



# UNCOMMON NATURE

The Abstractions  
of Freddie Styles



The background of the entire page is a dense, abstract artwork by Freddie Styles. It features a complex, textured surface with a warm, golden-brown base color. Scattered throughout this base are numerous small, irregular specks and spots of various colors, including bright yellow, deep red, forest green, and a muted blue-grey. The overall effect is one of organic complexity and vibrant energy, reminiscent of a microscopic view of a mineral or a close-up of a natural material like marbled paper or stone.

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Boxed Note Cards



PHOTO BY KATHERINE LAMBERT

GREGORY W. FOWLER, PhD  
PRESIDENT  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
GLOBAL CAMPUS

On behalf of University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) and the more than 90,000 learners we serve each year, I am pleased to introduce a remarkable exhibition—*Uncommon Nature: The Abstractions of Freddie Styles*.

In a celebrated career that has spanned more than 60 years, Freddie Styles is justifiably renowned for his abstract works on paper and canvas and for his ability to depict our connection to nature, often through a masterful combination of textures and media.

Growing up in the Jim Crow South, Styles overcame limitations imposed by poverty and society, inspiring us with his evolution as an artist and his prolific creativity. His works portray a combination of the physical world and the nuance of emotional landscapes, interwoven in tapestries of color, texture, and light.

Given our institutional mission—to inspire hope, empower dreams, and transform lives . . . one student at a time—Styles’s journey is one that resonates deeply with our learners as well as with our internal and external stakeholders.

Through our Arts Program, which serves to support and expand our mission, we are privileged to honor Styles and showcase his remarkable works, to celebrate his influence in and beyond the world of art, and to introduce his unique vision to new and broader audiences.

I hope you find the life and work of Freddie Styles as engaging as I do, and I hope you come away with a deeper appreciation of the arts and their ability to illuminate our world and the beauty in it. Thank you as always for supporting the arts and our Arts Program at UMGC.

ERIC KEY  
DIRECTOR, ARTS PROGRAM  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
GLOBAL CAMPUS



PHOTO BY TRACEY BROWN

As a university dedicated to putting students first, UMGC considers exploration and experimentation among the hallmarks of educational development. Artist Freddie Styles has been exploring and experimenting with new ways of creating art throughout his career. He started with the familiar style of figurative painting. After experimenting with paint and paper—specifically fax paper—he transitioned to abstraction. His early abstract painting evolved from just paint on canvas to the use of fax paper and paint to create some intriguing works. Once he became comfortable with the results he produced, he explored other ways to give his new style a more definitive look. He began incorporating solid color borders, changing the orientation of his paper and canvases, and layering his colors, which provided more depth to his work. He also expanded his creative process by etching and scratching into the paint before it dried.

Most visual artists have explored abstraction in one form or another at some point in their artistic career, conveying the sense of a subject rather than its precise image and using the blending of color to express emotion. And even extremely abstract pieces can have some level of realism. Styles's abstract works are also identified as landscapes or abstract landscapes. The artist creates such works either by changing the scenery that exists in real life or by creating an imagined setting. His works capture the eye and encourage viewers to explore the pieces at a deeper level, asking questions such as, How did he do that?, What color is that, and why did he choose it?, and Is there something under the primary color? Today Styles is considered a major abstractionist.

Styles grew up in rural Georgia and remembers the racial divide of the Jim Crow South, and his humble beginnings served as inspiration for his painting. His experiences working in the family garden, hunting in the lush forest, and doing his childhood chores fueled his artistic creativity over the years and led to his lifelong participation in the visual arts. His works are in numerous collections within the United States and abroad.

The UMGC Arts Program is pleased to showcase the works of Freddie Styles.



KERRY DAVIS  
GUEST CURATOR

It is with great pleasure that I share my reflections on the remarkable Freddie Styles and this exhibition.

Having known him for more than 30 years, and aware of his deep connection to the small Southern town of Madison, Georgia, that nurtured his early curiosity with nature, it is no surprise to me that his artistic journey has been so profoundly inspired by the world around him. Witnessing his evolution as an artist, from his participation in the esteemed Atlanta University Art Annuals to the present day, has been an honor.

I often think about why I am drawn to Styles's art, apart from knowing the artist personally. There are a multitude of reasons, but most importantly, it is because his works recreate the natural environment for which he and I share an affinity. They are calming, nonconfrontational, pleasant to observe, and peaceful. I remember feeling that his pieces relaxed me after a long, stressful day at work. I also liked his evolution from figurative to abstraction and was intrigued by his use of pine needles, azalea plant roots, and fax paper to create masterful works. It is for these reasons that I have advocated for collectors and museums to consider his artwork.

This exhibition, showcasing approximately 50 works spanning six decades, offers a glimpse into Styles's ever-evolving creativity. From his early *Reclining Nude* (1965) to his more recent *Brenda Thompson's Red Painting Reimagined* (2024), the collection is a testament to his artistic vision and exploration.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Kenneth Prince for his invaluable logistical support and unwavering friendship. His assistance has been crucial in bringing this exhibition to fruition. I also recognize the generosity of Brenda and Larry Thompson, who have been supporters and collectors of Styles's works for years. In addition, I must thank their assistant Vicki Viall, who has devoted a lot of time to getting us what we need for this exhibition.

I invite you to join me in experiencing the "uncommon nature" of Freddie Styles's work. Take a close look. I am confident you will be captivated by his unique artistic expression.



## Freddie Styles: Cultivating Abstraction Through Nature and an Indomitable Spirit

BY HALIMA TAHA

**Freddie Styles (b. 1944)** was shaped by the harsh realities of growing up in the Jim Crow South, where poverty and racial inequality defined his early life in Madison, Georgia. Amid economic hardship and systemic barriers, his experiences navigating both racial discrimination and his sexuality forged his resilience and creativity. The stark contrasts in living conditions between Black and

white families in the rural South fueled his determination and artistic vision, turning hardship into powerful artistic expression.

The landscape of Styles's childhood was one of dilapidated shacks and overcrowded houses, often lacking basic amenities like indoor plumbing or electricity. This physical environment stood in sharp contrast to the living conditions of even modest white families and served as a daily reminder of the deep-seated racial disparities that permeated every aspect of Southern life.

Education, a potential pathway out of poverty, was severely restricted for Black children like Styles. Segregated schools received significantly less funding and resources than their white counterparts, with many rural Black children attending school for only a few months each year because of the demands of agricultural labor. This educational disparity had profound and long-lasting impacts, limiting economic opportunities and perpetuating cycles of poverty across generations.

The ever-present threat of violence and the intricate web of Jim Crow laws created an atmosphere

of constant tension and fear. Public spaces, transportation, and even drinking fountains were segregated, reinforcing a social order designed to limit Black economic progress and maintain white supremacy. This oppressive environment, however, became the fertile ground from which Styles's creativity would bloom.

It was within this climate of systemic oppression and economic hardship that Styles began to forge his unique artistic vision. The stark contrast between his surroundings and the vibrant inner world of his imagination became a driving force in his creative journey. As he recounts, "I was extremely timid, and to be made to feel that I was not wanted, although in a place where I had every right to be, even months afterward caused me sometimes weeks of pain." Rather than crushing his spirit, this early adversity fueled a deep sense of purpose and a determination to create a world of his design through art.

Styles's abstract forms, reminiscent of organic vegetation, can be seen as a response to and transformation of his early



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FREDDIE STYLES

experiences. His lush, layered compositions starkly contradict the barren economic landscape of his youth. His use of metallic inks and crinkled fax paper introduces luminosity and texture that transcends the material limitations he faced growing up. In this way, his art becomes a powerful act of reimagining and reclaiming physical, emotional, and spiritual space.

The influence of nature in Styles's work takes on added significance when considered against the backdrop of his early life. The natural world provided equality and inspiration in a world where access to beauty and resources was often restricted along racial lines. The organic forms in his paintings can be seen as a celebration of this universal beauty and a subtle critique of man-made systems of oppression.

The prominent presence of Hale Woodruff (1900–1980) in Atlanta's art scene profoundly influenced many young Black artists, including Styles and Emma Amos (1937–2020), who became the sole female member of the African American artist collective Woodruff established in New York. Woodruff's commitment to advancing Black art and artists resonated with Styles, who found in him a model for exploring in his work themes deeply rooted in the Black American experience.

Another significant influence on Styles was Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859–1937), whose masterful use of light and color in religious paintings served as a beacon of hope and inspiration for many younger Black artists. Tanner's emigration to Europe at a time when few Black artists had ventured abroad paved the way for future generations to seek recognition beyond the constraints of American racial prejudices.

Styles's profound connection to nature and gardens echoes the artistic journeys of several renowned painters who found inspiration in the natural world, particularly Claude Monet (1840–1926) and Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919). However, Styles's approach to nature in his art represents a unique synthesis of these influences, shaped by his experiences and cultural background.

Like Monet, Styles demonstrates a deep appreciation for the transformative power of gardens and nature in artistic expression. Monet famously created his garden at Giverny as a living canvas, meticulously designing and cultivating it to serve as both inspiration and subject for his paintings. Styles draws inspiration from his surroundings, mainly the organic textures and forms he observes in nature. However, while Monet actively shaped his environment to suit his artistic vision, Styles's approach is more observational, focusing on the inherent beauty and complexity of the natural world as he finds it.

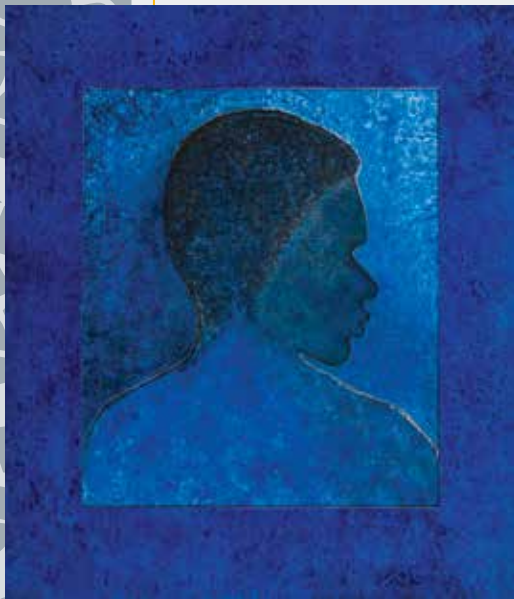
Renoir's relationship with nature offers another interesting parallel to Styles's work. When Renoir acquired the estate of Les Collettes, he chose to preserve the existing olive groves rather than redesign the landscape. This approach resonates



Hale Woodruff, artist and teacher, ca. 1936–37  
Courtesy of the U.S. National Archives



Claude Monet, *The Artist's Garden at Giverny*, 1900,  
oil on canvas, 32½ x 36½ in.  
Courtesy of Mondadori Portfolio,  
Getty Images



Freddie Styles, *Rufus in Blue*, 1975,  
mixed media on paper, 28 x 25 in.



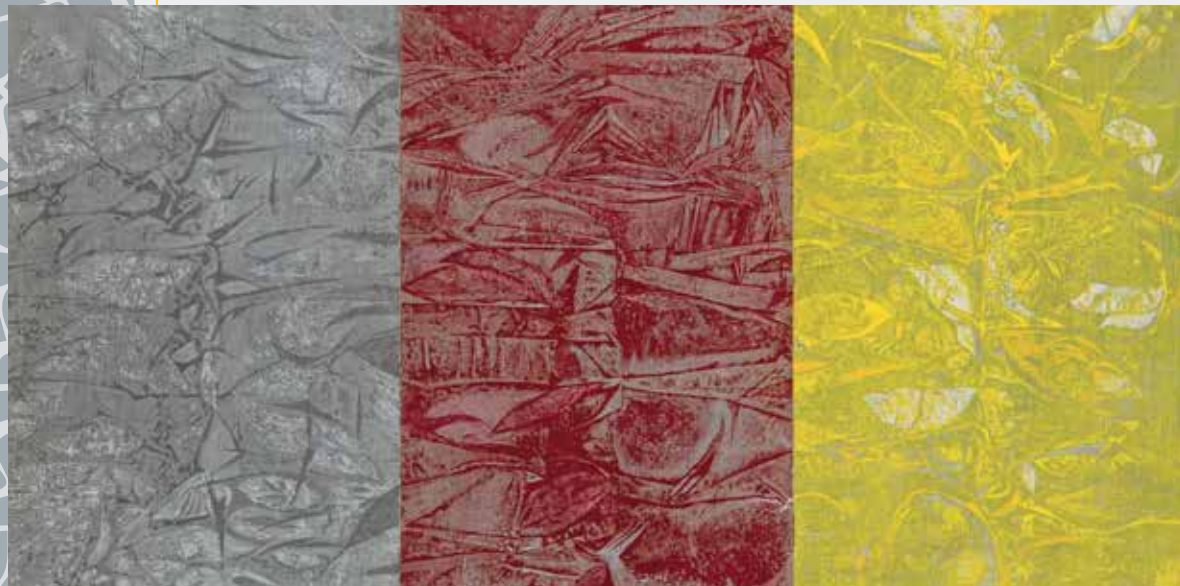
with Styles's reverence for the natural world and his desire to capture its essence rather than impose his will on it. Like Renoir, Styles seems to find perfection in the unaltered state of nature, allowing its forms and rhythms to guide his artistic expression.

Styles's work goes beyond mere representation of nature, however. His abstract compositions, with their layered textures and metallic inks, transform natural inspirations into complex visual experiences that reflect the physical world and his inner emotional landscape. This approach bridges the gap between the more literal representations of the impressionists and the abstract explorations of later modernists, creating a unique artistic language that is deeply rooted in nature yet distinctly contemporary.

In essence, Styles's connection to nature and gardens represents a synthesis of various artistic traditions, filtered through the lens of his own experiences as an African American artist from the South. His work demonstrates how the universal theme of nature in art can be reinterpreted to express personal and cultural narratives, creating a bridge between the past and present, the universal and the deeply personal.

Styles's aesthetic approach aligns with what Romare Bearden (1911–1988) said about how painters think about their work: “The painter must be able to organize the visual elements at his disposal into a coherent structure.” This principle is evident in Styles's meticulous layering and manipulation of materials. His artistic process creates forms reminiscent of organic vegetation; this technique serves as a metaphor for plants and paintings. Just as plants respond to their environment through chemical reactions and layering as they grow, Styles's work evolves through layering materials that interact with one another.

The artist's unique process involving crinkled fax paper and metallic inks can be likened to the art of choreography. Just as a dancer's movements are controlled and fluid, Styles's technique allows for intentional composition and spontaneous expression. The resulting works are a testament to the artist's ability to balance structure and improvisation, much like a skilled dancer interpreting a piece of music.



Freddie Styles, *Study in Red, Yellow, and Silver*, 2015, mixed media on paper, triptych, 20 x 39 in.



**The painter must be able to organize the visual elements at his disposal into a coherent structure.**

ROMARE BEARDEN

the growth of a garden itself: just as a carefully tended plot evolves from orderly rows into a wild, harmonious ecosystem, Styles's art has blossomed from structured representation into fluid, organic abstraction. Like a master gardener who learns to work with nature rather than against it, Styles has cultivated an artistic practice that embraces spontaneity and the inherent beauty of natural forms.

As Styles observes, “There is electricity in the earth, and I think this is what creates the euphoria of gardening—much like the increased atmospheric ozone before a thunderstorm renders us unaccountably happy.” This sentiment perfectly captures the essence of his art, which draws on the vibrant, life-affirming forces of nature to transcend the harsh realities of his early experiences.

Styles's artistic process is intimately tied to his keen observation of the world around him. He explains, “I focus on interesting and complex textures that emerge from my surroundings. The wood grain of oak, the textures of bark, the smoothness of stone, the cracks of aged paint, and the processes of mold and decay are all recorded on the canvas of my memory for future use in my work.” This meticulous attention to detail and texture informs his abstract compositions, leading to works that are at once deeply personal and universally resonant.

Styles's work can be seen as a visual symphony akin to the improvisational nature of jazz. His abstract forms dance across the canvas, creating rhythms and harmonies that resonate with the viewer on an emotional level. Like the syncopated rhythms of bebop or the fluid melodies of cool jazz, Styles's paintings pulse with an inner energy that transcends the visual realm.

The mood and atmosphere in Styles's paintings bear similarities to the work of Richard Mayhew (1924–2024) and Norman Lewis (1909–1979). All three artists create abstract landscapes that evoke emotional responses through color and form rather than literal representation. Mayhew's luminous, dreamlike landscapes

Styles's artistic career, spanning more than six decades, mirrors the broader developments in American art from the 1950s through the 2010s. His work evolved in response to changing artistic movements, societal shifts, and personal growth. In the 1950s, as abstract expressionism dominated the American art scene, Styles began his artistic journey. This movement's focus on spontaneous brushwork and emotional expression likely influenced his early explorations.

The evolution of Styles's work from figurative art as a younger artist to nature-based abstraction parallels his development as a gardener. This transformation can be likened to



Richard Mayhew, *Spring Mood Series #4 (Rust)*, 2018, watercolor on paper, 9 x 12 in. Collection of Eric Key.



and Lewis's rhythmic, calligraphic abstractions share a sense of mystery and spiritual depth with Styles's works.

Parallels also can be drawn between Styles's art and the writings of James Baldwin, who explored the intricate layers of race, sexuality, and humanity. But while Baldwin's work resonates with the urgency of social critique and the struggles against oppression, Styles's approach embodies a spiritual and human depth that universalizes the particular experiences of existence. Through the lens of nurtured love and emotional connection, he invites us to explore the profound landscapes of human experience, revealing how intimacy—both with oneself and a partner—can illuminate the darkest corners of our shared humanity, much like Baldwin's poignant narratives compel us to confront and reflect on the intricate tapestry of life that binds us all.

Styles's work can also be compared to the culinary arts, in which layers of flavors and textures combine to create a harmonious whole. Like a master chef who balances sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami, Styles carefully orchestrates his visual elements to create a sensory experience that is both complex and satisfying.

The power of imagination, self-reflection, and beauty in Styles's artistic practice, as with those of other artists who emerged from the crucible of the

Jim Crow South, cannot be overstated. Like Styles, artists such as Benny Andrews (1930–2006), Alma Thomas (1891–1978), and Beverly Buchanan (1940–2015) drew from their Southern experiences to create influential, innovative works that challenged prevailing narratives and expanded the boundaries of American art. For these artists, these elements became not just artistic tools but essential means of survival and transcendence. Imagination served as a powerful act of resistance and creation, allowing artists to envision worlds beyond the oppressive realities of their immediate surroundings.

Unlike many Black artists since the 1980s, whose works often focused on identity and sexual politics, Styles has cultivated self-acceptance and a deep awareness of the interconnectedness of all people. He found strength in a nurturing and loving relationship that flourished for more than 40 years.

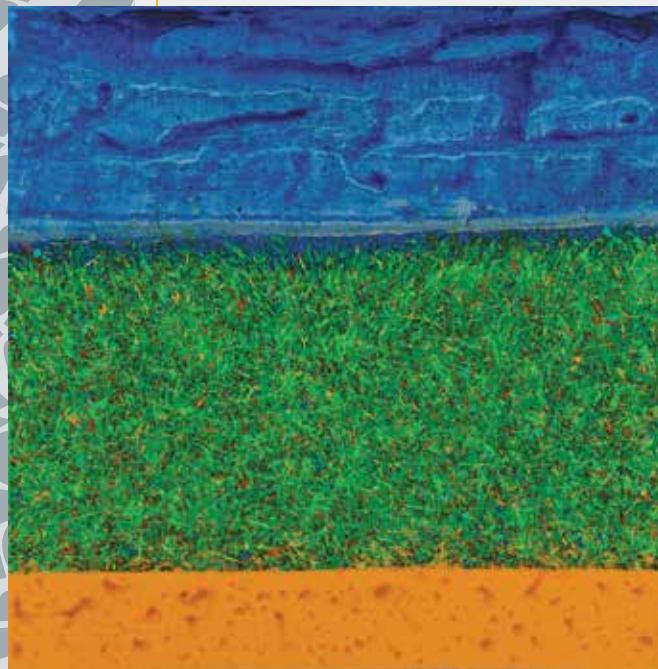
His relationship served as a wellspring from

which compassion and empathy flowed freely, allowing him to navigate his artistic expression with a unique perspective. This emotional closeness enriched his work, deepening his ability to reflect on universal themes of love, loss, and



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FREDDIE STYLES



Freddie Styles, *New Series #3*,  
2019, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.

belonging. This profound bond also provided a sturdy lighthouse guiding him through the tumultuous seas of life and creativity. The emotional intimacy with his partner wove a rich tapestry of resilience and understanding, enabling him to embrace the complexities of the human condition with an expansive heart.

In conclusion, Styles's artistic journey is a powerful testament to the enduring spirit of Black creativity and the importance of regional artists within the global art landscape. His work seamlessly blends abstraction with nature and cultural commentary while offering unique perspectives on the Black American experience. Styles demonstrates how local artists can contribute to shaping broader artistic dialogues by remaining rooted in Atlanta while addressing universal themes. His career is an inspiring example of how art can flourish when given the right environment, inviting us to see the world anew and appreciate the profound connections between life, nature, culture, and creativity across generations and geographical boundaries.



Freddie Styles, *An Owl for Richard (Long)*,  
2017, acrylic on canvas, 10 x 8 in.

**Halima Taha** is a renowned art professional and advocate for artists and Black visual culture. She is best known for her groundbreaking best-seller, *Collecting African American Art: Works on Paper and Canvas*, which validated the collection of fine art, printmaking, and photography by Americans of African descent as valuable assets in the art market. Her book also served as a PBS membership incentive, exceeding its fundraising goal three times.

Taha's expertise played a crucial role in developing and educating global markets for art. In conjunction with the National Black Fine Art Show and Swann Galleries, she helped pioneer the first international African American auction category. Her work has inspired prominent museums to pursue African American art collections for exhibition and acquisition.

Currently, Taha is the project manager for the Kamoinge Digital Archive, the depository of America's oldest Black photographer collective, in conjunction with the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the

Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora and funded by a Mellon Foundation grant. As an art curator, advisor, and strategic planner, she has contributed significantly to developing, documenting, and acquiring contemporary visual culture. Her extensive experience includes co-owning a gallery in New York City, serving as faculty and director of the Gordon Parks Gallery at the College of New Rochelle, and working as an adjunct professor and curator at Bloomfield College in New Jersey.

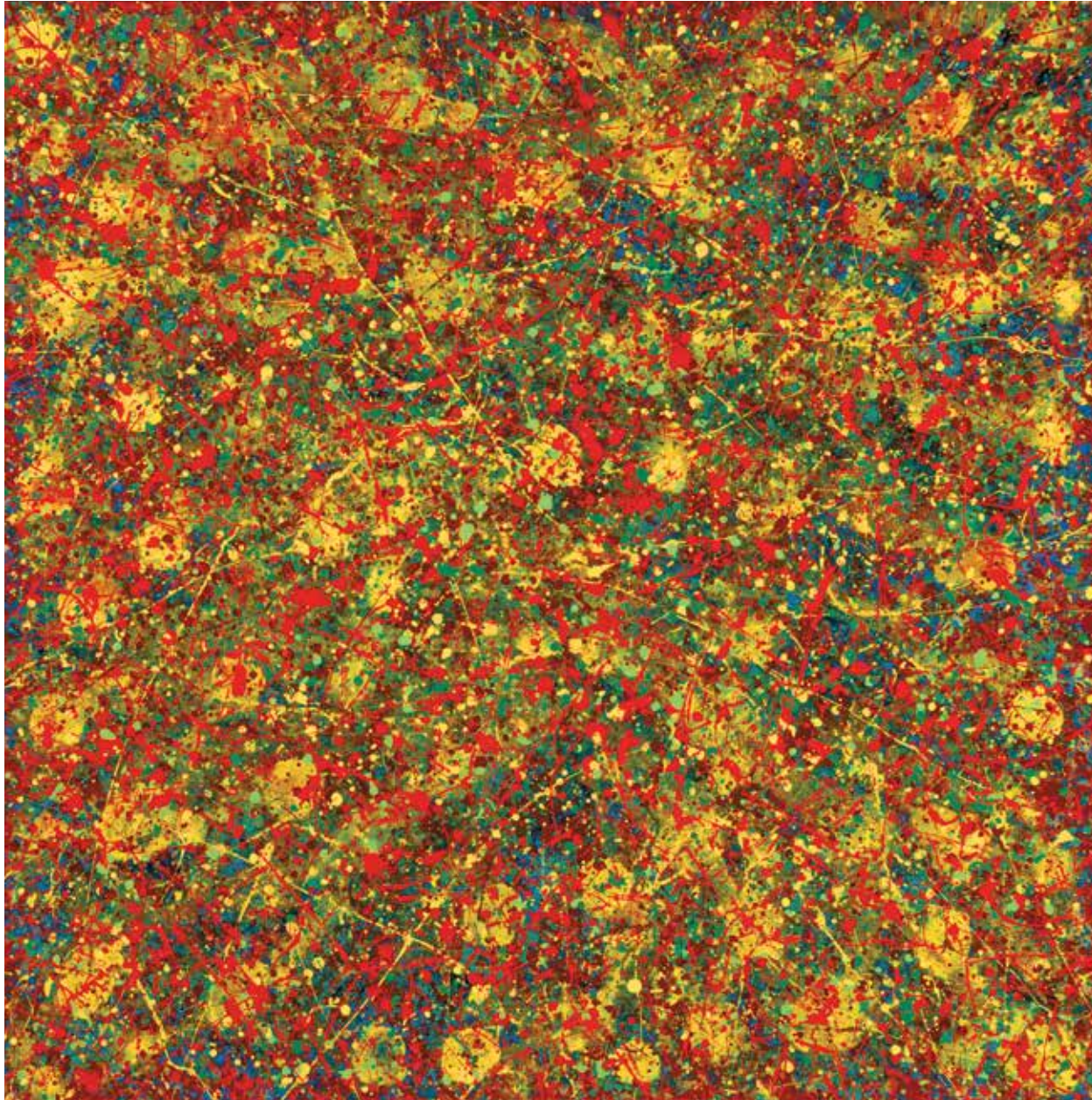
Taha also serves as the artistic chair at the Hammonds House Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, and on the boards of the Clara Elizabeth Jackson Carter Foundation and the Brandywine Workshop and Archives. She is an advisor for the Calabar Gallery Art Residency at Colab Arts, the EFA Studio Program of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, and the Ntozake Shange Trust. Her tireless dedication to promoting Black visual culture and supporting artists has made her a respected figure in the art community.



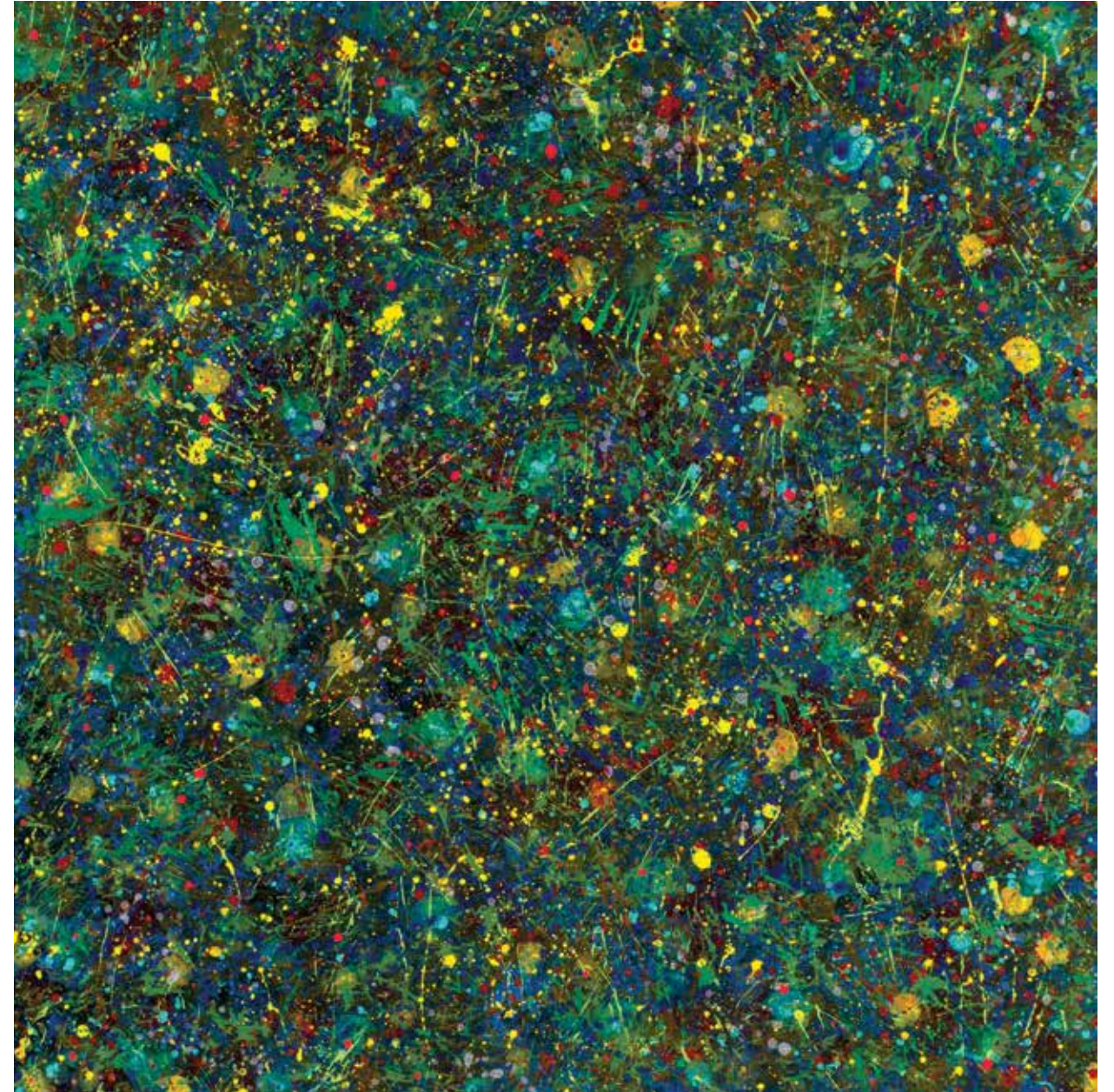
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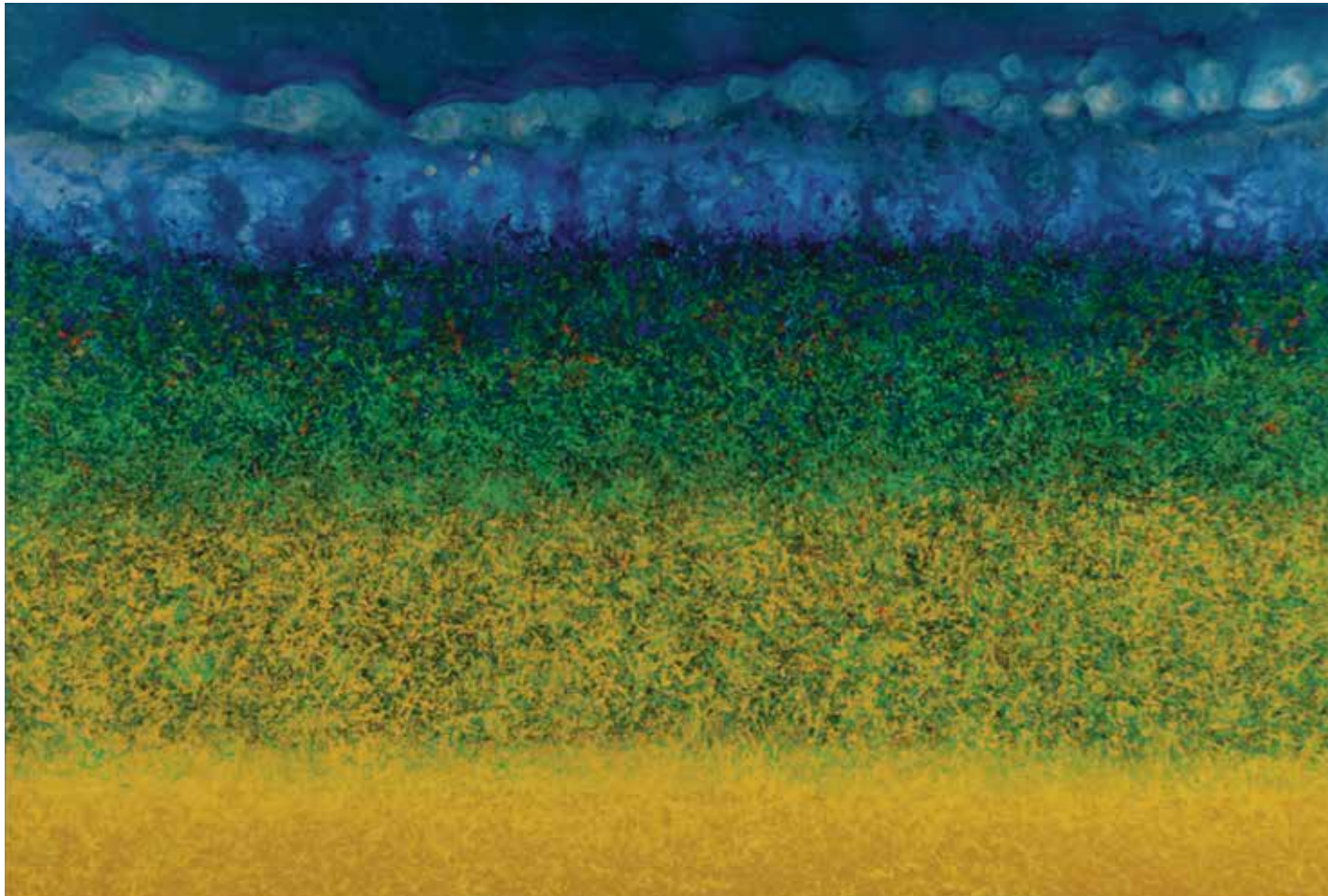


*Untitled (Louis Delsarte Series)*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48 in.  
Collection of Kerry and C. Betty Davis



*LDS (Louis Delsarte Series) #2*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48 in.





*Kerry's Painting*, 2018, oil on canvas, 48 x 72 in.  
Collection of the artist

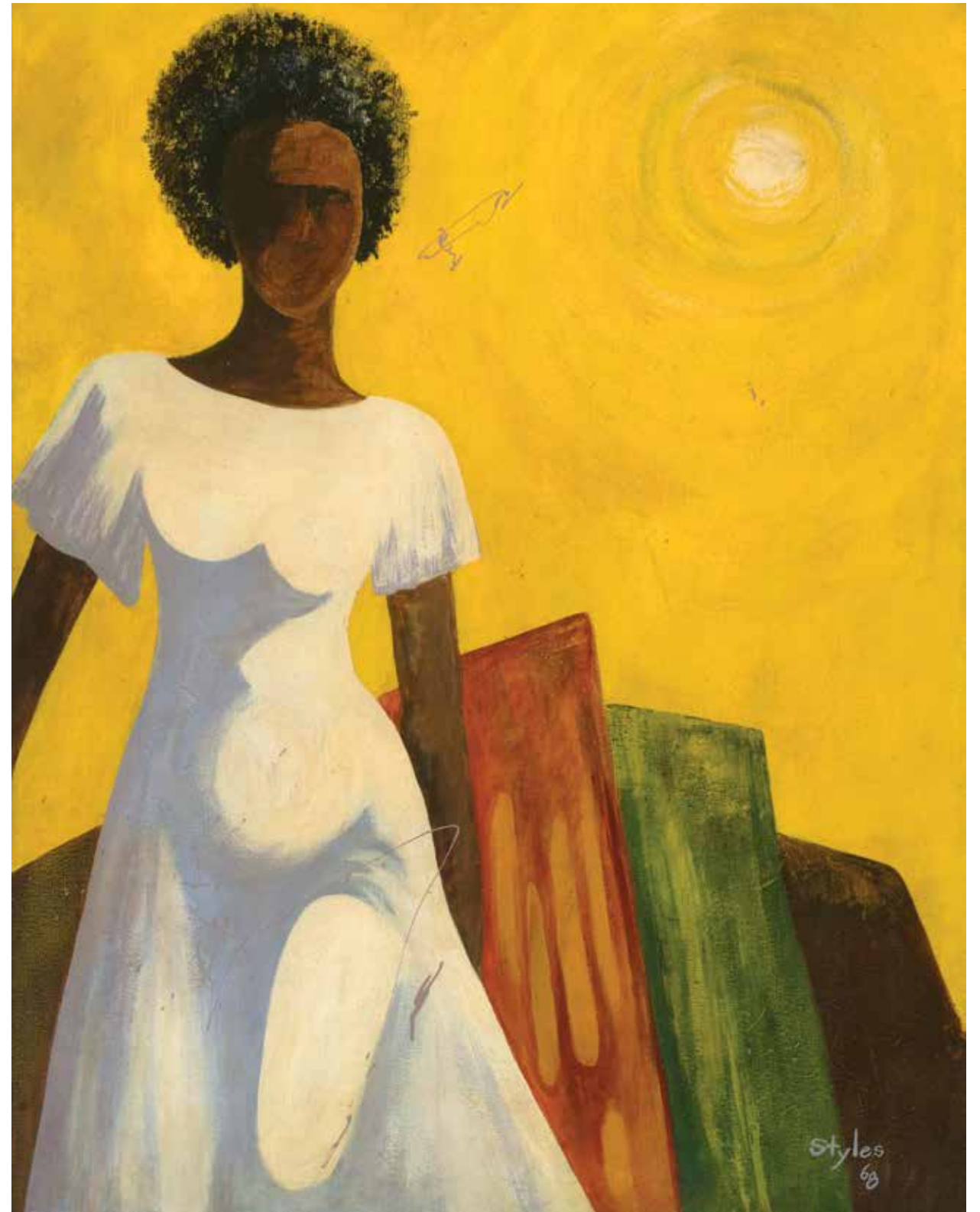


*Reclining Nude*, 1965, modeling paste on canvas, 10 x 16 in.





*Sunrise Sunset*, 1983, acrylic and collage on illustration board, 20 x 32 in.  
Collection of Larry and Brenda Thompson

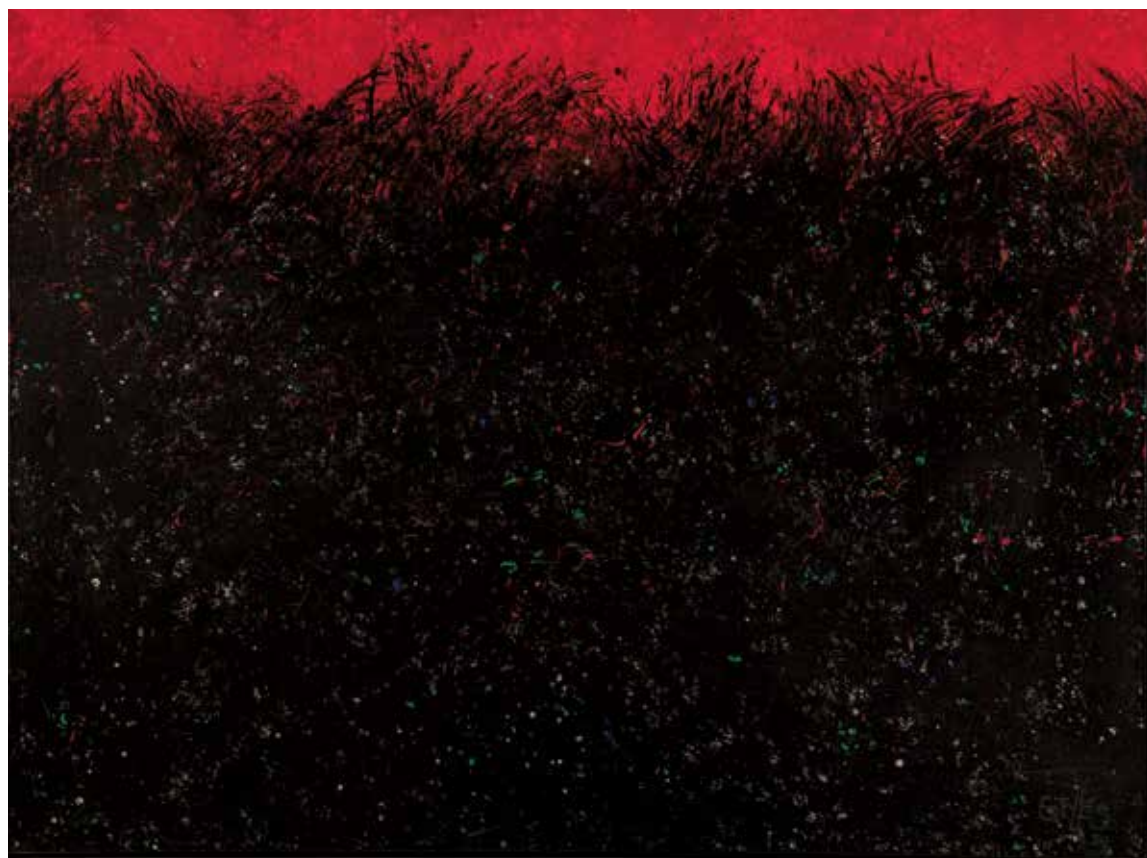


*Woman in a White Dress*, 1968, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 37 in.  
Collection of Larry and Brenda Thompson





*Black into Red into Black #2*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.  
Collection of Kerry and, C. Betty Davis



*Black into Red into Black #1*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 48 in.  
Collection of Kenneth and Cynthia Prince



*Working Root Series*, 1994, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 60 in.  
Collection of Michael and Danita Harris





*Sunrise Sunset Revisited, 2024,*  
acrylic on canvas, triptych, 30 x 90 in.





*Study in Black, White, and Green, 2015,*  
collage on paper, diptych, 7½ x 12 in.



*Study in Blue, White, Green, and Silver, 2012,*  
mixed media on gesso on rag paper, 22 x 30 in.

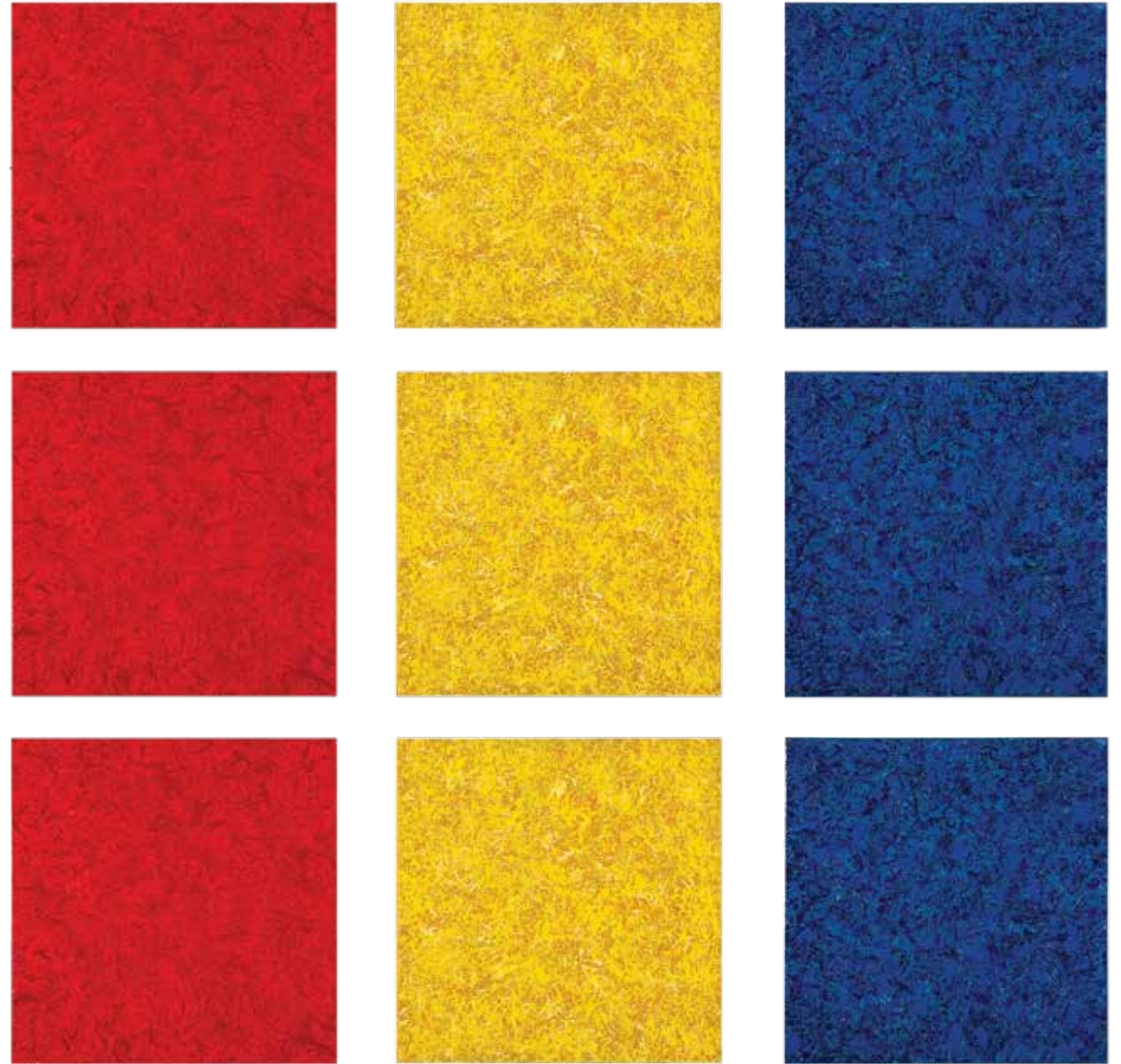


*Study in Blue and Silver, 2020, acrylic on paper, 42 x 60 in.*



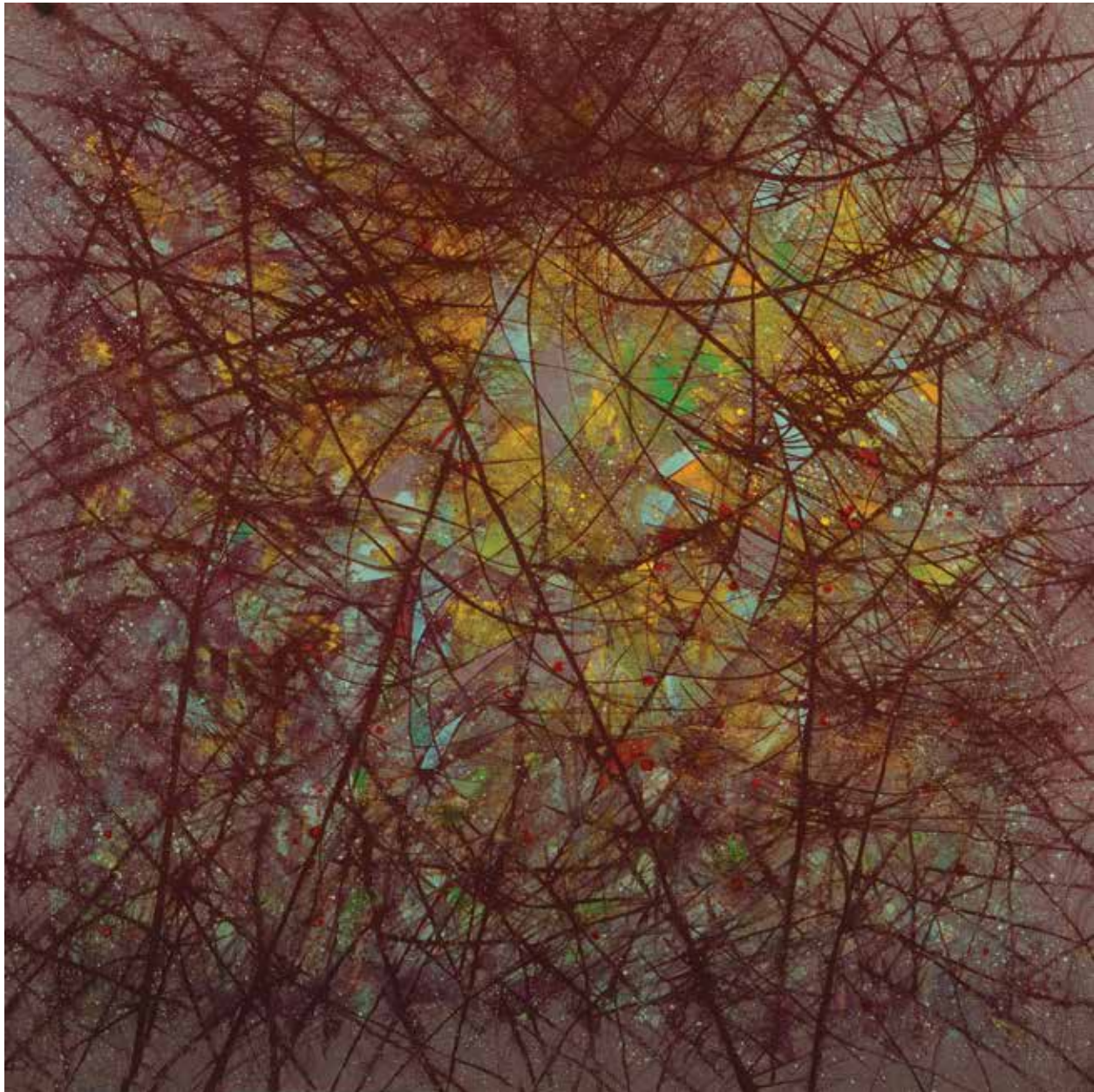


*Hybrid*, 2008, acrylic on paper, 32 x 46 in.

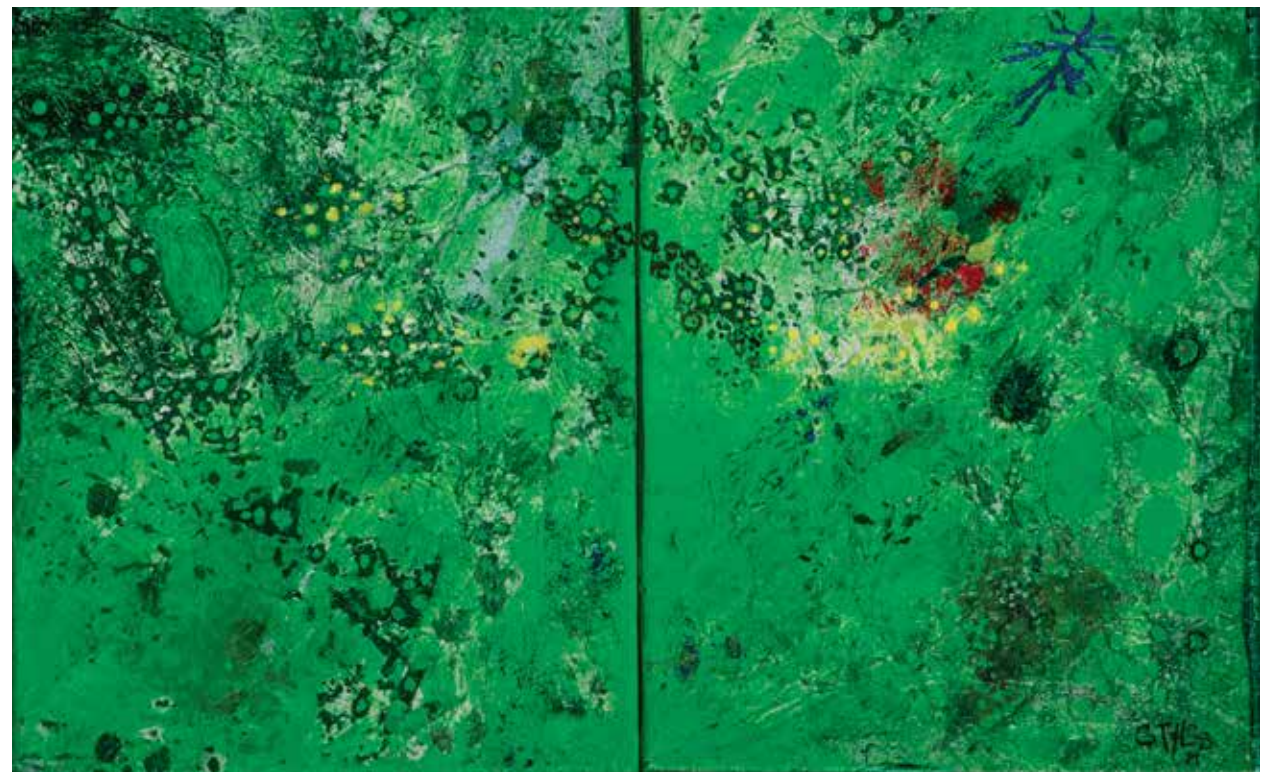


*Red, Yellow, Blue Pine Needle*,  
2013, acrylic on canvas,  
9 panels, each 20 x 20 in.





*Untitled*, 1983, acrylic on fabric-covered paper, 34 x 34 in.

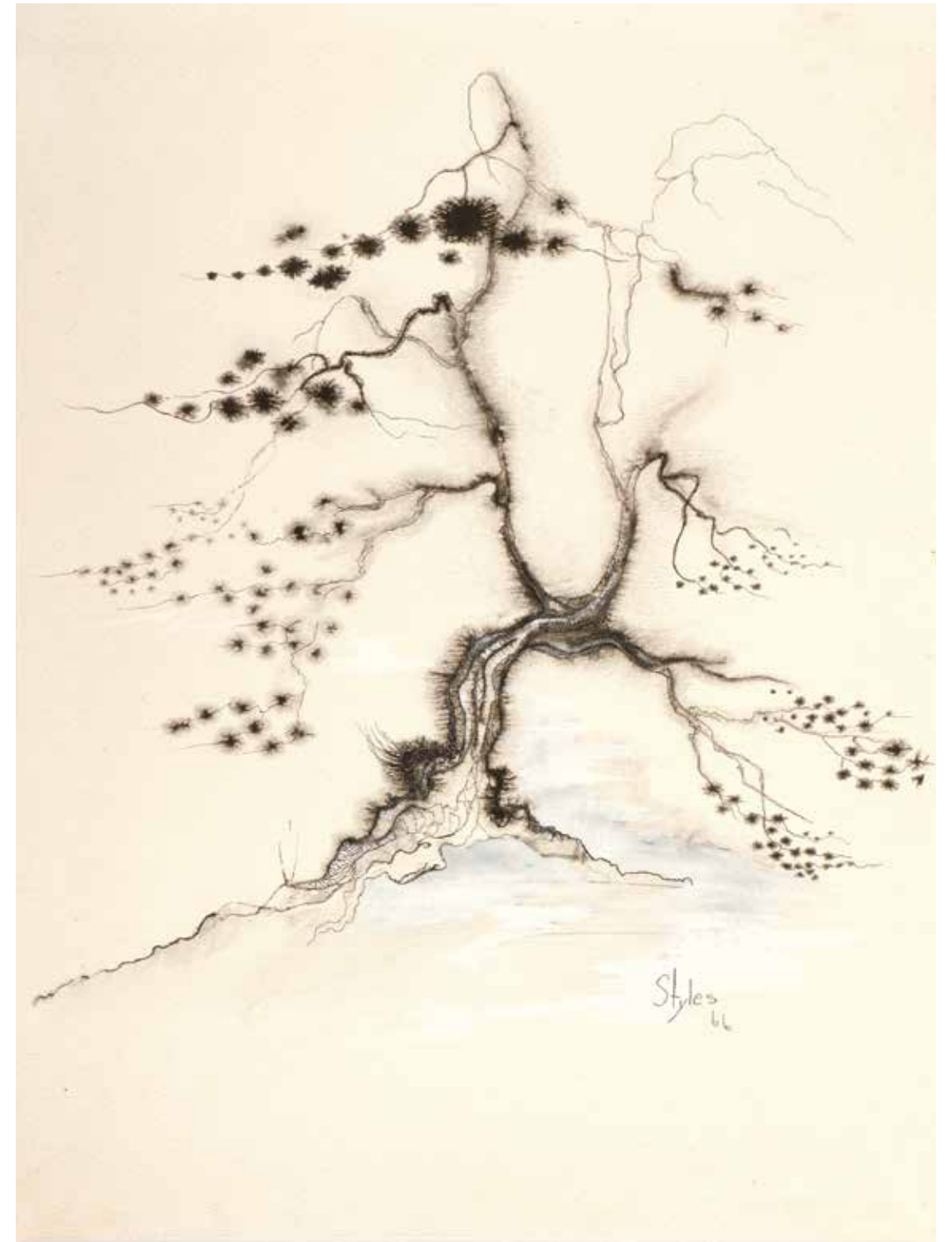


*Green Diptych*, 2021, collage on canvas, diptych, 10 x 16 in.





*Untitled*, 1978, monoprint, 16 x 12 in.



*Oriental Pine*, 1966, ink and gouache on paper, 20 x 15 in.



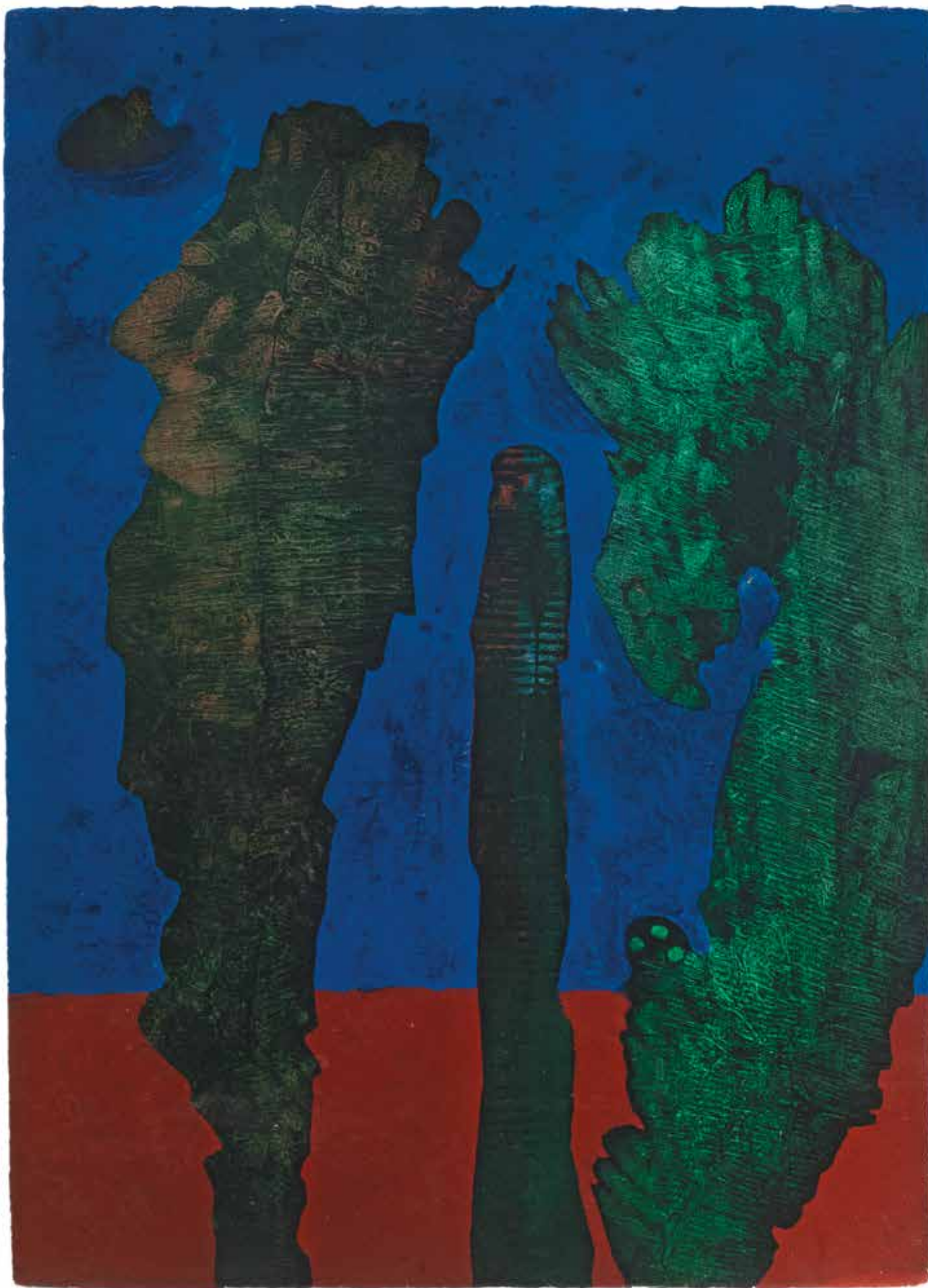


*Study in Red, Yellow, and Silver*, 2015,  
mixed media on paper, triptych, 20 x 39 in.



*Study in Black, White, and Silver*, 2002,  
mixed media on gesso on rag paper, 30 x 22 in.





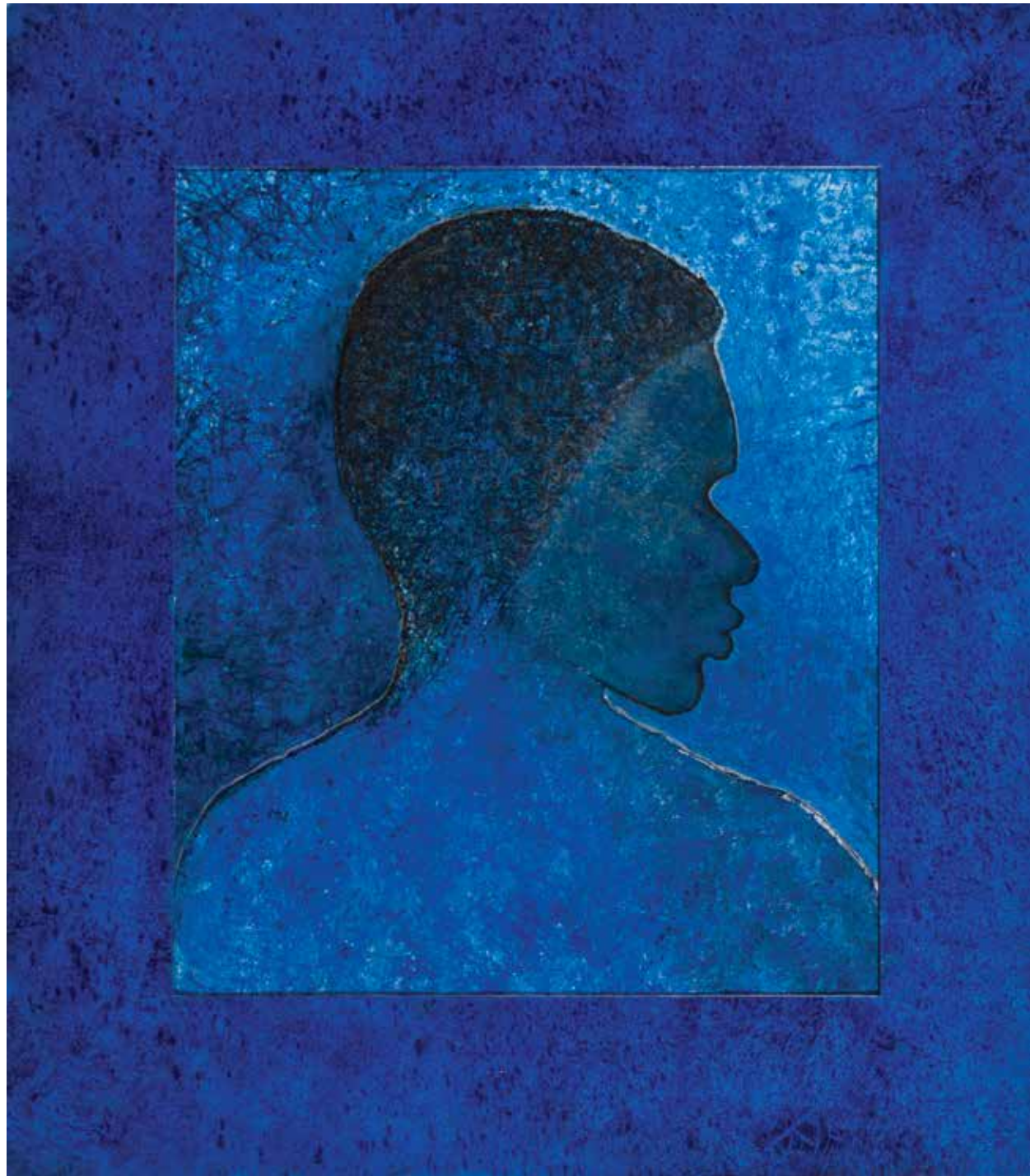
Eddie's Fantasy, 1986, acrylic on paper, triptych, 42 x 89 in.





*Pine Needle Series #8*, 2011, acrylic on rag paper, triptych, 30 x 67½ in.



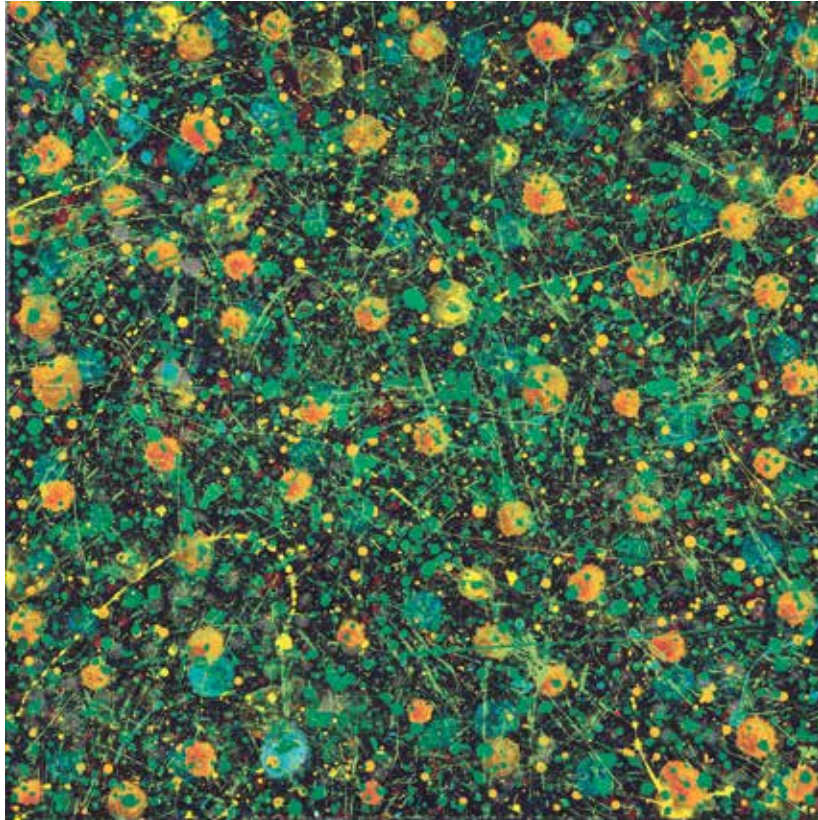


*Rufus in Blue*, 1975, mixed media on paper, 28 x 25 in.



*Naomi Grouping*, 2015,  
acrylic on paper,  
nine figures,  
25 x 25 in. (overall)





*LDS (Louis Delsarte Series)*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.



*LDS (Louis Delsarte Series) #4*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.



*Silver Series, Yellow*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 60 in.  
Collection of Kerry and C. Betty Davis



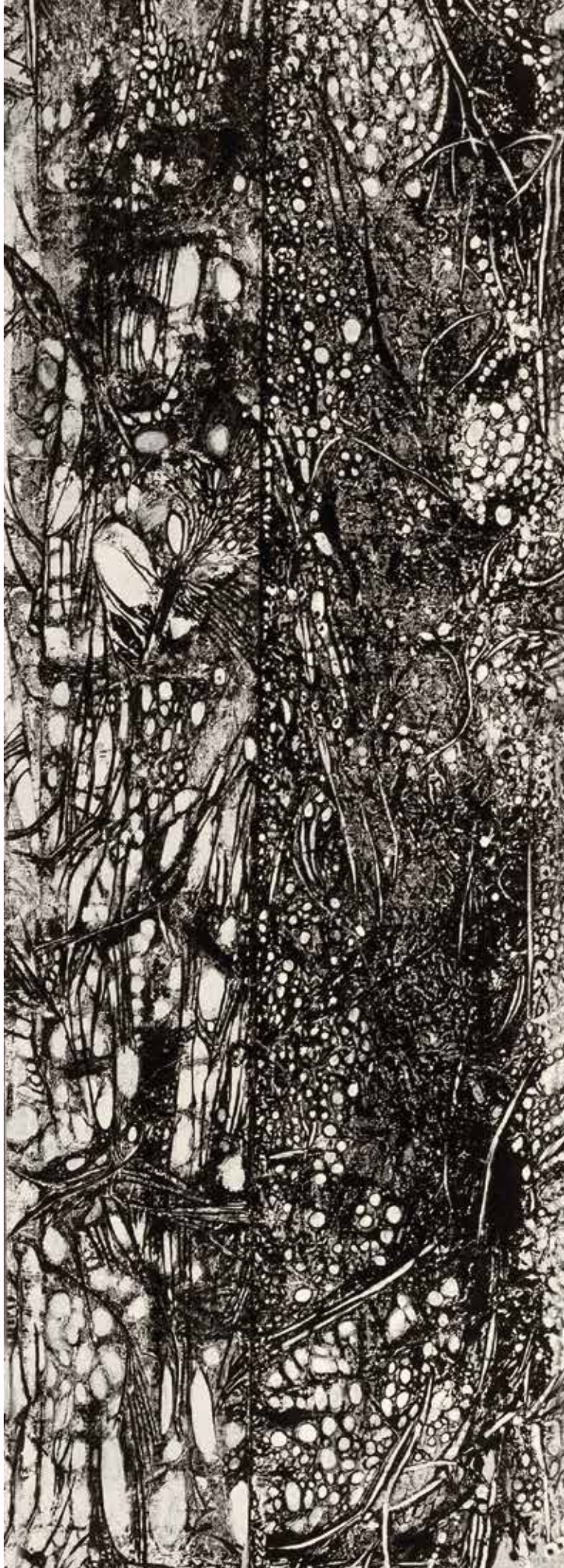


*Where the Golden Leaves Fell*, 2011, acrylic on paper, 40 x 50 in.  
Collection of Stewart Scott



*Silver Edge*, 2009, acrylic on gesso on rag paper, 32 x 42 in.



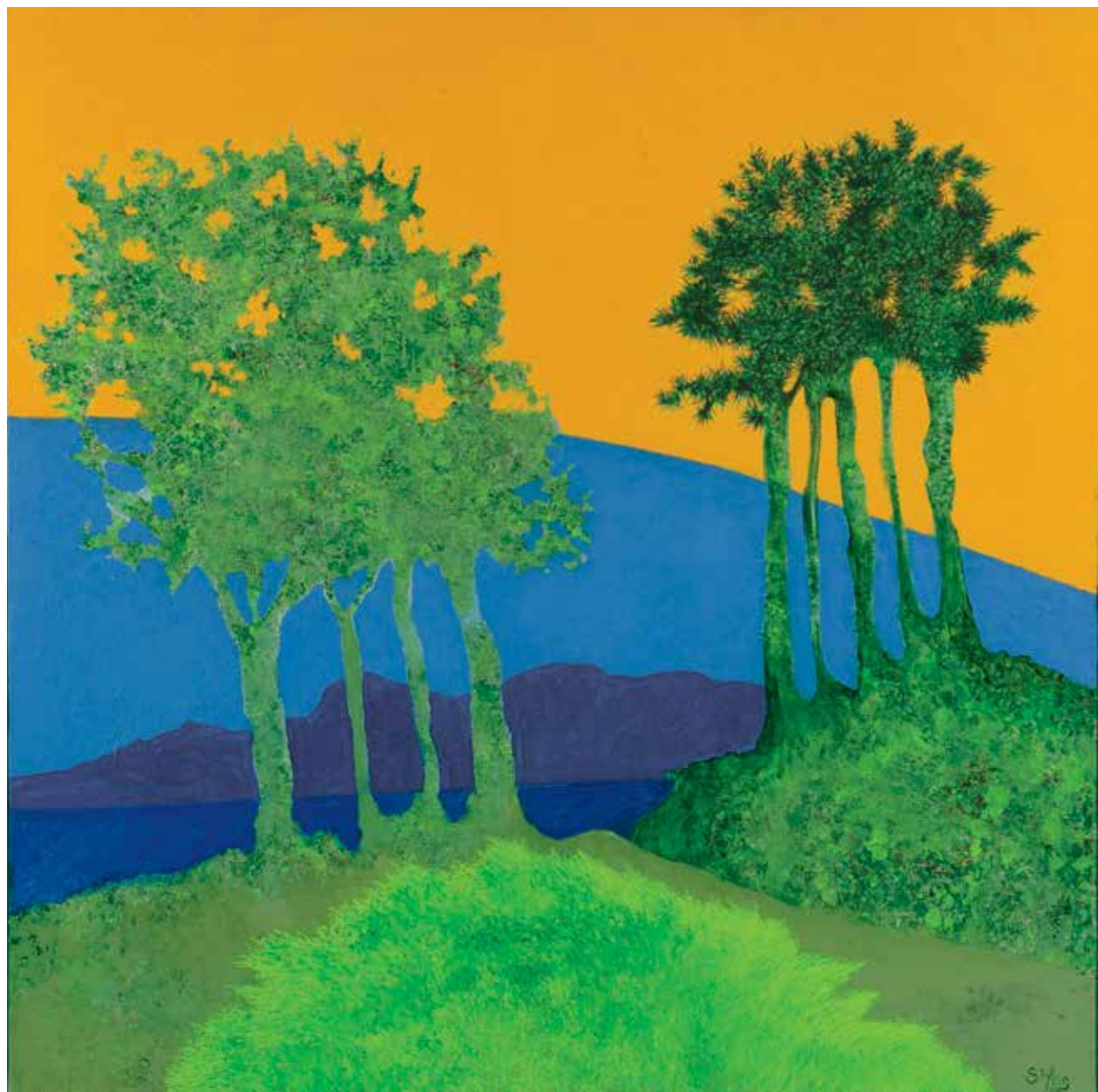


*Evolving Series*, 2007,  
collage on paper, 39¾ x 13¾ in.

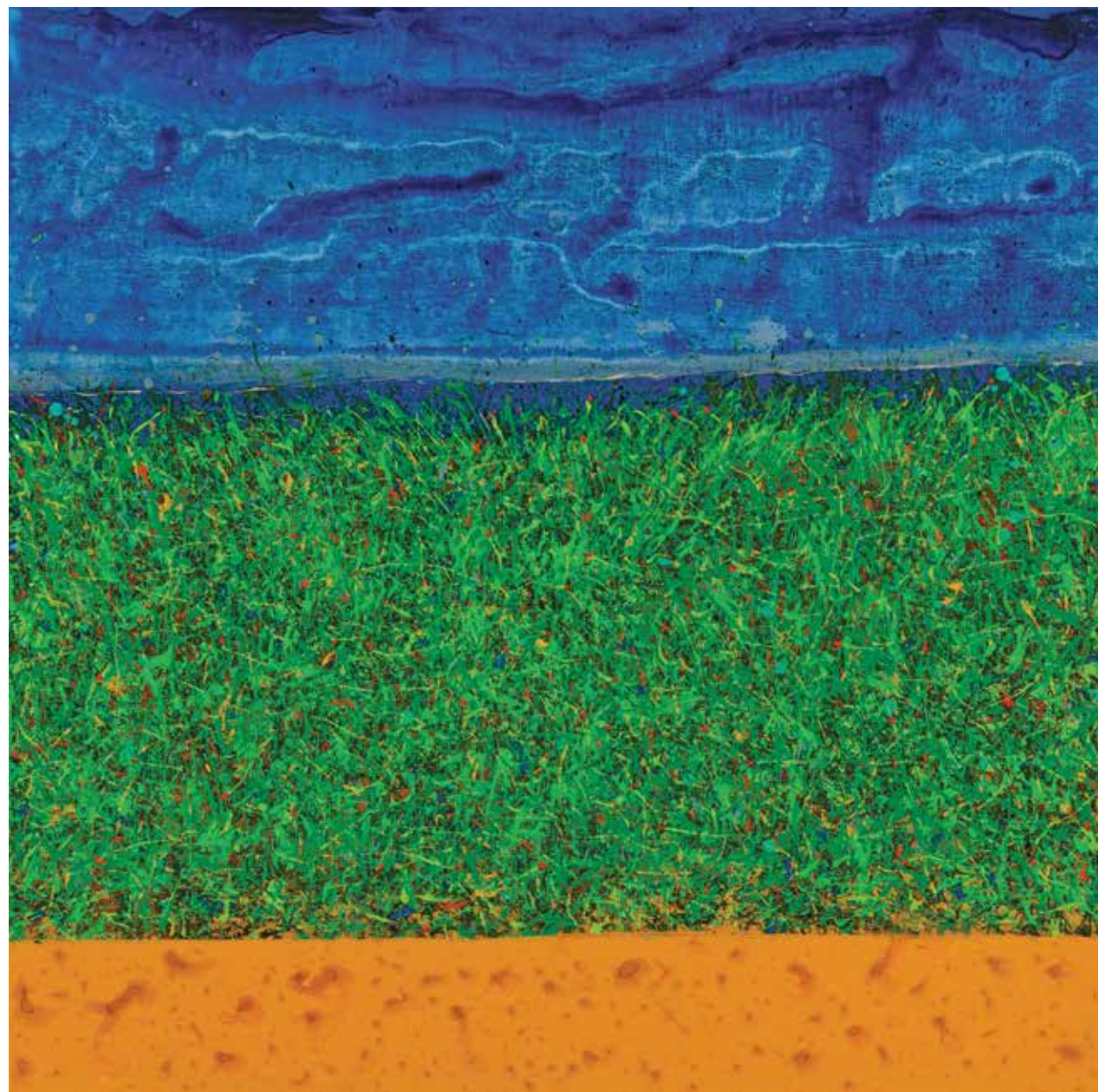


*Brenda Thompson's Red Painting Reimagined*, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 72 in.  
UMGC Permanent Collection, International Collection, Gift of the artist





*MBP (Mayhew Birthday Painting) Series #1,*  
2024, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48 in.



*New Series #3, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 30 in.*





Boxed Note Cards (detail)



Boxed Note Cards  
2013-14  
acrylic on paper  
dimensions variable





*Root Work #5*, n.d., acrylic on paper, 38 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 48 in.  
Collection of Neil and Juanita Hartbarger

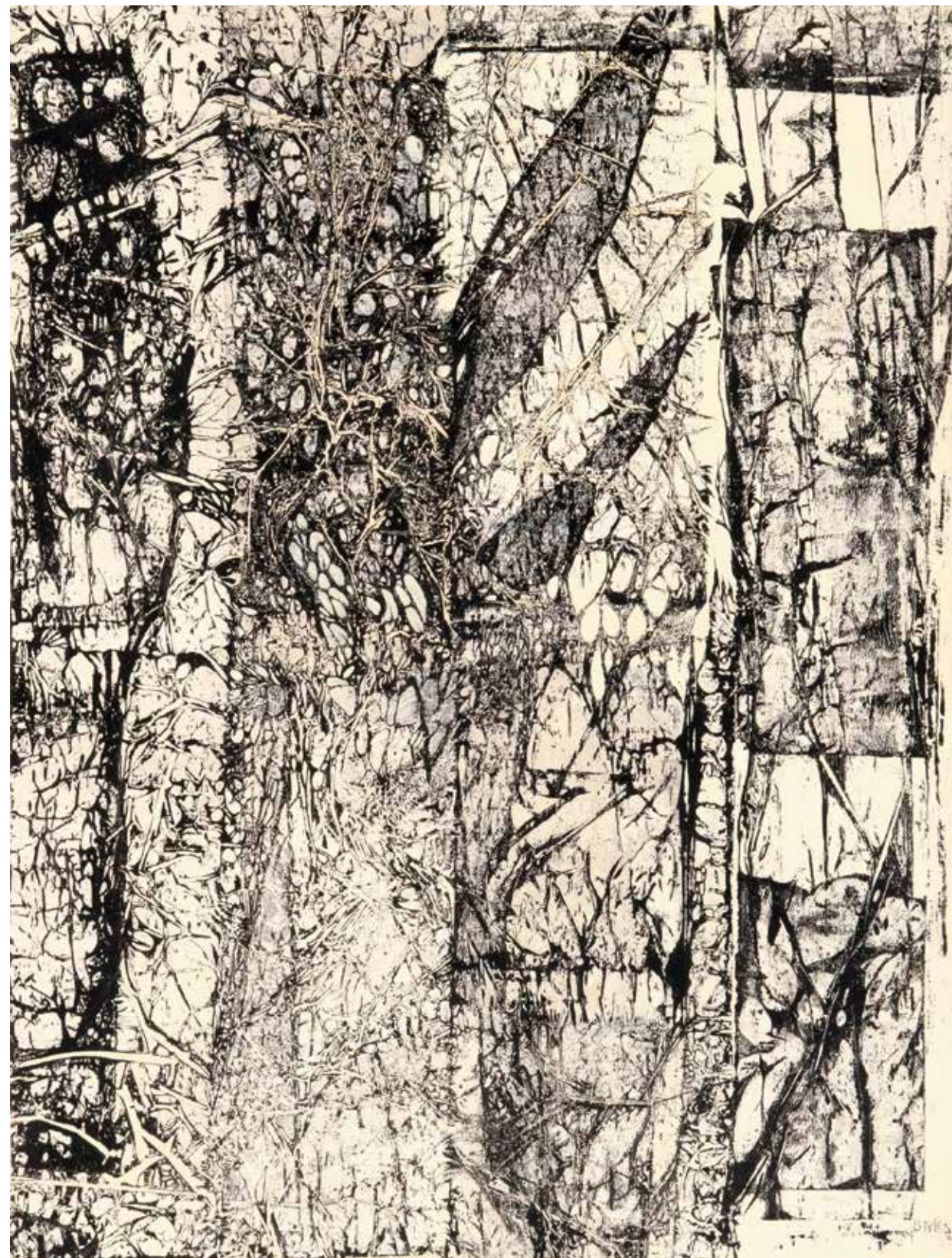


*Study in Purple*, 2000, acrylic on paper, 37 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 51 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
Collection of Larry and Brenda Thompson



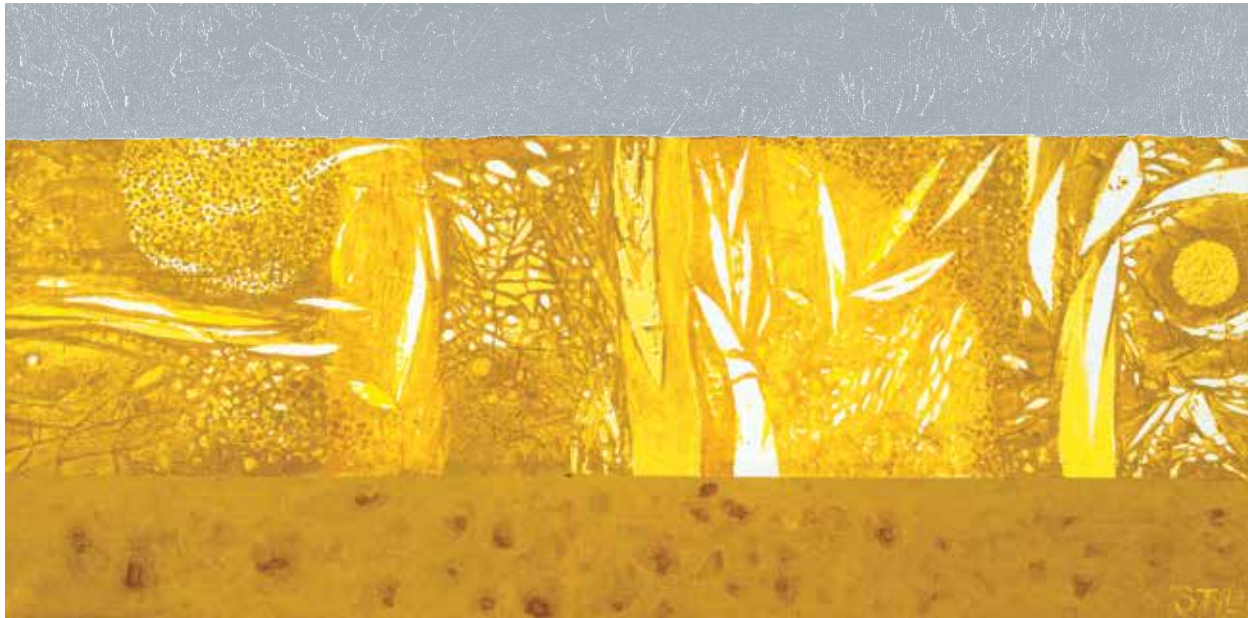


*Red Leaf*, 1981, collage on paper, 15 x 22½ in.

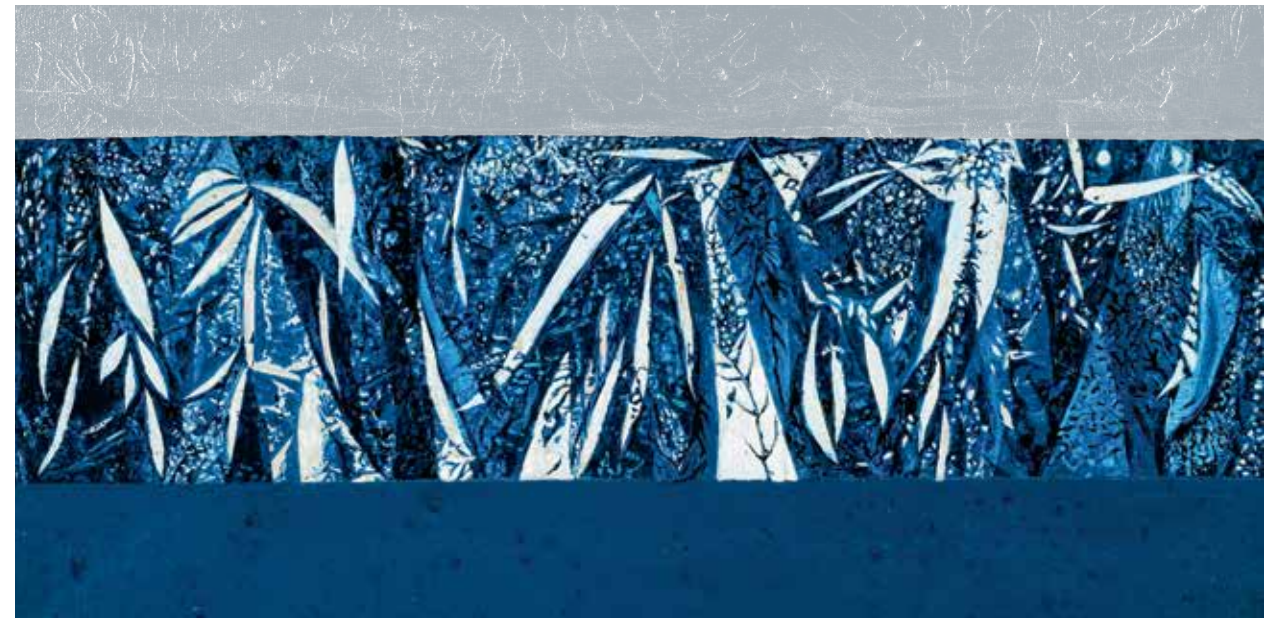


*Evolving Series #1*, 2000, collage on paper, 40 x 30 in.  
Collection of Kenneth and Cynthia Prince





*Silver Tree Revisited (Yellow)*, 2015,  
mixed media on canvas, 12 x 24 in.



*Silver Tree Revisited (Blue)*, 2015,  
mixed media on canvas, 12 x 24 in.



*Silver Tree Revisited (Green)*, 2015,  
mixed media on canvas, 12 x 24 in.



*Silver Tree Revisited (Red)*, 2015,  
mixed media on canvas, 12 x 24 in.





*An Owl for Richard (Long)*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 10 x 8 in.



*Naomi (Woman in Profile)*, 2015, acrylic on paper, 5½ x 5½ in., Collection of Larry and Brenda Thompson





*Phoenix Series #3*, n.d., acrylic on canvas, 46 x 66 in.  
Collection of Carl Christian



*Spring Awakening*, 1984,  
acrylic on canvas, 49½ x 96 in.

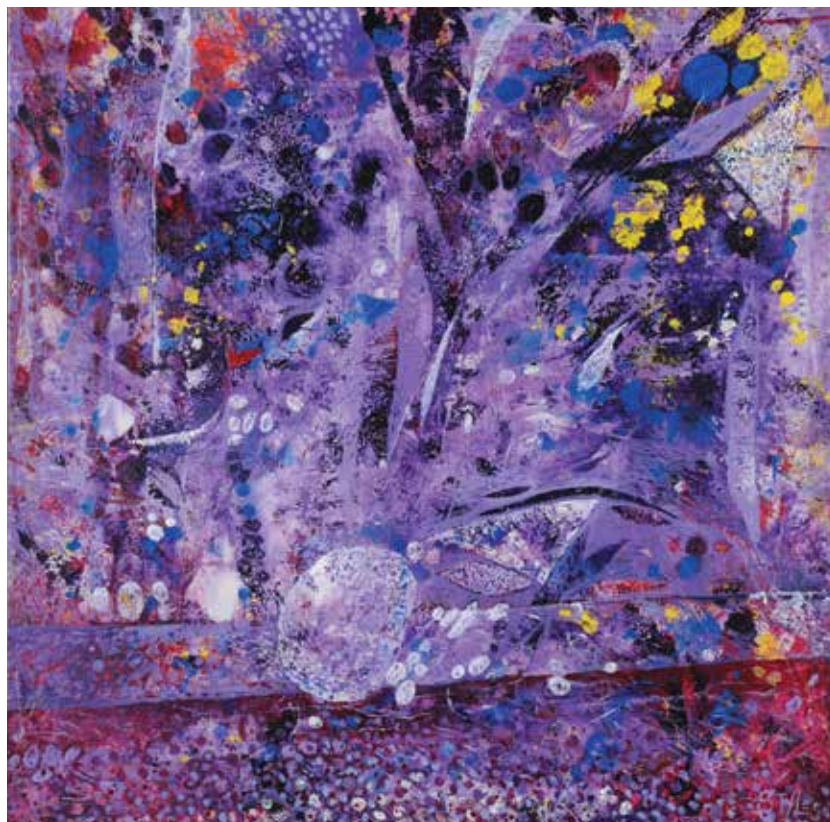




*Study in Black, White, Silver*, 2002, mixed media  
on gesso on rag paper, diptych, 20 x 50 in.



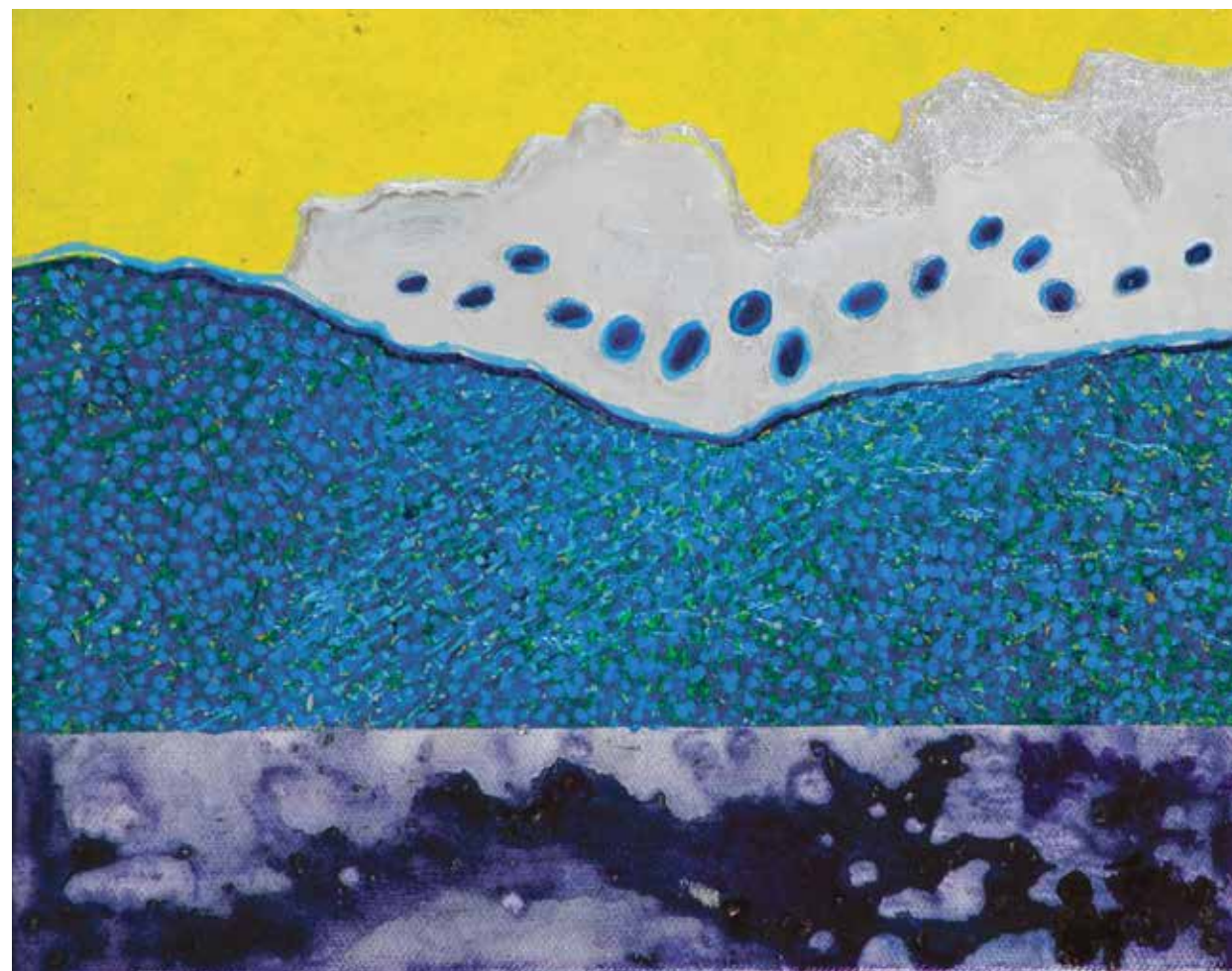




*Sheila's Wish #1*, 2022, collage on canvas, 20 x 20 in.  
Collection of Franklin and Sheila Jackson



*Sheila's Wish #2*, 2022, collage on canvas, 20 x 20 in.  
Collection of Franklin and Sheila Jackson



*2/28/22*, 2022, acrylic on canvas, 8 x 10 in.





*Summer Rainbow Revisited #4*, 2015, acrylic on paper, 39 x 52 in.



*Working Roots Series in Red and White*, 2010, acrylic on board, 32 x 46 in.



2/28/22

2022  
acrylic on canvas  
8 x 10 in.

*Black into Red into Black #1*  
2020  
acrylic on canvas  
36 x 48 in.  
Collection of Kenneth and  
Cynthia Prince

*Black into Red into Black #2*  
2014  
acrylic on canvas  
30 x 30 in.  
Collection of Kerry and  
C. Betty Davis

*Boxed Note Cards*  
2013–14  
acrylic on paper  
dimensions variable

*Brenda Thompson's Red  
Painting Reimagined*  
2024  
acrylic on canvas  
48 x 72 in.  
UMGC Permanent Collection  
International Collection  
Gift of the artist

*Eddie's Fantasy*  
1986  
acrylic on paper  
triptych, 42 x 89 in.

*Evolving Series*  
2007  
collage on paper  
39¼ x 13¾ in.

*Evolving Series #1*  
2000  
collage on paper  
40 x 30 in.  
Collection of Kenneth and  
Cynthia Prince

*Green Diptych*  
2021  
collage on canvas  
diptych, 10 x 16 in.

*Hybrid*  
2008  
acrylic on paper  
32 x 46 in.

*Kerry's Painting*  
2018  
oil on canvas  
48 x 72 in.  
Collection of the artist

*LDS (Louis Delsarte Series)*  
2020  
acrylic on canvas  
30 x 30 in.

*LDS (Louis Delsarte Series) #2*  
2020  
acrylic on canvas  
48 x 48 in.

*LDS (Louis Delsarte Series) #4*  
2020  
acrylic on canvas  
30 x 30 in.

*MBP (Mayhew Birthday  
Painting) Series #1*  
2024  
acrylic on canvas  
48 x 48 in.

*Naomi Grouping*  
2015  
acrylic on paper  
nine figures, 25 x 25 in. (overall)

*Naomi (Woman in Profile)*  
2015  
acrylic on paper  
5½ x 5½ in.  
Collection of Larry and  
Brenda Thompson

*New Series #3*  
2019  
acrylic on canvas  
30 x 30 in.

*Oriental Pine*  
1966  
ink and gouache on paper  
20 x 15 in.

*An Owl for Richard (Long)*  
2017  
acrylic on canvas  
10 x 8 in.

*Phoenix Series #3*  
n.d.  
acrylic on canvas  
46 x 66 in.  
Collection of Carl Christian

*Pine Needle Series #8*  
2011  
acrylic on rag paper  
triptych, 30 x 67½ in.

*Reclining Nude*  
1965  
modeling paste on canvas  
10 x 16 in.

*Red Leaf*  
1981  
collage on paper  
15 x 22½ in.

*Red, Yellow, Blue Pine Needle*  
2013  
acrylic on canvas  
9 panels, each 20 x 20 in.

*Root Work #5*  
n.d.  
acrylic on paper  
38¾ x 48 in.  
Collection of Neil and  
Juanita Hartbarger

*Rufus in Blue*  
1975  
mixed media on paper  
28 x 25 in.

*Sheila's Wish #1*  
2022  
collage on canvas  
20 x 20 in.  
Collection of Franklin and  
Sheila Jackson

*Sheila's Wish #2*  
2022  
collage on canvas  
20 x 20 in.  
Collection of Franklin and  
Sheila Jackson

*Silver Edge*  
2009  
acrylic on gesso  
on rag paper  
32 x 42 in.

*Silver Series, Yellow*  
2021  
acrylic on canvas  
48 x 60 in.  
Collection of Kerry and  
C. Betty Davis

*Silver Tree Revisited (Blue)*  
2015  
mixed media on canvas  
12 x 24 in.

*Silver Tree Revisited (Green)*  
2015  
mixed media on canvas  
12 x 24 in.

*Silver Tree Revisited (Red)*  
2015  
mixed media on canvas  
12 x 24 in.

*Silver Tree Revisited (Yellow)*  
2015  
mixed media on canvas  
12 x 24 in.

*Spring Awakening*  
1984  
acrylic on canvas  
49½ x 96 in.

*Study in Black, White,  
and Green*  
2015  
collage on paper  
diptych, 7½ x 12 in.

*Study in Black, White, and Silver*  
2002  
mixed media on gesso  
on rag paper  
30 x 22 in.

*Study in Black, White, Silver*  
2002  
mixed media on gesso  
on rag paper  
diptych, 20 x 50 in.

*Study in Blue and Silver*  
2020  
acrylic on paper  
42 x 60 in.

*Study in Blue, White, Green,  
and Silver*  
2012  
mixed media on gesso  
on rag paper  
22 x 30 in.

*Study in Purple*  
2000  
acrylic on paper  
37½ x 51½ in.  
Collection of Larry and  
Brenda Thompson

*Study in Red, Yellow, and Silver*  
2015  
mixed media on paper  
triptych, 20 x 39 in.

*Summer Rainbow Revisited #4*  
2015  
acrylic on paper  
39 x 52 in.

*Sunrise Sunset*  
1983  
acrylic and collage on  
illustration board  
20 x 32 in.  
Collection of Larry and  
Brenda Thompson

*Sunrise Sunset Revisited*  
2024  
acrylic on canvas  
triptych, 30 x 90 in.

*Untitled*  
1978  
monoprint  
16 x 12 in.

*Untitled*  
1983  
acrylic on  
fabric-covered paper  
34 x 34 in.

*Untitled*  
n.d.  
acrylic on canvas  
49½ x 96 in.  
Collection of Kenneth and  
Cynthia Prince

*Untitled (Louis Delsarte Series)*  
2020  
acrylic on canvas  
48 x 48 in.  
Collection of Kerry and  
C. Betty Davis

*Where the Golden Leaves Fell*  
2011  
acrylic on paper  
40 x 50 in.  
Collection of Stewart Scott

*Woman in a White Dress*  
1968  
acrylic on canvas  
48 x 37 in.  
Collection of Larry and  
Brenda Thompson

*Working Root Series*  
1994

acrylic on canvas  
36 x 60 in.  
Collection of Michael and  
Danita Harris

*Working Roots Series in Red  
and White*  
2010  
acrylic on board  
32 x 46 in.



## Education

Morris Brown College (1962–1965)

## Selected Commissions, Awards, and Fellowships

**2018** The Larry D. and Brenda A. Thompson Award, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**2001** Cultural Exchange Fellowship, King Baudouin Foundation, Belgium

**2000** “It’s An All-Star Ball” Prototype Ball, Atlanta Braves

**1997** STYLES Absolute Expressions, Absolut Vodka, Sweden

## Selected Group Exhibitions

**2025** *Memories and Inspiration: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art*, Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke, VA, traveling exhibition (catalog)

**2024** *Decadence of Another Kind*, September Gray Art Gallery, Bridgeport Art Center, Chicago, IL

**2024** *Memories and Inspiration*, Lauren Rogers Museum of Art, Laural, MS

**2024** *Landscapes for Richard Mayhew*, Black Art in America Gallery, East Point, GA

**2024** *Memories and Inspiration*, Sardoni Art Gallery, Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, PA

**2022** *Heralding Confluence*, “Confluence 2022,” Meridian Herald, Trees Atlanta Kendeda Building, Atlanta, GA

**2022** *Memories and Inspiration*, Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV

**2022** *Infinity on the Horizon*, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**2021** *Stories Told in Abstraction*, Inaugural Art Exhibition, Mimosa Hall and Gardens, Roswell, GA

**2021** *Memories and Inspiration*, David Owsley Museum of Art, Ball State University, Muncie, IN

**2021** *Memories and Inspiration*, Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, CT

**2021** *Memories and Inspiration*, Appleton Museum of Art, Ocala, FL

**2020** *Memories and Inspiration*, University of Richmond Museums, Richmond, VA

**2020** *Memories and Inspiration*, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK

**2020** *The Urban and the Rural Experience*, Tubman African American Museum, Macon, GA

**2020** *Celebrate! Investigate! Create! A Collaboration Between Arcadia Elementary School and the Paul R. Jones Collection of American Art*, Paul R. Jones Museum, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**2019** *seenUNseen: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art and the Northeast Ohio Response*, Artist Archives of the Western Reserve and the Sculpture Center, Cleveland, OH (catalog)

**2019** *[Un]Common Collections: Selections From Fifteen Collections*, David C. Driskell Center, University of Maryland, College Park, MD

**2019** *The Adjacent Possible*, Muscarelle Museum of Art, William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA

**2019** *Stony the Road We Trod*, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**2019** *Atlanta Collects: Ten Notable Fine Art Collections*, ArtsXchange, Jack Sinclair Gallery, East Point, GA

**2018** Permanent Collection Rotation, Orkin Gallery, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**2018** *Divergent // Abstraction*, Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, Atlanta, GA

**2017** *Expanding Tradition: Selections from the Larry D. and Brenda A. Thompson Collection*, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA (catalog)

**2017** *Freedom? Selections from the Paul R. Jones Collection*, Paul R. Jones Museum, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**2017** *A Professor’s Influence: The Sperry and Thompson Collections*, Culver-Stockton College, Canton, MO (catalog)

**2016** *Artist and Collectors: Atlanta Area Collectors*, Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA

**2016** *Recent Acquisitions*, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**2015** *Black Artists of Georgia: African American Art from the Tubman Museum of Art Collection*, Tubman African American Museum, Macon, GA

**2014** *Beyond the University Art Annuals: Acquisitions from 1970–2014*, Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA

**2014** *FreshPAINT: African American Art at UD*, Mechanical Hall Gallery, University of Delaware, Newark, DE

**2014** *Ascending Yellow*, Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA

**2013** *Drawing Inside the Perimeter*, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA

**2012** *Wavelengths: Abstract Selections from the Paul R. Jones Collection*, Paul R. Jones Museum, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**2011** *Western American Art South of the Sweet Tea Line III*, Booth Western Art Museum, Cartersville, GA (catalog)

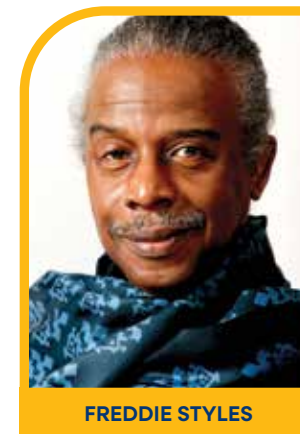
**2011** *Tradition Redefined: The Larry and Brenda Thompson Collection of African American Art*, Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**2010** *Art in Embassies*, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

**2008** *Art in Embassies*, Freetown, Sierra Leon (catalog)



**I focus on interesting and complex textures that emerge from my surroundings. The wood grain of oak, the textures of bark, the smoothness of stone, the cracks of aged paint, and the processes of mold and decay are all recorded on the canvas of my memory for future use in my work.**



FREDDIE STYLES

REIS BIRDWHISTELL

## Selected One- and Two-Person Exhibitions

**2024** *Queer Perspectives*, Steffen Thomas Museum, Buckhead, GA

**2016** *The Nature of Art: Freddie Styles and Richard Mayhew*, September Gray Fine Art Gallery, Atlanta, GA

**2012** *Freddie Styles: New Work*, Bill Hodges Gallery, New York, NY

**2012** *Freddie Styles: Roots, Pine Needles, and Faxes*, Tubman African American Museum, Macon, GA

**2011** *Freddie Styles and Lynn Marshall-Linnemeier: Naturally*, Avisca Fine Art Gallery, Marietta, GA

**2006** *Freddie Styles: Old, New, Borrowed, Blue*, Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA (catalog)

**2002** *New Work*, AIR Antwerpen, Antwerp, Belgium

**2001** *Evolving*, Atrium Gallery, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Atlanta, GA

**2001** *New Work*, Kiang Gallery, Atlanta, GA



## Selected Curatorial Projects

**2009** Curator of Art for the City of Atlanta  
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural  
Affairs, 16th and 17th floors, Harris Tower,  
Peachtree Center, Atlanta, GA

**2008** *Masters Series Reunion*, City Gallery East,  
Atlanta, GA

**2008** *Artists/Architects*, City Gallery East,  
Atlanta, GA

**2008–2003** Art on Loan Program, Office of  
Cultural Affairs, City of Atlanta, GA

**2007** *A Summer Show with Caribbean Roots*,  
City Gallery East, Atlanta, GA

**2007** *Katherine Mitchell Retrospective*,  
13th Masters Series, City Gallery East, Atlanta, GA

**2006** *Pin-Up Show #3*, City Gallery East,  
Atlanta, GA

**2006** *Atlanta Collects Women*, City Gallery East,  
Atlanta, GA

**2006** Photographs, City Gallery East, Atlanta, GA

**2006** *On The Spot*, City Gallery East, Atlanta, GA

**2006** *Mario Petrirena: Conversations Past and  
Present*, 12th Masters Series, City Gallery East,  
Atlanta, GA

**2005** *Pin-Up Show #2*, City Gallery East,  
Atlanta, GA

## Selected Public and Private Collections

Anthony and Davida Artis, Flint, MI

AT&T, Atlanta, GA

Atlanta Housing Authority, Atlanta, GA

Atlanta Life Insurance Company, Atlanta, GA

Drs. Thomas D. Boston and Catherine L. Ross,  
Atlanta, GA

Dr. Adrienne Childs, Washington, D.C.

Carl Christian, Atlanta, GA

City of Atlanta, GA

Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA

Clayton State University, Morrow, GA

Dr. William and Verna Cleveland, Atlanta, GA

Kevin Cole, Fairburn, GA

Columbus Museum, Columbus, GA

Contel Corporation, Atlanta, GA

Kimberly Coulter, Burton, MI

Carter and DeLois Cue, Durham, NC

Kerry and C. Betty Davis, Clarkston, GA

Norm and Carnetta Davis, Birmingham, AL

Dacula Campus, Perimeter College, Georgia  
State University, GA

Dameon and Kimberly Fisher, Atlanta, GA

Sheryl Flowers, Atlanta, GA

Helen Forbes, Cleveland, OH

Eddie and Jacqueline Granderson, Atlanta, GA

Hammonds House Museum, Atlanta, GA

Michael and Danita Harris, Roswell, GA

Neil and Juanita Hartbarger, Silver Spring, MD

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Morris and Sonja Haywood, Cleveland, OH

Drs. Jeff and Sivan Hines, Atlanta, GA

H. J. Russell & Company, Atlanta, GA

George Howell and Mtamanika Youngblood,  
Atlanta, GA

Young Hughley, Atlanta, GA

I. P. Stanbeck Museum and Planetarium,  
South Carolina State University, Orangeburg, SC

Franklin and Sheila Jackson, Mitchellville, MD

E. Patrick Johnson and Stephen J. Lewis,  
Chicago, IL

Johnson Publishing Company, Chicago, IL

Lionel Lofton, Pearland, TX

Camille Love, Atlanta, GA

Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, CT

John Malcolm, Cleveland, OH

Patric McCoy, Chicago, IL

Jan Meersman, Antwerp, Belgium

MetroHealth Medical Center, Cleveland, OH

Cynthia Morrison, Winter Garden, FL

Muscarella Museum of Art, William & Mary College,  
Williamsburg, VA

Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia,  
Atlanta, GA

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

National Museum of African American History  
and Culture, Washington, D.C.

Paul R. Jones Museum, University of Alabama,  
Tuscaloosa, AL

Kenneth and Cynthia Prince, Stone Mountain, GA

Nigel Redden, Charleston, SC

Harold Rose, Stockbridge, GA

Stewart Scott, Redan, GA

Dr. Linda Singletary, Hillside, NJ

Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, GA

Dr. Robert and Jean Steele, Honolulu, HI

St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO

Cleophus and Carla Thomas, Anniston, AL

Larry and Brenda Thompson, Atlanta, GA

Brian and Irene Titus, Madison, GA

Roberta Torian, Westchester, PA

V&S Vin & Sprit AB, Åhus, Sweden

Donnell Walker, Yeadon, PA

Tony Walters, Warwick, NY

Beatrice and Anthony Welters, New York, NY

Clarence White, Atlanta, GA

## Selected Bibliography

- Ian Tocher, “Styles Brings Local Color to *Queer Perspectives* Exhibit,” Visual Arts Review, Lake Country, *Eatonton Messenger*, August 15, 2024.

- Steven Litt, “Seen Unseen Exhibition at Artist Archives in Cleveland Highlights African-American Artists, Known and Unknown,” Visual Arts Review, *Cleveland.com*, October 20, 2019.

- Catherine Fox, “High Museum Finally Gives a Nod to Atlanta Artists with a Splendid Exhibition of Drawings,” Visual Arts Review, *Arts ATL*, July 15, 2013.

- ART: Knowledge & Arts Initiative* (Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library, 2012), Exhibition catalog.

- Tina Maria Dunkley and Jerry Cullum, *In the Eye of the Muses: Selections from the Clark Atlanta University Art Collection* (Clark Atlanta University, 2012), 116, 209.

- “ABSOLUTE EXPRESSIONS at Woodruff Arts Center,” *The Champion* (Decatur, GA), July 22, 1998.

- “Three Locals Make Mark with ABSOLUTE Art,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, July 4, 1998.

- Anthony C. Davis, “Black Artists Create for Heritage Series,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, June 16, 1998.

- Linda Armstrong and Joan H. Allen, “Fabulous Faces at Museum for African Art,” *New York Amsterdam News*, October 23, 1997, p. 24.

- Catherine Fox, “Safe Introduction to the Art of Blacks,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, June 13, 1997, p. 18.

- Crystal A. Britton, *African American Art: The Long Struggle* (Smithmark Publishers, 1996), 126.

- Lee May, “Artist Follows Nature’s Free-Spirited Lead,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, May 12, 1995, p. G1.

- Martha Woodham, “The Collectors,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, April 22, 1994.

- Mildred Thompson, “Inaugural Show, Camille Love Gallery,” Visual Arts Review, *Art Papers*, March/April 1994.

- William I. Homer, *African American Art, The Paul R. Jones Collection* (University of Delaware, 1993), Exhibition catalog.

- Marilyn Johnson, “The Life of the Party at Carnival,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 12, 1993, p. K3.

- Catherine Fox, “National Invitational Exhibition,” Visual Arts Review, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, August 7, 1992.



About UMGC

University of Maryland Global Campus was founded more than 75 years ago specifically to serve the higher education needs of working adults and military servicemembers. Today, UMGC is the largest provider of postsecondary education in Maryland and continues its global tradition with online and hybrid courses, more than 175 classroom and service locations worldwide, and more than 135 degrees and certificates backed by the reputation of a state university and the University System of Maryland. For more information, visit [umgc.edu](https://umgc.edu).

About the Arts Program at UMGC

Since 1978, UMGC has proudly shown works from a large collection of international and Maryland artists at its headquarters in Adelphi, Maryland, a few miles from the nation’s capital. Through its Arts Program, the university provides a prestigious and wide-ranging forum for emerging and established artists and brings art to the community through special exhibitions and its own collections, which have grown to include more than 2,900 pieces of art.

Artworks are on display throughout the College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center and the Administration Building in Adelphi. The main, lower-level gallery in Adelphi is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week, and the Leroy Merritt Center for the Art of Joseph Sheppard is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week. More than 75,000 students, scholars, and visitors come to the Adelphi facilities each year.

Arts Program Mission Statement

The UMGC Arts Program is dedicated to furthering the university’s objectives by creating a dynamic environment in which our diverse constituents, including students and the general public, can study and learn from direct exposure to our art collections, exhibitions, and educational programs.

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mixed media on canvas, 12 x 24 in.

Title page artwork:  
*Silver Series, Yellow* (detail), 2021,  
acrylic on canvas, 48 x 60 in.  
Collection of Kerry and C. Betty Davis

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UMGC Arts Program Gallery  
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