical complexities in his use of found materials: Georgia red clay and Dutch Wax cloth, a fabric ubiquitous in Africa using batik techniques from Indonesia. In addition to setting up a dialogue between Africa and the South, Wright evokes “the Great Migration of Black Americans, who left the familiar in the hope of something better.”

The traditions of rural Black life are memorably depicted in the works of self-taught artists Bernice Sims and Clementine Hunter, while Sister Gertrude Morgan represents the vicissitudes of displacement in *Hurricane Betsey* and the ultimate home sought by Christians in *New Jerusalem*. Rural life more generally is represented in the embroidered textiles of Mississippi folk artist Ethel Wright Mohamed, whose name reflects her 1924 marriage to a Lebanese-born salesman.

Marquetta Bell Johnson has sought to explore the legacy of these and other traditional artists in her quilts that affirm patterns derived from her African heritage but represent a vision oriented toward the future. The late Beverly Buchanan’s “Shack” series likewise looked to recollection of the past in an aesthetic idiom that was that of contemporary art.

**For there is a time in the tide of the heart, when
Arrived at its anchor of suffering, a grave
Or a bed, despairing in action, we ask,
O God, where is our home?**

—Derek Walcott,
Return to D’Ennery; Rain

Grace Kisa tells a different contemporary story, that of being a “third culture kid” born in Kenya and moving with her family to two other countries in Africa and two in North America before her arrival in Atlanta “to study art and settle.” Her work incorporates the combination of family heritage and personal creation of a sense of home that replaces displacement with self-chosen establishment.

Displacement takes many forms, and even voluntary migration in the twenty-first century has an air of displacement about it. What in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was an act of resolute adventure sometimes became an act of survival in the mid-twentieth, and three-quarters of a century later it has frequently become both of these mingled together. Refugees and what we have learned to call “economic migrants” have set out with a simultaneous sense of hope and despair.

Ruby Franklin portrays refugees resettled in Clarkston, Georgia, a town that has become noted for its multinational character, preserving cultures in a dramatically new setting. Her mother, Ruth Franklin, has produced a series of portraits of an older generation of immigrants, the working-class individuals who arrived via Ellis Island in New York harbor in the late years of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth centuries.

Ruwaida Khdir illustrates the persistence of a sense of home in the smallest of cultural survivals, in this case a particular Syrian sweet shaped by a wooden mold that has survived despite the sufferings involved in civil war and refugee camps followed by emigration to the United States.

Yehimi Cambron, a DACA recipient already known for her portraits of her Mexican-born family members of various immigration status, has produced an installation further affirming the network of family connections that remain unaffected by borders and the crossing of them.

Homelessness remains a domestic problem (and it is ironic that the term signifying “the opposite of foreign” also has so many meanings related to “house and home”!) that Daniel Troppy’s portrait series attaches to individuals rather than to the categories by which it is too often defined. Calvin Kimbrough’s photographs of homeless individuals at Atlanta’s Open Door Community are from a project that began in 1992, demonstrating that the situations Troppy documents on the streets of Atlanta today are far from being new. The Mad Housers are one group that has undertaken the unauthorized construction of huts for the homeless, plans for which are on display in this exhibition.

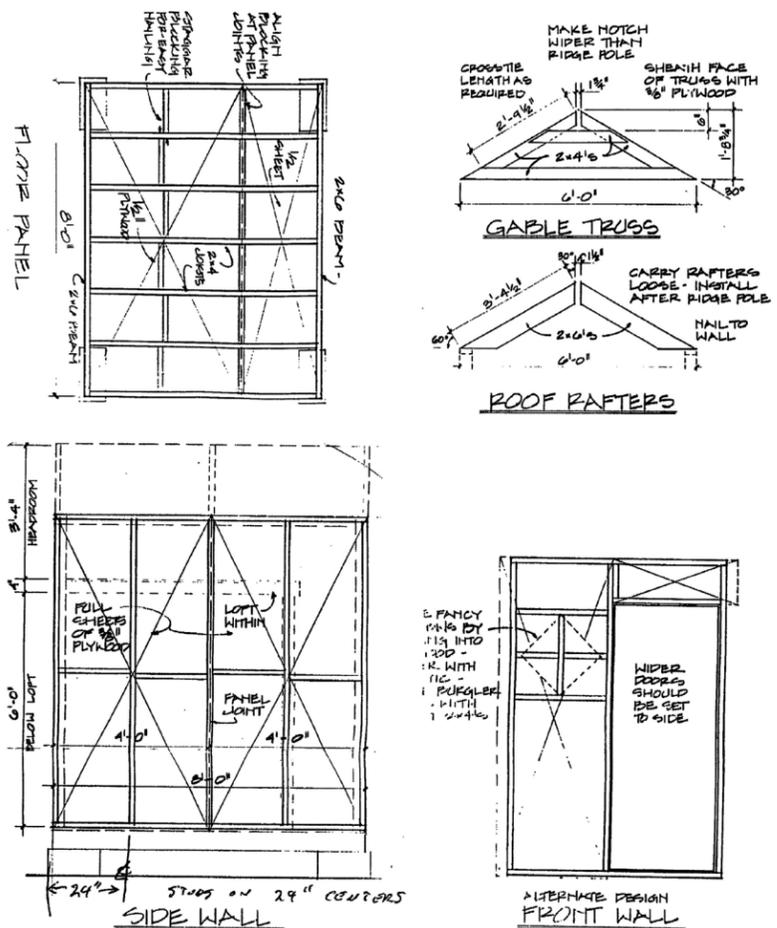
Climate change has created unsettled conditions in which what was once known as “home” may simply cease to exist. The ruby slippers in *There’s No Place Like Home*, from Jennifer Shaw’s “Hurricane Story” series of photographs, connote the return to a New Orleans home that narrowly escaped the destruction of Hurricane Katrina. Her subsequent photograms of the “Flood Series” imagine a present and future world in which houses elevated on stilts (such as already exist along the Gulf Coast) are succeeded by a phase of evolution in which home itself has become subaquatic.

Dawn Williams Boyd’s cloth paintings allude to two song lyrics that she uses to ironic purpose. *All Through the Night: America’s Homeless*, as the title implies, deals with homeless families, as a mother offers comfort by flashlight as she tucks her children into a street bed. *Six Feet of Water: Evangeline*, LA 1927 alludes to a Randy Newman song about the Great Flood of 1927 in which African Americans were left in work camps while white residents were boatlifted to safety—a dislocation that further impelled the northward migration of Black Americans seeking a more physically and economically secure home.

Macey Ley’s video *Family Dinner* deals with a much more contemporary topic, being a succession of videos of families eating meals together, arranged to suggest a family dinner via Zoom during the pandemic lockdown of 2020.

One other artwork, Leila Ross Wilburn’s architectural plan book, is evocative of more than the bare facts of the document might suggest. A graduate of Agnes Scott College, Wilburn became the first woman architect in Georgia, and she stated that her plan books of house designs for the aspiring middle class during the first quarter of the twentieth century reflected her unique perspective on houses and home life: “Being a woman I feel that I may know the little things that should go in it to make living in the house a pleasure to the entire family.” As with so many other aspects of this exhibition, there is far more going on here than a simple reading might suggest.

Jerry Cullum, longtime poet, essayist, and cultural critic, has made his home in Atlanta since arriving to pursue an interdisciplinary doctorate nearly half a century ago.



THE MAD HOUSERS

THE MAD HOUSERS Atlanta, Georgia

MAD HOUSERS Inc. is an Atlanta-based non-profit corporation with these goals and purposes:

- To provide shelter for homeless individuals and families regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, religion, or age.
- To develop low income housing for people in need of housing.
- To help people develop the skills and knowledge for constructing and rehabilitating housing and shelter.

- To increase the quantity and to improve the quality of housing in the world.
- To act, if necessary, as an advocate for the homeless, to ensure that their moral and civil rights are protected.

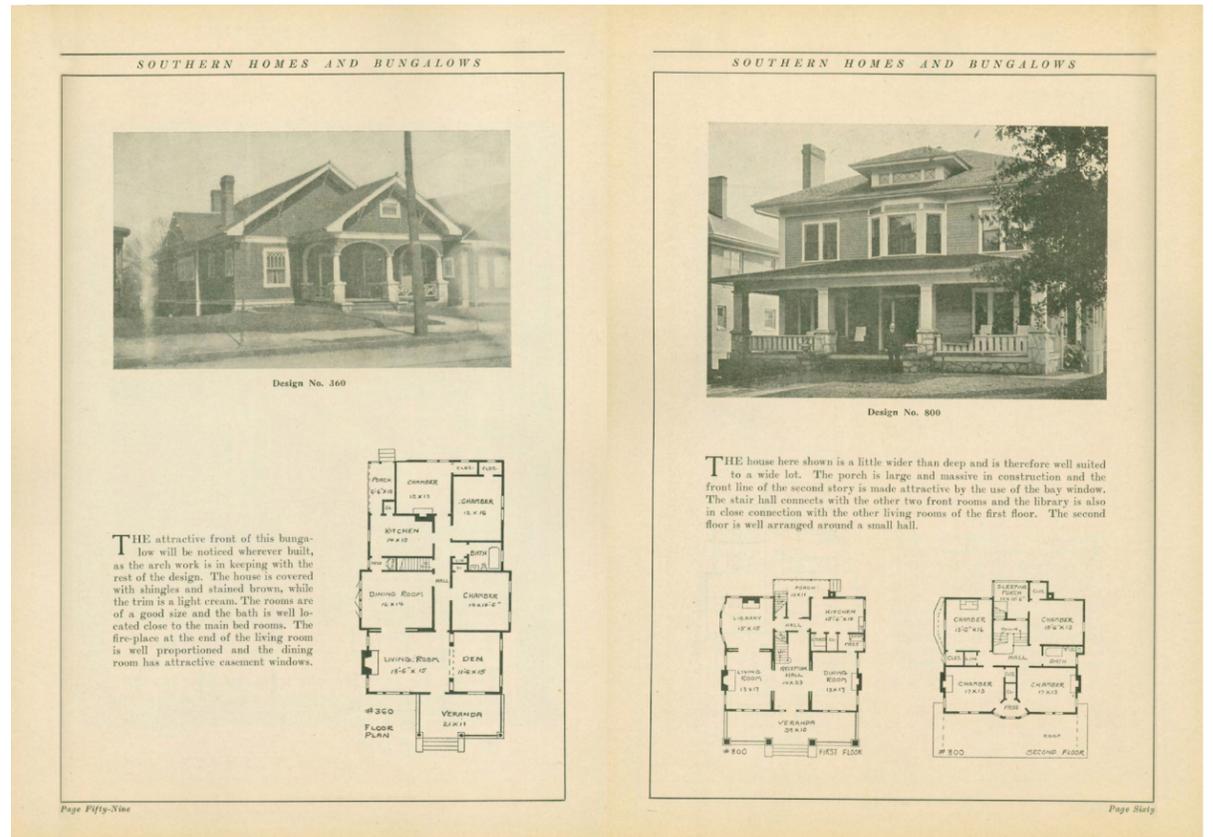
The Mad Housers believe that if a person has a secure space from which to operate, they are much more capable of finding the resources to help themselves. We are pleased to share our hut plan with *Searching for Home*.

LEILA ROSS WILBURN Decatur, Georgia

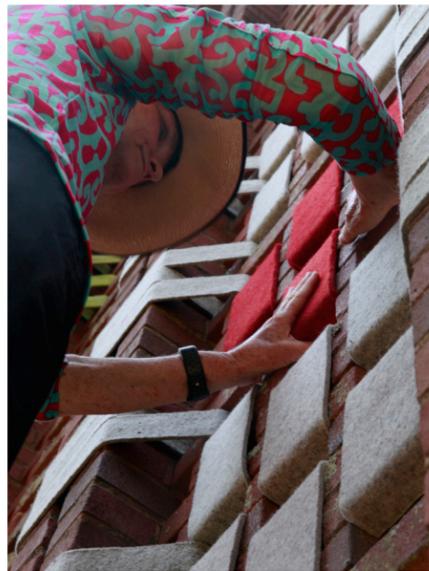
Leila Ross Wilburn [b. 1885, d. 1967] was born in Macon, Georgia and later moved to Atlanta. She graduated from Agnes Scott College in 1904 after studying liberal arts and science, then traveled the US to examine the emerging Arts and Crafts movement. While doing so, she created a library of 5,000 photographs of inspiring homes. In 1906, she became Georgia's first female architect; her first commission at the residential firm where she worked became the YMCA gymnasium at Georgia Military Academy (now Woodward Academy). After Wilburn opened her own firm, she focused on

home design, writing: "Being a woman I feel that I may know the little things that should go in it to make living in the house a pleasure for the entire family." She was the only female architect known to have published house plan books, which helped middle-class people to benefit from her expertise without having to pay a professional architect's fees.*

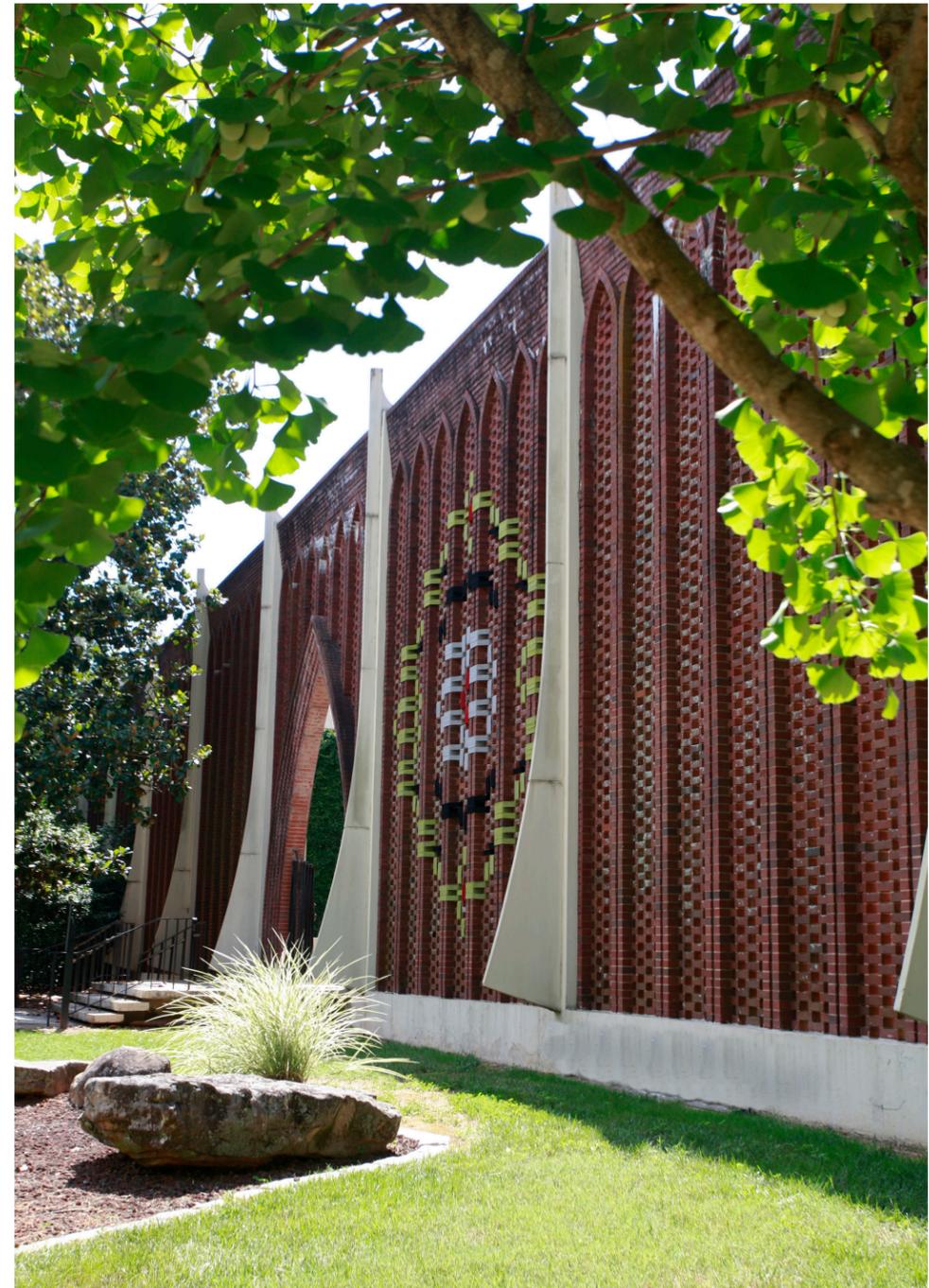
*Sources:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leila_Ross_Wilburn
<https://www.atlantamagazine.com/homeandgarden/pioneering-female-architect-leila-ross-wilburn-one-atlantas-prolific/>



Southern Homes and Bungalows, 1914. Plan book, opened. 11" x 17"



Nest.
Exterior fiber installation in front
of Dana Fine Arts Building



LYNN POLLARD Atlanta, Georgia

When we think of the great idealistic dreams of courage, loyalty, love, faith, and freedom, we think of home as a place of continued and all-encompassing love and support and protection. The great American writer Wallace Stegner wrote about the “geography of hope.” He was actually writing about the American West and the belief that migration there would lead to all good things in life. But I immediately thought home when I heard the phrase “geography of hope,” a place where there is hope and love and security. Home may be a physical place that provides all or most of one’s needs or fami-

ly, whether given or chosen, or the spiritual haven one resorts to in good times and in bad. Those are our ideals of the place we long for home to be or the place we would like to create for our children, but they are seldom possible. I hope that the collision of the ideal and the reality, the ambiguities of home, are felt in this work.

Continually grieving for my mother who died of dementia in 2016, I find that the moments of my most intense pain are the moments when I remember that, now, no place exists where I can arrive unannounced at any time of the day or night in any season and arms

will open up to embrace me and take me in, this made more poignant by my living alone and intensified by the pandemic. She was home for me.

In making Nest, I used a traditional weaving design tool called name drafting which embeds secret messages in the cloth. Weavers assign each letter of a phrase, here Searching for Home, to a thread on the loom and this determines the sequence of its movement, up or down. My structure was overshot, a quintessentially American cloth reflecting my deeply American, though not indigenous, family. I was thinking about birds’ nests

and turtles’ backs, yurts and igloos, wombs and eggs, dens and tree hollows, and arms and hearts, all homes. And yet a pierced brick wall is not a textile and so the design was converted to strips of felt wrapped around the bricks in a way that covered some of the bricks and closed up the openings between others. The felt strips were cut from the recycled walls of my retired art show booth. Some of the pieces were then hand dyed.

Through the colors chosen I have tried to impart the reality of our homes. I see home as pure as snow and the heart’s desire. I see the bonds of home which may

be as warm as the warmest hug and nourishing as a meal shared. I see some joy and happiness. But I also see home as dark and heavy as shackles and fragile as lace easily torn to shreds.

Susan Hand Shetterly writes of home as the place by which one measures the comfort and beauty of all other places. My hope is that we can make that home for ourselves somewhere, in spite of ourselves and the circumstances that may surround us.



James



Brian and Alex



Anthony



Courtney



Christian



Sherri



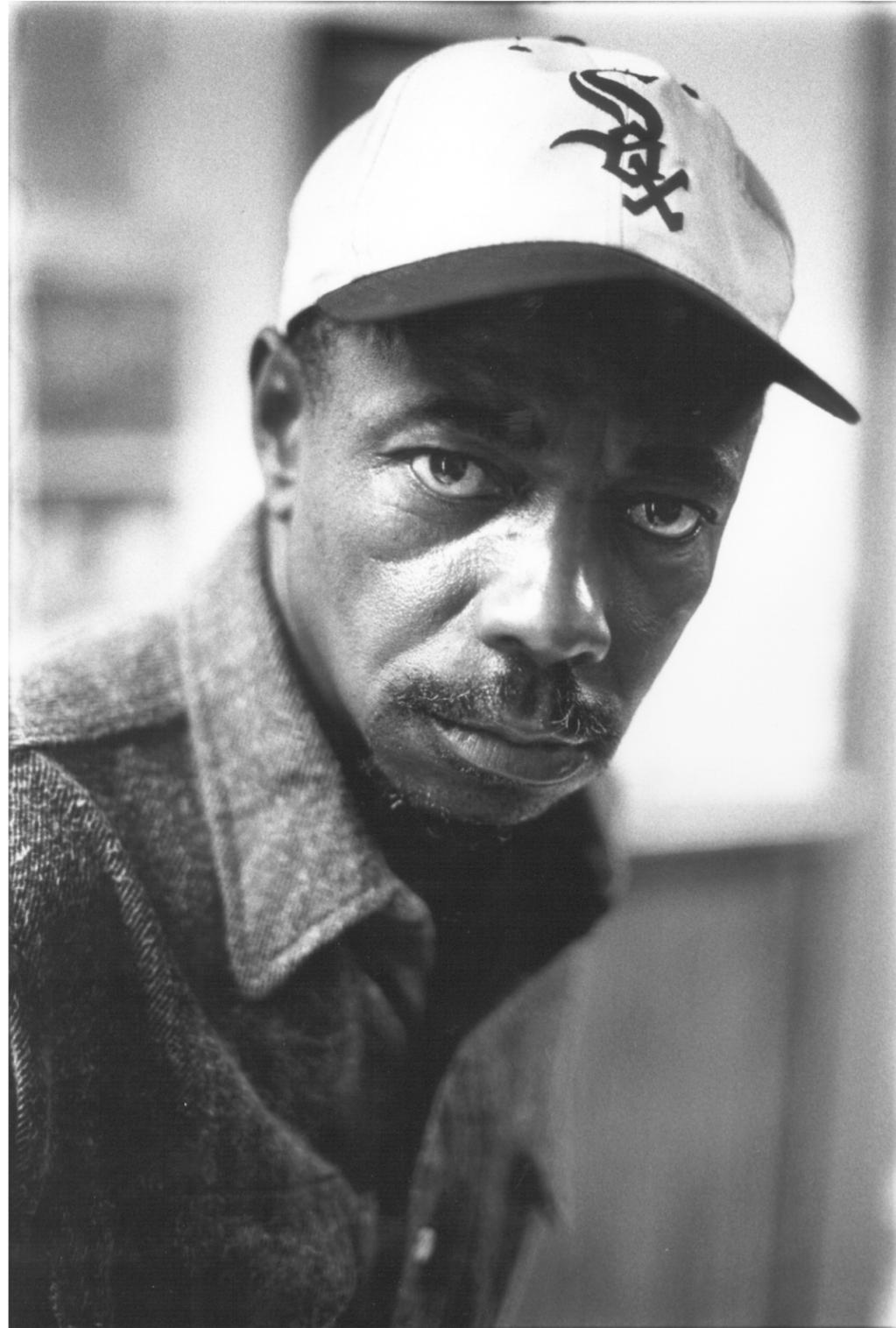
Shelly

20" x 16" Portraits of James, Brian and Alex, Anthony, Courtney, Christian, Sherri and Shelly

DANIEL TROPPEY Atlanta, Georgia

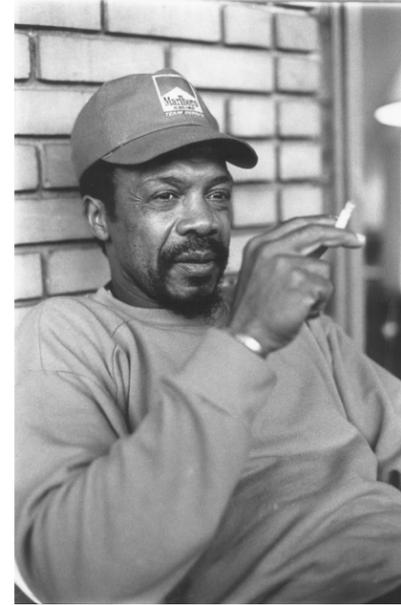
I've been an artist for 30 years. Several years ago, I picked up a 35mm camera, learned how the darkroom operated, and set out to meet people on the streets. With a notebook in hand, and my camera, off I went—looking for portraits to capture. Immediately I met our home-less neighbors and listened to their stories. One by one I accumulated street portraits with stories that are rich with reality. I shared these photographs and stories on social media and before too long it turned into YIMBY Georgia, a 501c3 nonprofit that helps our home-less neighbors. My focus has always been to make our

home-less friends be seen and heard, to put a name to their stories. I wanted them to feel respected and needed; I looked them in their eyes and acknowledged their existence. All humans want to feel loved and needed.



Frank

20" x 16" Portraits of Frank, Ira, Carol, Tony, Carl, Charles and Ralph
From the Open Door Community project, Atlanta, 1990s



Ira



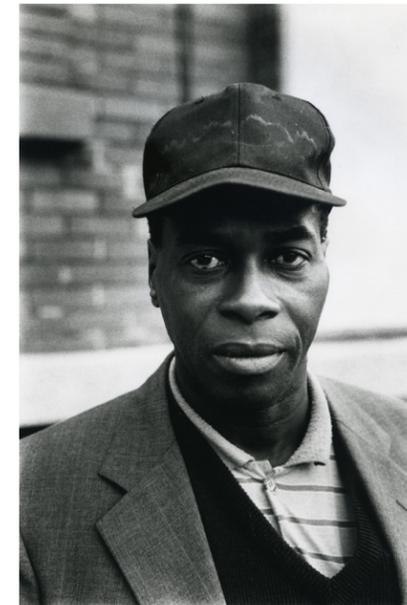
Carol



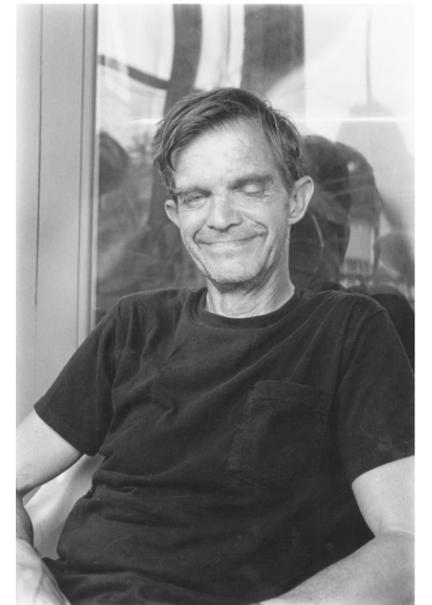
Tony



Carl



Charles



Ralph

R. CALVIN KIMBROUGH, JR. Nashville, Tennessee

As a photographer, I make images with cameras, lenses, film (and now pixels), light, my eye, my vision, another's visage, their eyes—and together we make create a picture. I believe that each of us is created in the image of God. For over 45 years I have photographed my neighbors, children, and adults, with whom I have shared space on the margins of our society. I am seeking a more complete image of God—an image that can bring us to value the humanity of each of our sisters and brothers.

I began making documentary photographs at the Open Door Community at 910 Ponce in Atlanta in 1992

and continued that work until 2016. These photographs are from the early part of that journey. They were made with 35mm cameras and relatively fast Tri-X 400 film, often in poor lighting, always with available light. I worked with a 50mm or 28mm lens, a range that placed me in direct interaction with each person.

In this world, we are all pilgrims searching for home. These photographs are part of my pilgrimage home.



ReBORN #2, 2020
Mixed Media w/ Georgia Red Clay on Dutch
Wax Cloth, 60" x 120"
Courtesy of September Gray Fine Art Gallery

JAMELE WRIGHT, SR. Atlanta, Georgia

My work is concerned with the Black American vernacular experience. The work entails collecting found materials: Georgia red clay and Dutch Wax cloth. I am creating a conversation between family, tradition, and the spiritual and material relationship between Africa and the South. My process is influenced by Hip Hop, in the way it gathers different cultural influences through sampling. Likened to the music, my work is charged with an energy passed down, then channeled through the Diaspora lineage. The work is also inspired by the Great Migration of Black Americans, when they left the familiar in hopes of something better.



Kindness in Quiet Company, 2017
Hand-cast resin, metal frame, cable ties, hand-woven
sisal fiber, wire, paint, wood. 54" x 31" x 16"

Transcending Limitation, We Fly, 2019
Hand-modeled clay, metal frame and legs, cable ties,
wood, pyrography, paint. 18" x 19" x 15"

**When the Roots are Deep, there is no Fear of the
Wind, 2019**
Hand-cast resin, metal frame, hand-woven sisal fiber,
wire, paint, wood, ceramic cup, silver leaf, pyrography,
paint. 38" x 20" x 10"

GRACE KISA Lawrenceville, GA

My childhood was spent in transit. I was born in Nairobi, Kenya, and lived with my family in three countries in Africa: Kenya, Ethiopia, and Botswana—as well as two in North America before I came to Atlanta, Georgia, to study art and settle. An upbringing spent in transit has shaped my definition of home.

My concept of home is a combination of different ideas. It is a sense of place in a shifting environment, memories, travel, family history, the place where my parents live, and the sound of my Mother Tongue. Home is the exchange between cultures and the experience of

"third culture kids," a global tribe whose travel remains constant. Home is a place where I am respected, loved, and can dream. Home is where I currently live, where I have been, and the places that I carry with me.



My Pot of Gold, (c. 1980)
Embroidery. 29" x 27"

"This is a picture of my husband and me cruising around on the bluebird of happiness. We are looking for the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow, just as all young married folks do. When we found it, it was full of children, not gold! We found our treasure in our children and the golden moments we have shared together."



A Dream, (circa 1980)
Embroidery. 30" x 40"

"I thought it would be a grand story to tell my children and grandchildren the reason I embroidered this picture. I had just moved into my new studio and was sitting in my yard under a tree, enjoying the beauty of all nature, when suddenly the bees were lulling me to sleep with their humming and they were dancing around me in a most delightful way, so I fell asleep. In my dream I could see the trees smiling and every living creature that lives or travels through my back yard was there to help celebrate this happy occasion. The lightning bugs lit on one tree and suddenly it looked like a Christmas tree. All of the animals were on parade—giving me a housewarming. Even the man in the moon got so jealous, he got a ladder and came down to join us. If Cora had not wakened me—I would have slept on forever in this enchanted world."

ETHEL WRIGHT MOHAMED [b. 1906, d. 1992] Belzoni, Mississippi

Ethel Wright Mohamed is sometimes compared to "Grandma Moses," both for her folk-art style of illustration and her late start as an artist. Born on a farm, she learned to embroider as a child. She and her husband, Lebanese-born salesman Hassan Mohamed, lived most of their lives in Belzoni, Mississippi, where they operated a store and had eight children. Mohamed returned to embroidery after her husband's death in 1965 and garnered national attention for its inclusion in the Smithsonian Institution's Festival of American Folklife; the 1976 Bicentennial Festival in Philadelphia, and two World's

Fairs. She received a Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in the Arts in 1991, the year before her death.

Courtesy of the Ethel Wright Mohamed Stitchery Museum, Belzoni, Mississippi.

*Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethel_Wright_Mohamed

CHRISTINE S. COZZENS

Charles A. Dana Professor of English,
Director of the Center for Writing and Speaking

Agnes Scott College

One January night more than twenty years ago, I was sitting by the window in my room at Dooley's Hotel on the River Suir in Waterford, Ireland, feeling lucky to have been given a room that overlooked the river. It was cold and rainy, the lights along the street reflected on the river's stormy black surface. I had my journal, a good book, a cup of tea, and pretty much everything I wanted at that moment. I opened the window to let the cold Irish rain help me savor the moment. Far away from anything that was familiar, or permanent, or could be called "mine," I remember thinking very clearly, "this is home."

That's the first thing I thought of when I looked at the images chosen for *Searching for Home*, not the cozy domicile of sampler fame, but a brief moment in time when things came together for me in a place where I was otherwise a stranger. "Home" would have been the easier title for this exhibit, but maybe we always have to be looking for, "searching for," and open to home for home to happen.

The word "home" by itself might prompt most of us to think first about where we are currently living, the place we go to after being "out" or "away" that gives us some sense of comfort, if we are lucky. Hovering on the word a bit longer brings to mind some of the many expressions that only begin to parse its meanings: go home, stay home, leave home, a house is not a home, homecoming, homegoing, home sweet home, home is where the heart is, coming home, home for good, home run, home front, take home, home from home, home wrecker, home, *There's No Place Like Home*... (Jennifer Shaw). Home is a physical place and an often-elusive concept. A home can have four walls, or not. It is something that happens to you, like the home into which you are born, but it is also something you can make happen: a clothesline strung with socks, while a man holds up a flashlight so that others bundled in blankets can read to each other in the cold, dark night (Dawn Williams Boyd).

In the last few months, people around the world have been staying at home more than ever before, and not because we wanted to. Have those four walls offered a haven from the world's troubles? Or have they closed in on us, proscribing a life we never desired? We will all have many homes, some will feel homier than others, and some will be fleeting, like my night on the river in Waterford. Home for you can be someone else's home where you are welcomed, it can be a place far away and barely remembered, a place you will never see again, a place that was obliterated but still exists, a place that you long to see, but never will.

Sometimes things—like the socks or the books, grandma's teacups (Clementine Hunter), the beat-up hat your father used to wear, a handmade cane (Calvin Kimbrough), a video of a family dinner (Macey Ley)—and the memory and imagination that go with them are all that's needed to make a place, however alien, a home. A shopping cart full of belongings that mean something and can be moved from place to place can create home in a few minutes. One of the images from this exhibit that continues to haunt me is Ruwaida Khdir's "hand-carved cookie press...hand carried on flight from Syria." That small wooden implement tells the story of immigration, of bringing the ways of the old home to the new, the mixed regret and eagerness to leave home, and the struggle to find and make a home in the new place. I have on my mantle a traditional copper coffee pot my great grandmother brought from Sweden well over a hundred years ago. When I saw one just like it in a museum in Stockholm, tears came to my eyes; in a tiny and surprising way, I had come home. Some migration occurs under circumstances that forbid even the smallest and most insignificant of things to be transported from one place to another; when that happens, memory and imagination alone must find ways to recreate a sense of home in the new place, often against formidable odds.

Some of our homes, real or imagined, are for us alone, while others require the people we want or need to be there. Most of the images in the exhibit include faces or bodies, though a few are only implied (In Kyoung Chun), and they set me thinking about who makes home happen for me, past and present. The warm metallic smell of ironing always reminds me of an aunt who lived with us for a while when I was young; she taught me how to iron and told me and my brothers made-up stories about child detectives named Jean and Jack. Sometimes I iron just to summon that memory. The home I live in now morphs and changes shape like an amoeba as my grown-up children come and go; I feel at home with all versions, though most at home when everyone is home. Family or chosen family can help create a sense of belonging, another avatar of home.

A common Irish language phrase for "goodbye" when someone is leaving you is "slán abhaile," or "safe home;" we want home to be safe, but we know it isn't always. The comforting intimacy of home can also be its undoing, and sometimes leaving home without a home to go to is the only option. War, hurricanes, floods, and fires (Sister Gertrude Morgan, Dawn Williams Boyd, Jennifer Shaw) leave the rubble of homes in their wake. Displacement is as much a part of home as the place itself. Even so, a surprising number of people want to rebuild in the same place, reclaiming the land, the cubic feet of air, and the essence of the homes they lost. Friends of mine lost everything but a laptop and their cats in the Tubbs fire that destroyed much of Santa Rosa, California, in 2017. Defying all expectation and advice, they chose a different path, recreating their home from the ashes of the old one a few thousand miles away in Evanston, Illinois—my hometown, it turns out—where their new grandchild had just been born.

Maybe home in its best sense is a place where we can go to find respite and renewal—new life, new hope, a renewed sense of how to continue the journey.



House, 2019
Tyvek and metal. 6" x 30" x 18"

Just Another Tuesday, 2018
Wool, Tyvek, metal, sheets. 24" x 24" x 24"

Two Sides to Every Story, 2019
Tyvek, mixed textiles, shell, foam, acrylic, epoxy. 84" x 26" x 26"



JESS SELF Black Mountain, North Carolina

My medium of choice is wool, and my work combines the traditional craft of needle felting and figurative sculpture. I roll up wool, then stab it with a barbed needle, forcing the fibers to lock together. The denser the wool gets with each poke of the needle, the more detail I get. At first glance, my pieces may appear to be made of stone or even paper. Using wool allows me to create a strong, soft structure while providing a warm and neutral surface to which a viewer can project a narrative or emotional response.

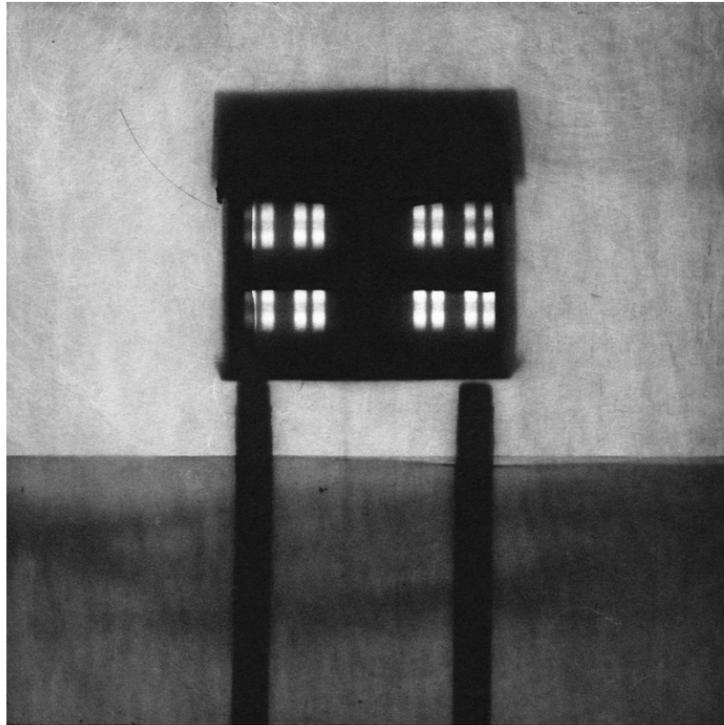
My creating process is intuitive. Observing humanity

and reflecting on my own life influences me; the subject and voice come later. My work has been a way for me to process personal growth, trauma, and self-image. The majority of the figures and forms have proportions based on my measurements and function as self-portraits. I am currently exploring how we process and move on from trauma. I am interested in how we associate our experiences with places, many occurring in the home. How can our memories of these experiences affect our security and comfort within our own homes or homes of others?

In the summer of 2018, I visited the house where I experienced sexual abuse as a child. It was the first time I had returned to that house in over 20 years. After this experience, I obsessively created art about the house as a way to heal; after a lifetime of pain, disappointment, and heartbreak, I was ready to move on. Haunted, I created work over and over again in a variety of different media. I built the house for the last time, and large enough to wear. I also created a skin made of the same materials to represent the shedding of this past. The heads of the figures in my current work are represented with houses

where trauma has taken place. I also play with how the texture of the houses mirrors the body language or position of the figure to express emotion.

I feel my work is easy to connect with. I build on that relatability by putting a spotlight on common, underlying insecurities. I strive to put a voice to topics that are isolating, and that many are too embarrassed to talk about, such as body image, abuse, and psychological discomfort. If I can make one viewer feel understood and heard without conversation, then maybe it could help them on their journey to closure and acceptance.

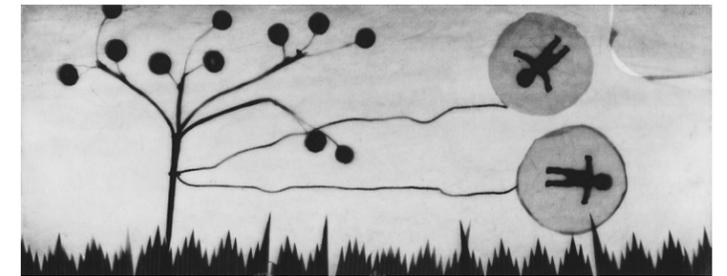
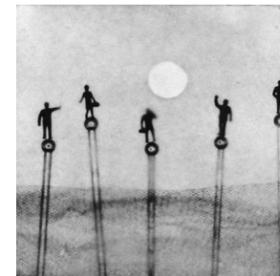
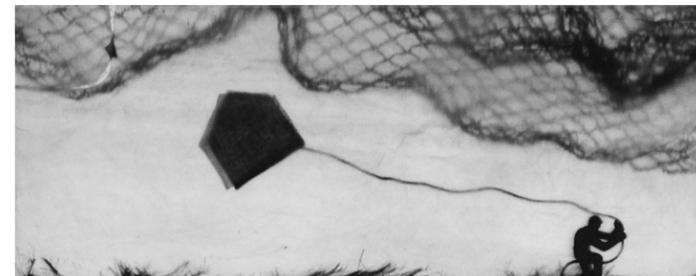
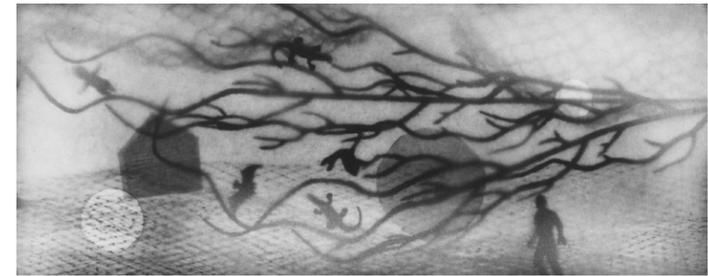
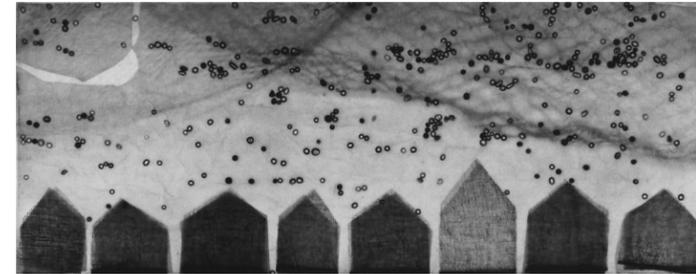
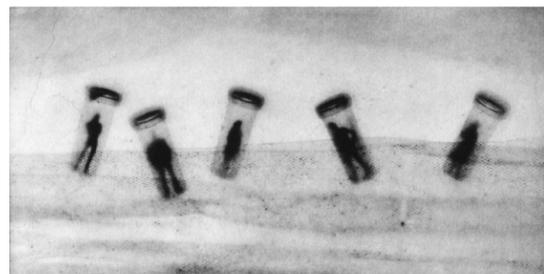
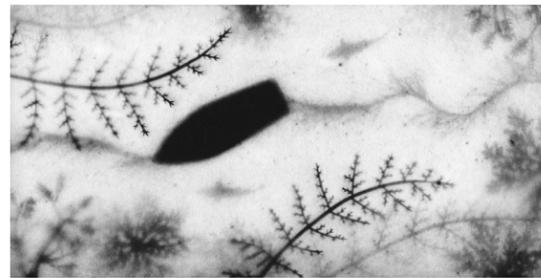


Flood State Series, 2016–2020
Varying sizes. Photogravure on kozo paper.

Flood State 001, 7" x 7"
Flood State 040, 7" x 7"

Flood State 072, 7" x 13"
Flood State 075, 7" x 13"
Flood State 071, 7" x 13"
Flood State 024, 7" x 13"

Flood State 027, 7" x 16"
Flood State 085, 7" x 16"
Flood State 031, 7" x 16"
Flood State 030, 7" x 16"



JENNIFER SHAW New Orleans, Louisiana

In 2016 two major floods affected vast portions of Louisiana inspiring this ongoing series about weather anxieties and the precarious act of making a home on vulnerable land. The widespread devastation left me once again questioning the long-term viability of living in a place where we are at constant risk of being inundated from above and below.

In Louisiana, heavy rains can drown thousands of homes without warning. We are facing one of the highest rates of sea level rise in the world, compounded by the loss of 10,000 acres of coastal land every year. With

each new storm that blows this way, I consider heading for higher ground. Yet the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events is increasing globally, begging the question: Is any place truly safe?

And so I imagine a future where we adjust and adapt to survive the rising tides. In this brave new water-world, the skies may be dark and stormy, but fear is tempered by hope.



De Aquí y de Allá, 2020
Documents printed on cut paper,
acrylic and collage on panel.
Dimensions variable; transfer
printing, polyurethane, acrylic,
fabric on panel.



YEHIMI CAMBRÓN Tucker, GA

I create art as activism to reclaim immigrant stories by challenging the harmful good-immigrant/bad-immigrant dichotomy, expanding the definition of dreamers to our parents (the original dreamers), and representing our diversity beyond the stereotype that migration is an exclusively Mexican experience.

As an undocumented immigrant, I have experienced first-hand how our stories are extracted and twisted to extremes—we are glorified as “dreamers,” or vilified as “very tough, hardened, criminals.” These were the loudest voices in my head as I transitioned into adulthood

and my “undocumentedness” became increasingly overwhelming.

I would plead to myself and the world:

This is the only home I know.

My parents brought me here through no fault of my own.

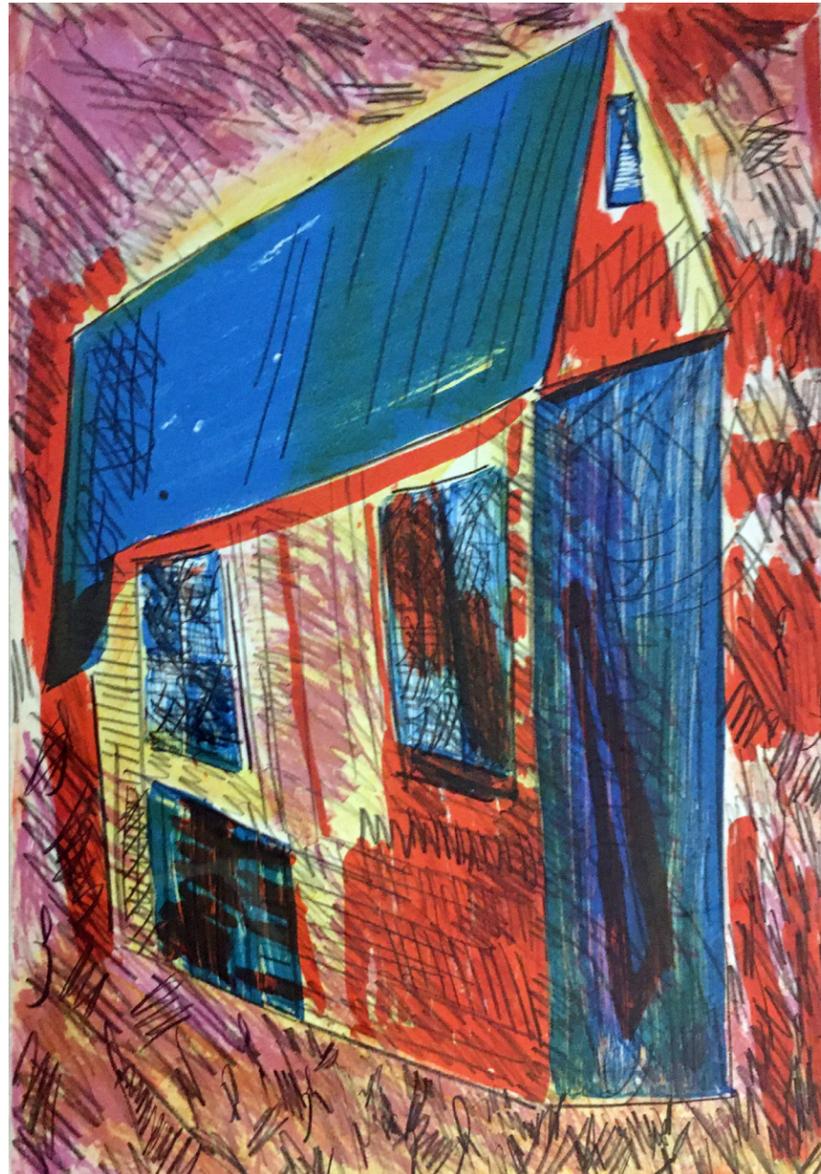
Listening to immigrant activists share their stories has helped me cast out the oppressor from my mind. I have learned to redefine home for myself, especially as the threat of deportation has intensified over the past four

years. Now I affirm to myself and the world:

Mexico is home. America is home.

My parents made the courageous decision to uproot and migrate to create more opportunities for us, and I will not apologize for that.

My portrait installation for Searching for Home navigates the complexity and limbo of rejection in the country we call home and of holding on to fading memories of the home we left behind.



Happy Shack, 1987
Lithograph on paper, 22.5" x 15"

BEVERLY BUCHANAN [b. 1940, d. 2015] South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, New York and Michigan

Beverly Buchanan's work celebrates the spirit of the shack dwellers whose communities dot the South, its coastal regions and Appalachia. These lean-to houses reveal much about their occupants. They act as a tribute to their imagination, ingenuity, and the human instinct for survival. The artist invites us to see with new eyes the dignity that can exist in the face of poverty and refutes the assumption that poverty of material things necessitates the poverty of will and spirit.*

Happy Shack was published by Rolling Stone Press in Atlanta, Georgia. It is shown courtesy of the Margaret

Virginia Philip Collection, also in Atlanta.

*Spruill Center publication, 1997

Thank you all

THANK YOU ALL:

Virginia Philip, Agnes Scott Class of 1961, for her foresight and generosity in establishing the Margaret Virginia Philip Art Endowment Fund, for the exhibition and catalogue

The James T. and Ella Rather Kirk Fund for funds to supplement the catalogue and the video tour

The talented and generous artists who have shared their work and their thoughts for this exhibition

The talented and generous essayists who have framed the work so beautifully, and for faculty and artists who have contributed their thoughts to the video tour

The McCain Library Special Collections, the Ethel Wright Mohamed Stitchery Museum, the CJ Williams Collection, the Virginia Philip Collection, the Mad Housers, and Sweet, Sweet Syria for generous loans of artwork

The continuing support of the Agnes Scott administration in the face of continuously shifting circumstances

The support of the Agnes Scott Department of Art, and especially Nell Ruby, chair, for support and navigational assistance, and continuous support of the Dalton Gallery as a campus and community resource

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Anna Carnes, Building Manager of the Dana Fine Arts Building for physical, technical, and curatorial assistance

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Lynn Pollard, for sponsoring the conservation of two textile masterpieces, and as travel companion and all-round sounding board and support

Angie Macon and the Decatur Arts Alliance for constant support and sharing of resources, and

Suppliers and vendors who have provided services with grace under pressure.

Searching for artists

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ARTISTS BELOW,
VISIT THEM ONLINE AT THE LINKS BELOW:

Dawn Williams Boyd dawnwilliamsboyd.com

Yehimi Cambron [instagram.com/ycambron](https://www.instagram.com/ycambron)

In Kyoung Chun inkyoungchoichun.com

Ruby Franklin rubyfranklin.com

Ruth Franklin ruthfranklin.com

Ruwaida Khdir sweetsweetsyria.com

Marquette Bell Johnson marquettabquilting.com

Grace Kisa gracekisa.com/GraceKisa.com

Macey Ley maceyley.com

Mad Housers madhousers.org

Ethel Wright Mohamed mamasdreamworld.com

Lynn Pollard www.broadwovens.com

Jess Self www.jessself.com

Jennifer Shaw jennifershaw.net

Daniel Troppy [instagram.com/danieltroppy](https://www.instagram.com/danieltroppy)

Jamele Wright, Sr. [facebook.com/jamelewrightsr](https://www.facebook.com/jamelewrightsr)

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS:

Yehimi Cambron, Ruwaida Khdir, Marquette Bell Johnson, Macey Ley,
Lynn Pollard: **Karin P. Koser & Andrew Dunbar** [KPKinteractive](http://KPKinteractive.com)

Ruth and Ruby Franklin: **Shawn Vinson** [Different Trains Gallery](http://DifferentTrainsGallery.com)

Jamele Wright, Sr.: **Marie Thomas Photography**

CATALOGUE DESIGN:

Linda Winsbro [Winsbro Design](http://WinsbroDesign.com)

JENNIFER SHAW [New Orleans, Louisiana](http://NewOrleansLouisiana.com)

Ruby Slippers
Photograph on fabric, 54" x 60"

“In spite of it all, there’s no place like home.”



safety safety high ground security fear
habitation dwelling place grounds shelter
exile exile displace separate deport
leave leave stay dream adapt
welcome welcome gather embrace cherish
no place place like home
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