

MATTHEW F. SINGER

## IN OTHER WORDS: THE SPIRIT OF FRAKTUR IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

**FIG. 32**

Pablo Picasso, *Bowl with Fruit, Violin, and Wineglass*, 1913. Charcoal, chalk, watercolor, oil paint, and coarse charcoal or pigment in binding medium on applied papers, mounted on cardboard, 25½ x 19½ in.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART:  
A. E. GALLATIN COLLECTION, 1952.  
© 2015 ESTATE OF PABLO PICASSO /  
ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS),  
NEW YORK

Countless artists have paired words and image, but fraktur did far more than that: flawlessly beautiful or quirky, it commemorated people and events and/or expressed identity, whether personal, group, or communal. Looking at the evolution of modern and contemporary art with fraktur-inspired matters of image and text, commemoration, and identity in mind reveals unexpected but revelatory parallels between otherwise wildly disparate forms of art. Even Cubism and Dada—the early-modern movements that broke most radically with the past—carried an echo of fraktur in their celebration of a particular time and place within a community. Picasso's *Bowl with Fruit, Violin, and Wineglass* (1913; fig. 32) presents recurring Cubist motifs, everyday objects that evoke hours spent in Parisian cafés and boîtes, and bits of text on newspaper that immortalize a moment. The Dadaists—well known for incorporating nonsense text in their visual art, published pieces, and performances—captured the disparity between European ideals and the build-up to World War I, with art as absurd as Europe's circumstances. The life-recording and -affirming spirit of fraktur can be found in work by Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), whose Dadaist art is noted for its cerebralism and lack of sentiment. His *Apollinère Enameled* (1916–17; fig. 33), an homage to his friend the poet and writer Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918), began as a printed-tin advertisement for Sapolin enamel. Here Duchamp blurred the line between utilitarian, commemorative, and artistic painting.

While European modernists looked to African and Oceanic art for ingenious examples of abstracted representation, American modernists such as Elie Nadelman, Marguerite and William Zorach, and Charles Sheeler found it in the nation's folk art. They gathered in salons at the





**FIG. 33**  
 Marcel Duchamp, *Apolinère Enameled*, 1916–17. Gouache and graphite on painted tin, mounted on cardboard, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART:  
 THE LOUISE AND WALTER  
 ARENSBERG COLLECTION, 1950.  
 © 2015 SUCCESSION MARCEL DUCHAMP  
 / ADAGP, PARIS / ARTISTS RIGHTS  
 SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

**FIG. 34**  
 Charles Sheeler, *Interior, Arensberg's Apartment, New York*, after May 1919. Casein silver print; sheet: 8 x 10 in.  
 PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART:  
 THE LOUISE AND WALTER  
 ARENSBERG COLLECTION, 1950





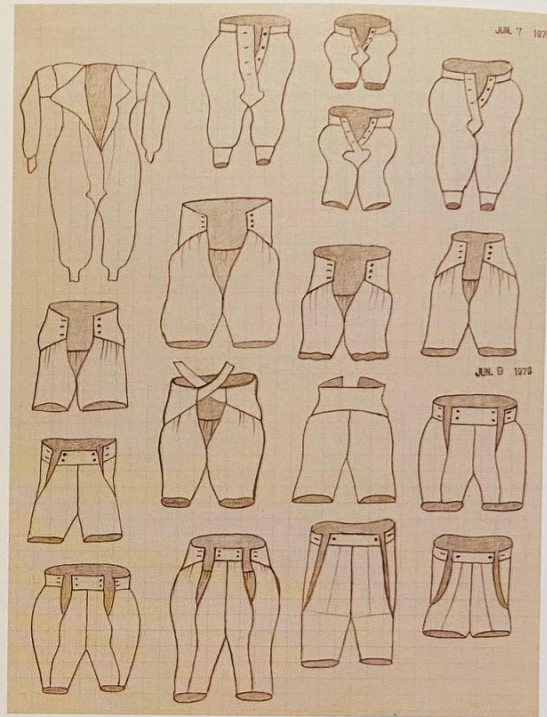
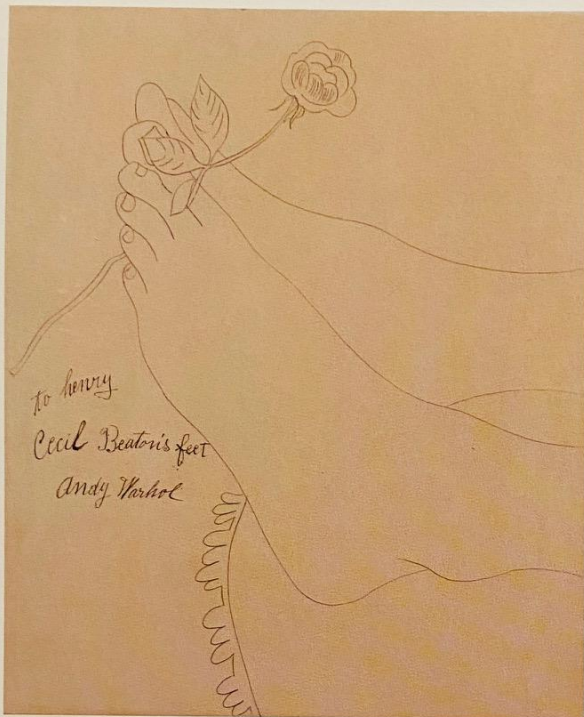
**FIG. 35** (LEFT)  
 Florine Stettheimer, *The Cathedrals of Art*, 1942.  
 Oil on canvas, 60¼ x 50¼ in.  
 METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART:  
 GIFT OF ETTIE STETTHEIMER, 1953.  
 © 2015 ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY  
 (ARS), NEW YORK



**FIG. 36** (RIGHT)  
 Charles Demuth, *I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold*, 1928. Oil, graphite, ink, and gold leaf on paperboard (Upson board), 35½ x 30 in.  
 METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART:  
 ALFRED STIEGLITZ COLLECTION, 1949.  
 © ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS),  
 NEW YORK

home of pioneering collectors Louise and Walter Arensberg, where masterpieces by Constantin Brancusi, Duchamp, Matisse, and other European and American artists were paired with Shaker and other American folk furniture (fig. 34). Florine Stettheimer (1871–1944) made works that themselves resemble folk art, including her series of large-scale depictions of the secular “cathedrals” of modern New York—such as museums—and their supplicants (fig. 35). Charles Demuth (1883–1935) was a native of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where his family first settled in 1770, but he traveled often to New York and Europe. He made a series of “poster portraits” of his friends and fellow artists, including *I Saw the Figure Five in Gold (Homage to William Carlos Williams)* (1928; fig. 36).

Commemorative portraits such as Demuth’s both expressed and asserted community, thereby becoming statements of identity. This approach became more common in the latter half of the century, as art became increasingly political. Andy Warhol (1928–1987), for example, drew the feet of a hero of his, English photographer Cecil Beaton, giving shape to the then-novel idea of a gay cultural lineage (fig. 37). Women



artists, too, sought to express a liberated yet historically rooted identity. Later in the decade, Christina Ramberg (1946–1995) focused on female undergarments: *Untitled (Bloomers)* (1979; fig. 38) features a garment developed in the mid-nineteenth century to increase women’s comfort and mobility. In several places the work is stamped “Jun. 7 1979” and “Jun. 9 1979” (likely the dates of the work’s creation—its “birth”—reminiscent of a *fraktur Taufschein*), highlighting women’s rights and well-being across time.

In the following decade, graffiti artists began to express a new urban identity. As they moved into distressed neighborhoods, they joined with disenfranchised and under-resourced communities, largely African-American and Latino. Jean-Michel Basquiat moved quickly from graffiti to the world of galleries and museums with profoundly expressive paintings that spoke of slavery, colonialism, and racism. Stripped of individuality and humanity, the skeletal figure in *Untitled* (1982; fig. 39) is alive with rage. Such personages recur in his work; Basquiat called them “warriors.” Holding a hatchet in one hand and a sword in the other, this warrior wears a red mask—another icon in Basquiat’s visual vocabulary.

**FIG. 37** (LEFT)  
Andy Warhol, *Cecil Beaton's Feet*, 1961. Black ink on buff wove paper, 16¾ x 13¾ in.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART: THE HENRY P. MCILHENNY COLLECTION IN MEMORY OF FRANCES P. MCILHENNY, 1982. © 2015 THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION FOR THE VISUAL ARTS, INC. / ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

**FIG. 38** (RIGHT)  
Christina Ramberg, *Untitled (Bloomers)*, 1979. Graphite on graph paper, 8½ x 11 in.

PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS, PHILADELPHIA. ART BY WOMEN COLLECTION, GIFT OF LINDA LEE ALTER

**FIG. 39**  
Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Untitled*,  
1982. Felt-tip pen and oilstick  
on paper, 30 x 22 in.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART: GIFT OF  
NORMAN DUBROW. © 2015 THE ESTATE  
OF JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT / ADAGP,  
PARIS / ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS),  
NEW YORK



His headpiece conjures both the artist's famously sculptural hair and antennae—conduits for the energetic clusters of letters and symbols that flank the form. Although shuffled, the scarlet letters lacerating the composition are those of “warrior.” Scrawled or in grids, Basquiat’s seeming wordplay may be deadly serious. “Roar” thunders for itself. “Roer” is a game-hunting rifle used in southern Africa. “Roan” describes animal coloring: typically, an even mix of brown and white. Vocalized, “rrrr” sounds a warning growl.<sup>1</sup> Basquiat’s friend and fellow graffitist Keith Haring (1958–1990) (who, incidentally, was born and raised in Pennsylvania Dutch Country) exuded a child’s joy in creating and, amid the AIDS epidemic, addressed sexual identity and AIDS as social, personal, and political issues in graphic images and words (fig. 40).



In the 1990s, a decade known even in its own time for a pervasive sense of irony in popular culture, artists' statements in word and image changed in tone. The art of Cary Leibowitz, a.k.a. Candyass (b. 1963), addresses a breathtaking range of personal struggles and issues of individual, group, even national identity—appearance, queerness, Jewishness, inadequacy, Americana, character, social consciousness, race, popular culture, consumerism, modernism, and kitsch. His text-based paintings feature determinedly childlike lettering, which Leibowitz initially called “New American Calligraphy.” What they say is mordant, self-effacing, and subversive, leavened with humor and a palpable sense of good-natured decency (fig. 41). Similarly, the text paintings of Sean Landers (b. 1962) are, typically, covered from edge to edge with the words of a stream-of-conscious, internal monologue that is alternately self-aggrandizing and self-questioning. They are raw, honest, overflowing with pathos—and funny. We cannot be sure whether they are autobiographical or imagined. This blurring and merging of fact and fantasy is underscored by the hybrid creatures that populate Landers's paintings. They fuse the human, animal, and mechanical worlds (fig. 42) and the realms of the grotesque and the adorable.

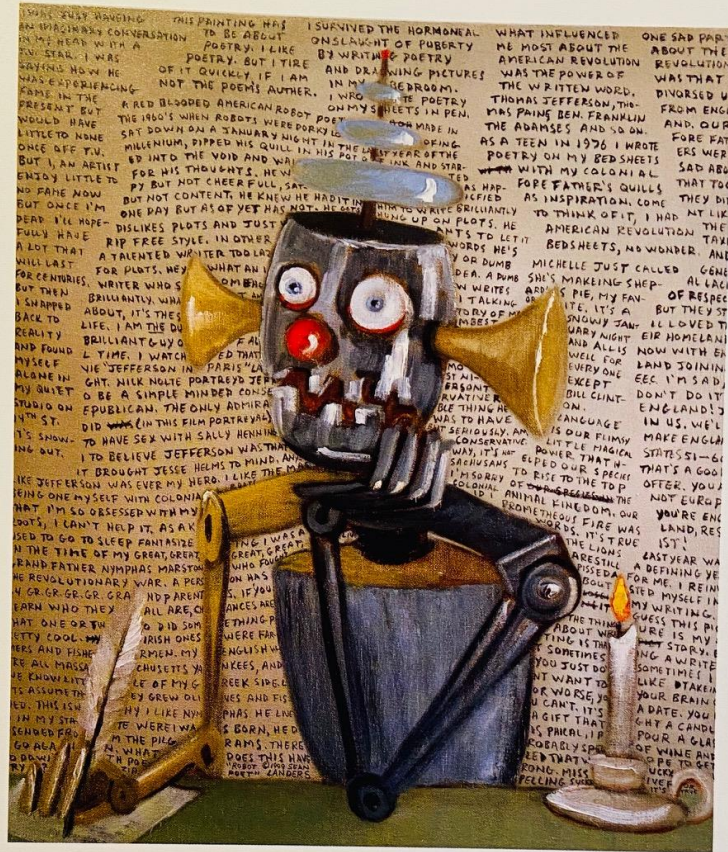
“Street Art” was and is an expression of the age-old instinct to claim a public space for oneself by marking it with graffiti, paired with political consciousness and the clarity of (often humorous) expression found in text-based art. Stephen Powers (b. 1968), first known by his



**FIG. 40** (FAR LEFT)  
Keith Haring, *Ignorance = Fear*,  
1989. Offset-lithograph on  
glazed poster paper, 24 x 43¼ in.  
© KEITH HARING FOUNDATION

**FIG. 41** (LEFT)  
Cary Leibowitz, *I Want To Do  
Good Things*, 1993. Latex  
on wood panel, 25¼ x 4¼ in.  
COURTESY THE ARTIST AND  
INVISIBLE-EXPORTS, NEW YORK

**FIG. 42** (RIGHT)  
Sean Landers, *The Robot Poet*,  
1999. Oil on linen, 30 x 26 in.  
COURTESY THE ARTIST AND FRIEDRICH  
PETZEL GALLERY, NEW YORK



nom-de-graffiti, ESPO, long walked the thin line separating graffiti as illegal vandalism and commissioned public art. He is well known for highly visible, large-scale projects such as *A Love Letter to Brooklyn* (2011). Less known is his strong interest in his Pennsylvania German heritage. Evidence of this is a traditionally made redware-with-slip-decoration plate (1993; fig. 43) that he designed for Ari Saal Forman, his friend and partner in publishing *On the Go* magazine. A towering lightbulb marches the streetscape carrying a can of spray paint. Paraphrasing Gil Scott-Heron with wit, the plate reads, “The evolution will be live.”

In the twenty-first century, the lineage that links these artists underpins the work of a group of contemporary artists that I will call Millennial Urban Rustics (MUR), who emerged at the turn of this century in spots spread wide across this continent and who share a certain longing for and ideal of community with the fraktur artists. Like fraktur, their





work combines words and images to express identity and memory. In response to the digital age, they create art that has the homespun, time-worn patina of folk art.

Most of the Millennial Urban Rustics emerged as members of informal and organized artists' collaboratives formed between 1995 and 2002 in San Francisco (the Mission School), Providence (Fort Thunder), Winnipeg (Royal Art Lodge), and Philadelphia (Space 1026). Almost all are art-school educated. Yet their art seemed to spring fully formed from a subculture of punk rock, skateboarding, surfing, and graffiti.

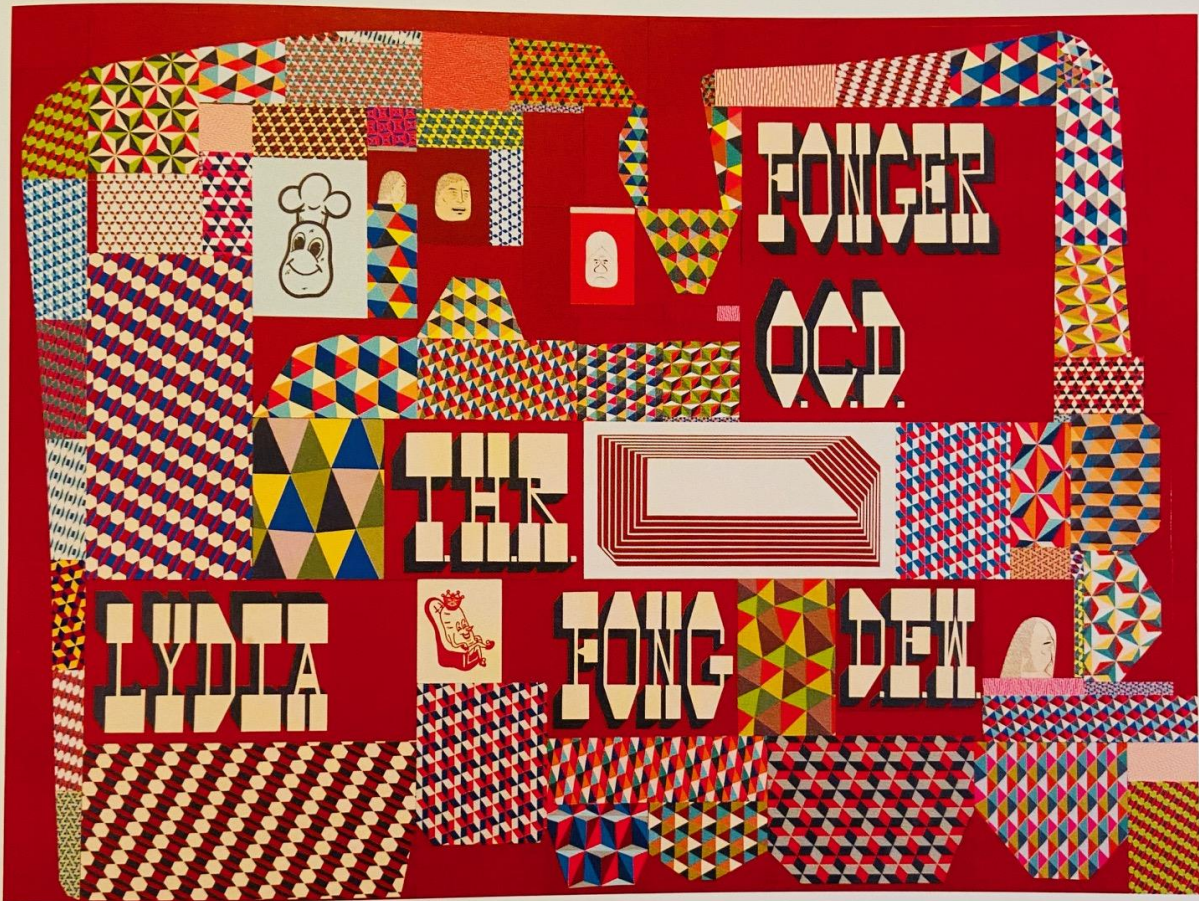
Under-resourced yet resourceful, and spurred by ecological concerns and punk's do-it-yourself ethos to remake, remodel, and recycle, MUR artists made their debut with paintings on flat and aggregated surfaces composed of found objects. Their images are quirky and folksy, their lettering eccentric, embellished, and always distinctive—like *fraktur*. Though spread from coast to coast, these artists know one another well, often collaborating and exhibiting together. They are a community of communities.

The sprawling wall-works of Barry McGee (b. 1966; fig. 44) are compositions of disparate items fit tightly together. McGee's human subjects are down-and-out urban men, depicted in subdued shades of black and white. By contrast, his abstract work looks like quilting-patterns-as-Op-art. The texts in McGee's work are bold and bright interpretations of the

**FIG. 43**

Stephen Powers / ESP0, *Untitled*, 1993. Created at Long Family Potters, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, under the supervision of master-potter Dorothy Long. Glazed earthenware with slip decoration; 8 in. diameter

COURTESY ARI SAAL FORMAN AND THE ARTIST



**FIG. 44**

Barry McGee, *Untitled*, 2013.

Acrylic on wood panel,

102 elements, 136½ x 180 in.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND RATIO 3,  
SAN FRANCISCO



graffiti aliases he uses: Ray Fong, Lydia Fong (McGee is half Chinese by descent), Twist, and the initials of the graffiti crews and side collaboration in which he's involved, DFW (Down for Whatever) and THR (The Harsh Reality), among others. By incorporating his graffiti personae into his clustered wall-works, McGee bridges his dual identity as a graffitist and oft-exhibited, and avidly collected, "gallery artist." There is a distinctly urban tension and a sense of melancholy in his work. He commemorates the San Francisco of his youth before the influx of digital dollars and the pre-modern world he never knew — one without consumerism and the related anxieties of urban life.

Margaret Kilgallen (1967–2001) was a painter with a passion for letter forms that she shared with McGee, her husband and frequent collaborator. Kilgallen responded to the coded messages and aliases of hobos

**FIG. 45**  
Margaret Kilgallen, *Sloe*,  
1998. Color, aquatint etching  
with sugarlift, 36 x 24½ in.  
COURTESY THE ARTIST'S ESTATE  
AND RATIO 3, SAN FRANCISCO



**FIG. 46**  
 Clare Rojas, installation view of  
 the exhibition *We They, We They*,  
 2010, at the Museum of Craft  
 and Folk Art, San Francisco  
 COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GALLERY  
 PAULE ANGLIM, SAN FRANCISCO

and the music of Appalachia, especially its female musicians. Unassuming but self-reliant women dominate her figurative work. Recorded in Kilgallen's art are the names of revered female folk musicians, California place-names, and surf slang.<sup>2</sup> In the case of *Sloe* (fig. 45), Kilgallen's references include California-grown berries.

Raised in northern Maryland, Kilgallen and her family took day trips to the Pennsylvania Dutch Country, where she absorbed the visual culture of the area, quilt patterns in particular. Kilgallen painted on four-by-eight-foot sheets of plywood and large stretches of canvas, creating works that look like quilts writ large—"women's work" on a monumental scale. Her art is modern in its feminism, yet—like McGee's—evinces nostalgia. It "remembers" in words and pictures.

Clare Rojas (b. 1976) has been affiliated or associated with Fort Thunder, Space 1026, and the Mission School. While she is now exploring pure abstraction—an evolution seen in the work of other MUR artists—her previous expansive and celebrated body of work was highly figurative, narrative, and folk-art informed. Pennsylvania German aesthetics can be seen in Rojas's interpretations of hex-sign-like pinwheels and other starry, geometric shapes (fig. 46). They appear on their own and

ward away trouble from simple white structures that suggest farmhouses. Quilting is echoed and is transformed in Rojas's abstract compositions, her approach to installation, and in the making of some of the hex signs and farmhouses: Rojas pieced them together from wood cut into squares, rectangles, and triangles.

Rojas's figures are most often women who exude competence and strength. Typically, they appear to be from an earlier time. They reflect the artist's rejection of "official" history as written, with women rendered all but invisible. The contributions of determined, resourceful, stoic pioneer women—for one example—are not part of the long-accepted syllabus that teaches of America's expansion westward. Rojas gives such women pride of place—their due place—in the American and human story.

Philadelphia born and bred, Jim Houser (b. 1973) is a visual artist with a poet's sensibility whose work explores the relationship between the look, sound, and meaning of words and the things they represent. His painted words suggest snippets from overheard conversations or an inner monologue of his own. Houser creates enveloping environments by painting directly on walls, ceilings, and floors, then layering on clusters of paintings, drawings, and objects that he has transformed with paint: sneakers, basketballs, flowerpots, skateboard decks. *This Place Is Ours* (2005; fig. 47) refers to a strip of Nantucket beach where the late Rebecca Westcott (1976–2004), Jim's wife and fellow artist, was raised and where her ashes were scattered.

Also a Philadelphia native, Shelley Spector (b. 1960) finds, gathers, and sorts objects, then reassembles them in new contexts, imagining and reimagining the details of the American past and present. Her installation *Keep the Home Fires Burning* at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 2015 was inspired by a large embroidery in the PMA collection: it was designed by folk art historian Frances Lichten (1889–1961) and embroidered by her mother, Cecelia, with the familiar Pennsylvania German motifs of birds, flowers, angels, and hearts. Completed in 1943, it was given to the museum after Lichten's death by Katherine Milhous, an artist and Lichten's companion of forty years. *Frances Loves Katherine* (2015;





fig. 48) makes material Spector's imagining of the life they shared. "Give Sunshine to Others" is writ large on the tiny cottage roof.

Born and raised in New York state and a longtime resident of Philadelphia, Joy Feasley (b. 1966) blends nature, the supernatural, and memory. *Memorial Picture* (2007; fig. 49) was inspired by a trip to the Ephrata Cloister—once the settlement of a separatist sect that included America's first fraktur artists. Inside the blooms of this potted plant are the curvaceous outlines of fraktur letters—the initials of people dear to Feasley but whom she hadn't seen in some time and was remembering.

The surfaces upon which Isaac Tin Wei Lin (b. 1976) paints include photographs; life-size blow-ups of cartoon-like cats he's drawn; art-ready paper, canvas, and panels; and objects of the home and the street. He covers these surfaces with dense, fluid but robust, precisely drawn, and graphically engaging marks that appear to be the letters of an unknown language written in exquisite calligraphy. These shapes hold the power and promise of communication, but they are complete abstractions, creations of Isaac's imagination. Chinese American, Lin is the son of parents born in China. He has witnessed the challenges of those assimilating into a new culture while grappling with its language.

**FIG. 48**

Shelley Spector, *Frances Loves Katherine*, 2014.

Wood and paint, 6 x 9 x 6 in.

COURTESY THE ARTIST

Lin has described the meditative quality of his extraordinary mark-making. One wonders whether it, in addition, offers the unusual experience of creating “letters” that may be appreciated as shapes but not read—what we do when encountering alphabets completely different from our own.

Lin explores and honors his family and its history in his work. *Black Water* (2013; fig. 50) shows two smiling women sitting on what appears to be a concrete ledge overlooking an indeterminate landscape—the background is obscured, to mesmerizing effect, by Lin’s calligraphy. A narrative is suggested, though one as open-ended as the “meaning” of Lin’s marks.

Also noteworthy are contemporary artists of Pennsylvania German descent who were born and bred in the Dutch Country, whose work overtly reflects the aesthetic aspects of their ethnic heritage.

A practicing Mennonite, Philadelphia-based artist Tim Gierschick II (b. 1976) makes paintings, drawings, and sculpture, incorporating traditional Pennsylvania German tools and techniques and commonplace

**FIG. 49**

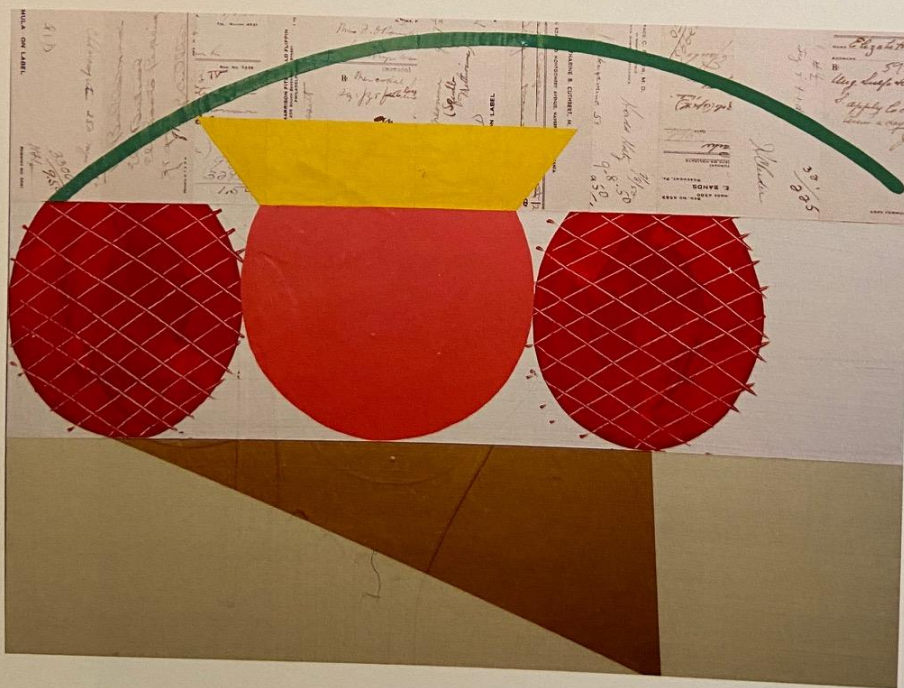
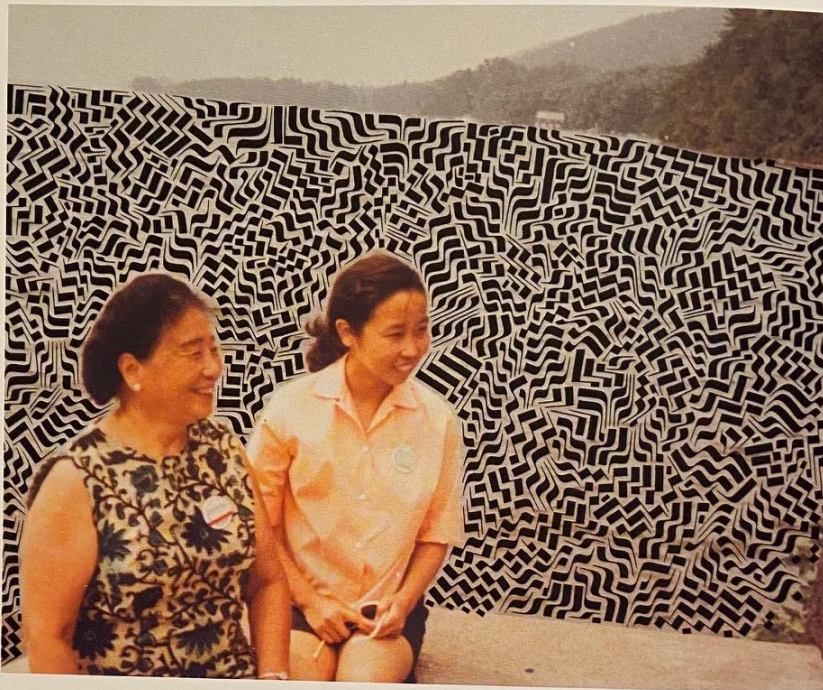
Joy Feasley, *Memorial Picture*, 2007. Vinyl paint on medium-density overlay plywood, 15 x 20 in.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND  
LOCKS GALLERY, PHILADELPHIA





**FIG. 50**  
Isaac Tin Wei Lin, *Black  
Water*, 2013. Ink on  
photograph, 12 x 16 in.  
COURTESY THE ARTIST  
AND FLEISHER/OLLMAN,  
PHILADELPHIA



**FIG. 51**  
Timothy Gierschick II, *Goldpe*,  
2010. House paint, enamels,  
and collage on panel, 15 x 20  
COURTESY THE ARTIST

materials such as found wood and house and sign paint. In describing *Goldpot* (2010; fig. 51), Gierschick says he sees it as a “self-conscious, post-modern version of the stylized forms found in fraktur: flowers, landscapes, architecture—and household objects, like pots. My use of abstracted and stylized forms is directly linked to that of traditional fraktur artists. They, innately, saw a link between living life and representing it. So do I.” The found, lettered paper at the top of *Goldpot* has no direct relationship to the work’s images. Such textual elements are common in Gierschick’s art. They converse with him as he forms the composition, and he sees them as points of discussion (internal or aloud) for the viewer.

Jerome Hershey (b. 1950) has Swiss-German ancestry in Pennsylvania that can be traced back to 1712 or earlier. Hershey, based in Lancaster, was taught to appreciate traditional Pennsylvania German craft and art traditions by his grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Among his family’s heirlooms was the celebrated “Huber Schrank” (1779), a masterpiece of Pennsylvania German cabinetmaking (a *Schrank* is a cupboard or wardrobe), now in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Hershey uses words to create abstractions. In *Interesting and Irresistible* (2010; fig. 52) and other examples of his “Word” paintings, the words of the title are repeated, layered, and fragmented. Hershey explains, “Repeated over and over, the words become purposefully illegible, serendipitous rhythms of lines and colors in transition.”

Dennis Stephan (b. 1947), also based in Lancaster, retired from his graphic-design practice in 2011 with plans to devote more time to a passion: creating new fraktur that, while made to commemorate contemporary life-cycle events, was guided by historic examples and made with period-appropriate instruments, materials, and techniques. Since then, Stephan has become one of the most respected and sought-after makers of contemporary, yet traditional, fraktur. Recently, Stephan began to make art that is directly informed by fraktur but entirely new in appearance and process—his own creative expression. *Crossover* (2015; fig. 53) is a “poster size” twenty-four-by-twenty-inch giclée print inspired by



the “poster portraits” created by Stephan’s fellow Lancaster artist, the American early Modernist Charles Demuth (see page 49). In his contemporary work, Stephan isolates decorative motifs found in Fraktur, such as the pinwheel, and enlarges them to emphasize their graphic power. Fraktur’s “fractured” lettering is broken further into portions of single or intersecting letters, then “writ large,” allowing the viewer to appreciate them as graceful abstractions.

Douglas Witmer (b. 1971), now a Philadelphia resident, was born and raised in a Mennonite community that valued and emphasized “plainness”—unadorned function for things material, humility, and group-mindedness for the self. Ultimately, this plainness is a spiritual imperative—it honors the divine by deferring to it. Witmer is a painter of abstraction that is “pure”—it does not reference the perceived world. Viewed in groups, his paintings evoke an artist exploring, with intent,

**FIG. 52**

Jerome Hershey, *Interesting and Irresistible*, 2010.

Acrylic on paper, 25½ x 32 in.

COURTESY THE ARTIST

the infinite possibilities presented by varying shape, color, and surface. Alone, a painting by Witmer is “visual” enough to engage eye and mind, yet “plain” enough to allow the viewer to project her or his perceptions, to meditate, or simply to be present in the experience of seeing.

Witmer paints with the viewer in mind. He says, “I have always had the desire that my work be ‘useful’ for others. This comes out of my Mennonite upbringing, where image-making was meant to function as decoration or ‘serve’ as an illustration of something else.” In his art, Witmer expresses himself while honoring the practical Mennonite worldview: it is “useful” investigation that serves others by providing moments of clarity and focus.

**FIG. 53**  
Dennis Stephan, *Crossover*,  
2015. Giclée print, 24 x 20 in.  
COURTESY THE ARTIST





In *School Papers (2013–1)* (2013; fig. 54), Witmer maintains the purity of his abstraction while introducing elements that invoke the “fancy” and narrative/documentary nature of *fraktur*. On a timeworn sheet of ruled paper, Witmer has drawn a rectangle, a frame—a graphic device common to *fraktur* and other forms of illustration. Surrounding it are brightly colored splotches of paint that—like the “school paper” itself—recall childhood. These humble materials and their modest presentation evince joy, recalling for all when we first partook in the human ability to create.

In the end, art is always communication. *Fraktur* artists documented events, capturing their own time, place, and people for posterity. Unlike *fraktur*, words and identity in contemporary art are not always straight-

**FIG. 54**  
Douglas Witmer, *School Papers (2013–1)*, 2013. Mixed media on found paper, 9 x 6 in.  
PRIVATE COLLECTION, ENGLAND;  
COURTESY THE ARTIST

forward. They may be, or appear to be, random or deliberately ambiguous. Nonetheless, these artworks speak and encourage replies—they offer icebreakers in the conversation between artist, object, and viewer.<sup>3</sup>

#### NOTES

- 1 See Fred Hoffman, *Jean-Michel Basquiat Drawing: Work from the Schorr Family Collection* (New York: Acquavella Galleries and Rizzoli, 2014). Additional thanks to Mr. Hoffman for insights about Basquiat's "warrior" imagery in an e-mail to the author on March 23, 2015.
- 2 See Alex Baker, "Matokie Lives," in *Margaret Kilgallen: In the Sweet Bye and Bye* (Los Angeles: Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater, 2005), 58–71.
- 3 Thanks to Timothy Gierschick II for noting that text in art—regardless of its content—inspires thought and discussion. Timothy Gierschick II, e-mail to the author, February 12, 2015.

*Matthew F. Singer is senior writer for the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art, and a doctoral candidate in American Studies at Pennsylvania State University. His writings have appeared in publications for museums and galleries as well as DINOSAUR, Modernism, The Magazine Antiques, Veranda, and other periodicals.*