

# The Almanac

Masako Miki: "Anderson Collection show offers 'journey' toward the future"

By Mette Huberman

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Highlighting innovative and diverse artists, 'The Journey Continues' exhibit hints at how the museum might continue to grow



"Hagar," a glazed stoneware sculpture by Simone Leigh, is a "tribute to underrepresented stories and peoples," according to the label text. Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery

"The Journey Continues" is a special exhibit of 19 artworks by 16 contemporary women and nonbinary artists featuring paintings, sculptures, ceramics, weaving, textile work and mixed media. The show offers a glimpse of the directions in which the Anderson Collection might continue to grow, featuring more women, more diversity and more innovative methods.

Most of the artworks include some kind of craft material, such as yarn, clay or paper, which have been incorporated into the artworks in innovative and interesting ways. The 16 artists range in age from 31 to 92 and represent three continents, North America, Europe and Asia, though a majority of the artists are American. They also represent different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

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The artworks were loaned by Mary Patricia "Putter" Anderson Pence, who carries on the legacy of her parents, Harry and Mary Margaret Anderson, in collecting contemporary art. Their gift of 121 works of postwar American art — the museum's core collection — is the foundation of the Anderson Collection.

The co-curators of the exhibit are Jason Linetzky and Trisha Lagaso Goldberg. Linetzky has been the Anderson Collection's director since its opening in 2014 and Goldberg is the Anderson's recently appointed director of programming and engagement.

The show is the third special exhibit to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Anderson Collection and in this exhibit, Linetzky said that he wanted, "to look toward the future and to present the work of contemporary living artists working today." Thus, almost all of the artworks were created in the last 10 years.



Sarah Crowner creates a textile-like quality by combining painting and stitching techniques in "An Ocean Between the Waves." Courtesy Anderson Collection.

The introduction to the exhibit states that it "helps chart a direction for the second decade (of the Anderson Collection) that invites contemporary artists into dialogue with the museum's core collection." Linetzky said that with this "dialogue," new artworks will continue the "head and the hands" approach in the core collection — that is, contemporary artists whose art reflects "a direct impact from the world in which they live," combined with "a real sense of craftsmanship and facility with manipulating media."

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Goldberg added that, although the exhibit also reflects a continuation of the Andersons family's legacy of art collecting, this exhibit is a reflection of Pence's taste: "It really is a portrait in some ways of Putter and it shows what her thinking is and what she's drawn toward," she said.

Goldberg noted that these artworks are more "experimental" and "innovative" than works in the permanent collection. Painting and ceramics have traditionally been dominated by men and craft disciplines like weaving and textiles by women, so this exhibit says something "about gender, labor and thinking outside the box."



Arlene Shechet combined glazed ceramic and concrete in her sculpture "Snow Day." Courtesy the artist and Pace Gallery

In spite of the wide age range of the artists (a 61-year range), neither Linetzky nor Goldberg felt that their different ages were observable in the artworks. Linetzky said: "I don't think that it presents itself in an aesthetic or observable way. All the work seems really fresh, vivacious and engaging ... which speaks to the manipulation of the materials in really inspiring ways." Goldberg concurred, noting that, "they all look really fresh and contemporary, which is a reflection of Putter as a collector." Linetzky even speculated that it would be hard for viewers to guess the birth year of the artists if they were covered up.

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"Signal" by Teresa Baker combines indigenous materials and synthetic elements as a commentary on "contemporary experiences and present-day Native life," according to the label text. Photo by Mette Huberman.

At the same time, many of the pieces highlight the diversity among the artists' races, ethnicities and nationalities. For example, Simone Leigh's piece, "Hagar," shows the head and torso of a Black woman made in blue glazed stoneware, creating "a tribute to underrepresented stories and peoples," according to the label written by Goldberg. Further, "Signal" by Teresa Baker is made of yarn, cleaned and dried animal hide and willow on artificial turf, which combines "Indigenous materials" with "synthetic elements" as a commentary on "contemporary experiences and present-day Native life," according to the label text.

In "Persevering Daruma Doll" by Masako Miki, the artist takes inspiration from the traditional Daruma doll, which symbolizes "good fortune, determination and luck," according to the label. She has created a sculpture consisting of two large balls sitting on top of each other, made of foam covered with blue and brown wool patterned with dots and stripes, and standing on three wooden legs.

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Goldberg commented that Miki's sculpture is "otherworldly," "playful" and "filled with such personality," reminding her of "a cartoonish figure" out of "a manga or an anime." "You walk into the room and you're greeted by it ... and you want to touch it because you want to know what it's made out of." Linetzky said that the sculpture looks very "poppy and contemporary" at a first glance, but he said he was surprised to discover "her deep references to traditional Japanese art forms ... and Japanese spirituality."

Other artworks embody innovative ways of combining craft materials and methods with more traditional artforms. In Sarah Crowner's "An Ocean Between the Waves," the artist painted several canvases using acrylic paint in white and blue shades and subsequently sewed the canvases together, which creates a large painting that's also suggestive of a textile.



"Persevering Daruma Doll" by Masako Miki takes inspiration from the traditional Japanese Daruma doll, which symbolizes good fortune. Photo by Mette Huberman.

Linetzky said that "Sarah is not only manipulating the surface of the canvas through the application of acrylic, but the forms in the shapes that we observe were created not with a brush, but with a hand that cut and sewed these works from the back."

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An abstract oil painting by Michaela Yearwood-Dan titled "My sugar, my honey, my tenda lovah" incorporates paper, ceramics and text onto the canvas to create a highly textured piece. The color palette ranges from dark blue, to green and pink with thin, white lines painted across the canvas creating a warm feeling. Small pieces of painted ceramics appear like attached flower petals, pieces of attached paper like leaves, and text on the left side of the painting reads, "until we meet again."

Linetzky noted that "written in this painting and in much of her work are these really beautiful reflections and thoughts, so I think that incorporating text in this sort of hidden way is really part of the discovery of her work."

Arlene Shechet's small sculpture titled "Snow Day" is made of glazed ceramic and concrete, "juxtaposing fragility and solidity to forge an unexpected balance," according to the label. Linetzky reflected on "the softness of the color and texture," reminding him of the experience of being outdoors on a snowy day. "There's just a sort of beautiful poetic connection."

Stanford professor Alexander Nemerov interviewed Schechet in the Burt and Deedee McMurtry lecture in May 2025. They discussed Schechet's evolution as an artist and her creation of sculptures with a focus on a set of large sculptures she made for an exhibit at the Storm King Art Center, an open-air sculpture center in New Windsor, New York. A recording of that talk is available to view online.

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