

Between WORLDS MOKUHANGA

Curated by the Mokuhanga Sisters

Artists: Katie Baldwin, Matthew Willie Garcia, Hidehiko Gotou, Kyoko Hirai, Patty Hudak, Mariko Jesse, Shoichi Kitamura, Terry McKenna, Kate MacDonagh, Yoonmi Nam, Natasha Norman, Mia O, Brendan Reilly, Louise Rouse, Lucy May Schofield, Melissa Schulenberg, Ayao Shiokawa, Chihiro Taki, Katsutoshi Yuasa
Artists (Focus on the Flatfiles): Annie Bissett, Takuji Hamanaka, Keiko Hara, Jennifer Mack-Watkins, Florence Neal, Yasu Shibata, April Vollmer

June 17 - July 31, 2022

Opening Reception: Friday, June 17, 6-8pm

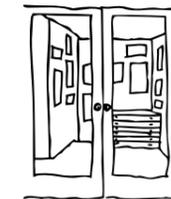
RELATED EVENTS: Mokuhanga Family Programs: Saturday, June 18, 10-11:30am with artists Kate MacDonagh and Lucy May Schofield; Saturday, July 9, 10-11:30am with artists Katie Baldwin and Melissa Schulenberg **Mokuhanga Demonstration:** Sunday, July 10, 1-3pm with artists Melissa Schulenberg and Katie Baldwin **Exhibition Tours:** Sunday, July 17, 1-2pm and Sunday July 24, 1-2pm with artist Patty Hudak

Interior: in order of appearance:

Mokuhanga Sisters, Borderless, 2021, collaborative mokuhanga scroll, 10.2" x 99.2" x 1.5"; **Shoichi Kitamura, Eagle**, 2021, mokuhanga print of photograph by Okamoto Toyo, Kachou (Flower and Bird), Toyo Photo Collection, 14.5" x 9.5" Publisher: Unsodo; **Kyoko Hirai, Kowatari Kin Sarasa**, 2019, handmade mokuhanga print reproduction of Aya Nishiki (Brocade) #8, from Textile Book, 11" x 8.25"; **Katie Baldwin, Meeting Place (garden)**, 2021, mokuhanga, 19" x 22"; **Chihiro Taki, Walking Day**, 2015, mokuhanga, 21.5" x 15.75"; **Ayao Shiokawa, Wildflowers in the Woods**, 2021, mokuhanga, 24.4" x 33.45"; **Katsutoshi Yuasa, Making your own Paper, printing by hand, and seeing through the light**, 2021, mokuhanga, 12" x 18"; **Mariko Jesse, Night Garden (Green and Pink)**, 2020, mokuhanga, 8.5" x 10.5"; **Hidehiko Gotou, Traveler**, 2010, mokuhanga, 12.8" x 9.8"; **Terry McKenna, Water from Heaven**, 2021, mokuhanga, 35.4" x 19.6"; **Mia O, Nature Forms**, 2018-2021, mokuhanga, 47" x 35.5"; **Louise Rouse, Study for Plane of Immanence, (detail)**, 2021; mokuhanga, 15" x 10"; **Natasha Norman, Woven Water**, 2018, mokuhanga, 8" x 16"; **Melissa Schulenberg, Patterns**, 2017, mokuhanga, 10" x 16"; **Brendan Reilly, Untitled (Landscape)**, 2020, mokuhanga, 6" x 8"; **Matthew Willie Garcia, ...and From a No Where Place**, 2021, mokuhanga, 12" x 16"; **Keiko Hara, Verse - Earth**, 2021, mokuhanga, ed.: 2/12, sumi with stencil & collage, 9" x 38"; **Yasu Shibata, Nine Blue Diamonds**, 2015, mokuhanga, 24" x 18"; **Takuji Hamanaka, Gem**, 2019, mokuhanga collage, 21.5" x 17"; **Annie Bissett, Vigil 2**, 2017, mokuhanga, 14.5" x 18.5"; **Jennifer Mack-Watkins, The Conqueror**, 2015, mokuhanga, 11" x 17"; **April Vollmer, Two Times Two**, 1998, mokuhanga, 37" x 17"; **Florence Neal, Águas do Futuro (6)**, 2021, mokuhanga scroll, 56" x 17"

Special thanks to:

- The Japan Foundation for their generous grant in support of the exhibition brochure.
- Southern Vermont Arts Center in Manchester, Vermont for hosting the first version of this exhibition in The World Between the Block and the Paper, December 11, 2021 – March 27, 2022.
- St. Lawrence University.



KENTLER INTERNATIONAL DRAWING SPACE

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Kentler International Drawing Space, founded by two artists in 1990, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing contemporary drawings and works on paper by emerging and underrecognized national and international artists to the public, and to providing the opportunity to experiment, explore and expand the definition of art in society. Kentler programs: Exhibitions & Events; the Kentler Flatfiles; K.I.D.S. Art Education.

Exhibitions, events and public programs are made possible in part with public funds from: National Endowment for the Arts; The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy

Hochul and the New York State Legislature; The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Other Supporters Include: The Fort Trustee Fund, CFCV; New York Community Trust; The Creative Motif Fund; The Holt Family Foundation; The Gifford Foundation; Postindustrial Productions Inc.; MVS Studio Inc.; Movers Not Shakers; Epson America Inc.; Materials for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs /NYC Department of Sanitation/ NYC Department of Education; the many valued artists, friends & supporters of the gallery. Special thanks for pro-bono legal advice: Lawyers Alliance for New York. More info: <http://www.kentlergallery.org/news/index.php/supporters/>

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Between WORLDS MOKUHANGA



Top: Lucy May Schofield, *Sanguine Moon (After Helen)*, 2021, mokuhanga, 12" x 18.5"
Bottom: Kate MacDonagh, *Cadence 3*, 2021, mokuhanga, 24" x 37"

Clockwise from top: Yoonmi Nam, *LG 21*, 2012, mokuhanga and lithography, 2012, 13" x 13.75"; Melissa Schulenberg, *Blast*, 2012, mokuhanga, 14" x 12"; Patty Hudak, *Secret of the Flower*, 2021, mokuhanga, 36" x 48"

BETWEEN WORLDS – MOKUHANGA

INTRODUCTION

—April Vollmer, author of *Japanese Woodblock Print Workshop*

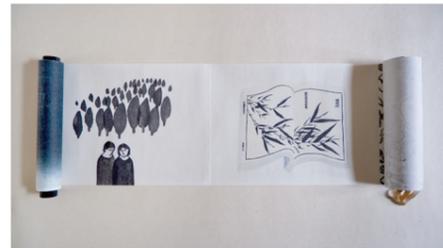
Between Worlds brings together artists who developed strong connections during shared residencies at the Mokuhanga Innovation Laboratory (MI-LAB) in Japan. As participants in the “Upper Advanced Residency” the Mokuhanga Sisters, as they became known, all had previous mokuhanga experience. The group includes Katie Baldwin, Patty Hudak, Mariko Jesse, Kate MacDonagh, Yoonmi Nam, Natasha Norman, Mia O, Lucy May Schofield, and Melissa Schulenberg. At the residency they refined their technique and built a strong network that has resulted in many shared projects and exhibitions. *Between Worlds* highlights connections between group members, their teachers, their students, and the community of mokuhanga artists centered around this international training program.

MI-LAB, conveniently located two hours from Tokyo at the foot of Mt. Fuji grew from the Nagasawa Art Park program initiated by Keiko Kadota in 1998. It opened in 2011 when the earlier program closed. In addition to the residency programs, Keiko Kadota established her head office and gallery at 3331 Arts Chiyoda art center in Tokyo to promote mokuhanga through exhibitions and short-term classes. An important initiative was establishing the triennial International Mokuhanga Conference to include a diversity of international artists and to provide a forum for maintaining contact among past residency participants. The first IMC was held in Kyoto and Awajishima; the second in Tokyo; the third in Hawaii; and the fourth, in 2021, had exhibitions and events in Nara, with international presentations and discussions online.

Keiko Kadota’s programs are unique in their personal flavor and international reach. She died in 2017, but her desire to promote world peace through the shared understanding of arts and culture lives on in the work of the many artists who participated in her programs. Artists who benefitted from her work have gone on to teach at universities and workshops around the world, written books, organized exhibitions, and published research on the history and materials of mokuhanga. Her success in fostering understanding through cooperative international friendships is epitomized by the strong bonds of the Mokuhanga Sisters and their work maintaining and strengthening the international mokuhanga network.

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

—Mokuhanga Sisters



Kate MacDonagh, Yoonmi Nam, Natasha Norman, Mia O, Lucy May Schofield, and Melissa Schulenberg. This international group bonded while studying mokuhanga in Japan and has continued to work together to promote exhibitions and educational projects involving mokuhanga.

Mokuhanga literally translates to “wood print” in Japanese. It originated in China and developed into a popular art form during the Edo Period (1603-1867). These *ukiyo-e* prints were profoundly influential on European artists in the 1800s. Though a traditional medium, *ukiyo-e* thrives on innovation, and has influenced both Japanese and global traditions.

Traditional Training

During the Edo period, craftspeople trained in an apprenticeship system where prints were produced in separate carving and printing studios. Accomplished artisans passed down their evolving knowledge so the process has accumulated subtle changes over the years. Both Shoichi Kitamura and Kyoko Hirai trained this way.

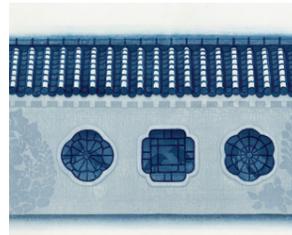
Shoichi Kitamura learned by working in a traditional carving studio alongside a master carver. His techniques in carving contemporary *ukiyo-e* prints and the development of his own artistic expression can be seen in his work *Eagle*, where he reproduces a photographic image using layers of sumi ink.



Kyoko Hirai’s *Kawatari Kin Sarasa, Textile*, is an example of the decorative catalogs that were printed in Kyoto at the end of the 19th century. This style of printing imitated the complexity of richly colored kimono fabrics. Hirai’s position as a master printer is unique because the profession has historically been occupied exclusively by men.

A Sense of Place

Katie Baldwin’s print *Meeting Place (garden)*, completed during her Fulbright fellowship in Taiwan, depicts the intimacy found within an enclosed space she is observing, yet not part of. The pair of birds echo the silhouette of the couple and the monochromatic image printed in shades of blue is richly melancholy.



Chihiro Taki’s layered landscapes suggest a place for imagination and contemplation where you can feel the weather. Taki’s large-scale *Walking Day* shows the watery technique *gomazuri*, or sesame seed printing, which creates a mottled texture, suggesting falling rain.

Lucy May Schofield’s *bokashi* gradation techniques use the same deep blues as *ukiyo-e* prints, suggesting an escape to an imaginative universe where ethereal longing creates a dreamscape of memory. Ayao Shiokawa prints in delicate layers, using only enough pigment to allow the image to emerge after a long, quiet gaze. Shiokawa’s imagery is like a whisper on the surface of the page.

Kate MacDonagh and Katsutoshi Yuasa’s surfaces rely on masterful carving to create textures that translate into optical mixing of values and colors. In *Cadence 3*, MacDonagh blends tones through her carving and careful control of water on the surface of the block. In Yuasa’s *Making your own paper, printing, by hand, and seeing through the light* he carves blocks, then prints his digitally generated halftone image on fine handmade washi, creating a conversation between the digital and the traditional.



The Sensitive Baren

Hidehiko Gotou is not only a masterful carver and printer but is also a craftsperson best known as the finest baren maker in Japan. The baren is



the “printing press” of mokuhanga. It is a handheld disk that is rubbed on the back of the dampened paper to pick up color from the inked block. Creating a baren is a meticulous process of cutting strips of bamboo sheath and twisting them together to create strings that are then tied into a flat spiral, backed onto a lacquered disk composed of layers of sized paper and then covered with a bamboo sheath.

Gotou teaches contemporary artists how to use the baren to create different printing effects. Multiple baren can be used within one print; some press gently on the paper surface, others make a stronger impression. In Mariko Jesse’s print *Night Garden (Green and Pink)* the pressure of her hand and the character of the baren work together to control the density of the pigment on paper. In Gotou’s work *Comb the Night*, the flat, even application of dense pigment, called *betazuri*, contrasts with the watery feeling of the lightly burnished areas.

Technical Meets Personal

Terry McKenna, the author of two mokuhanga books with a studio and a school in Nagano, Japan, explores the technical side of mokuhanga printing. In *Water from Heaven and Linden Falls*, he uses the same set of blocks to create two distinct prints. He uses varying amounts of water to create color tints and spatial effects.



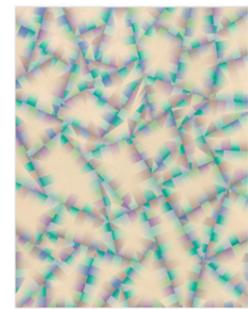
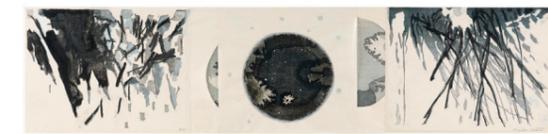
Mia O layers sheets of handmade paper to create luminous surfaces. She often joins the paper by sewing, emphasizing the strength of washi paper and its potential in installation. She channels her feeling for nature into geometric forms, flipping and layering shapes to create decorative surfaces.

Patty Hudak and Louise Rouse both collage their prints, layering and repeating shapes to reflect experiences from the natural world. Natasha Norman also seeks inspiration from nature, responding to the landscape of her home in Cape Town, South Africa.



Melissa Schulenberg is a masterful printer whose boldly patterned shapes suggest fantasy worlds. Her student Brendan Reilly brings these surfaces into his own work, which is informed by both Asian art and graphic design.

Yoonmi Nam and her student Matthew Willie Garcia each explore the sense of identity. Nam is inspired by woodblock-printed painting manuals from Asia and brings that language into her prints. Flowers arranged in disposable containers evoke cross-cultural dynamics and a sense of impermanence. Garcia creates colorful futuristic landscapes that investigate his queer identity through fluid ideas of multi-dimensional space-time.



Editions in New York. He has developed his own approach to reduction printing to create mathematically precise, jewel-like prints. Endlessly surprising, Takuji Hamanaka’s carefully crafted prints are pieced together from printed elements that coalesce to create unexpected vistas.

Annie Bissett channels her emotions about political divisions into her imagery of fire symbolizing hope in times of despair. Jennifer Mack-Watkins’ prints empower women to look beyond confining stereotypes to recognize their own strength and potential. Both April Vollmer and Florence Neal’s translucent surfaces of repeated forms reflect the beauty and logic of nature while foreshadowing loss and ecological turmoil.

All Together

Between Worlds explores the technical innovations of mokuhanga and contemporary themes of identity, place, environment, and gender from artists working around the world. As a medium, mokuhanga is versatile and sustainable. Its subtle applications of color and the tactile surfaces create space for contemplation. Its connection to the past and its potential for innovation give it continued relevance for international art making in the 21st century.



—April Vollmer is a New York City artist and educator who specializes in mokuhanga printmaking. Her book *Japanese Woodblock Print Workshop* was published by Watson-Guption in 2015.

—Mokuhanga Sisters is a print collective of nine artists: Katie Baldwin, Patty Hudak, Mariko Jesse, Kate MacDonagh, Yoonmi Nam, Natasha Norman, Mia O, Lucy May Schofield, and Melissa Schulenberg. This international group bonded while studying mokuhanga in Japan and has continued to work together to promote exhibitions and educational projects involving mokuhanga.

Mokuhanga from the Flatfiles

Concurrent with *Between Worlds*, a selection of work by artists from the Kentler Flatfiles highlights mokuhanga engaged with contemporary issues.

Keiko Hara, Yasu Shibata, and Takuji Hamanaka were all born in Japan and moved to the United States as young artists. Each developed a unique approach to mokuhanga based on refined technical skills first learned in Japan. Emeritus Professor of Art at Whitman College, Keiko Hara has devoted much of her creative work to immersive installations that incorporate mokuhanga. Yasu Shibata is a master printer for Pace

