

OUT OF ISOLATION



Work from the DePauw University
Permanent Art Collection

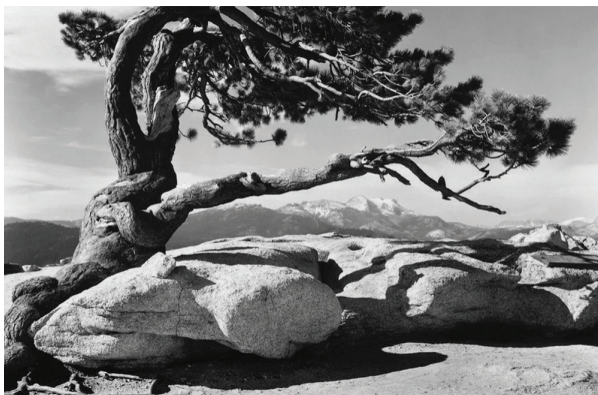
August 23 – December 10, 2021
DePauw University, Richard E. Peeler Art Center



Paul Hadley, *Soon after Sunup, Vevay*, 1960. 13 ¾ in. x 15 ¼ in. Watercolor.



Zoe Strauss, *Everything*, 2001-2008. 10 in. x 15 in. Photograph.



Ansel Adams, *Jeffrey Pine, Sentinel Dome*, 1940. 16 in. x 20 in. Photograph.

Out of Isolation: Work from the DePauw

University Art Collection highlights art that captures moments of reflection, contemplation, and isolation. Curated with the assistance of Austin Canales, 2020-21 Klauser Fellow, the work selected for this exhibition portrays environments and settings that might seem familiar to many after a year and a half of living through a pandemic. The scope of work invites viewers to consider a variety of environments from scenic mountain views, otherworldly desert lands, empty parking lots of convenience stores, and everyday domestic interiors. Figurative representation is limited to a few works that either celebrate identity, a specific moment in time, or capture the intimacy of solitude. For example, Paul Hadley's painting *Soon After Sun-up, Vevay* portrays a solitary figure walking along an empty streetscape in the early hours of the morning. While it is a scene that could have been captured very recently, Hadley painted this work in 1960. The relevance and contemporality of the work included in the exhibition demonstrates the ability of art to capture not just a specific environment, but one that is infused with atmosphere, evoking an emotional response that resonates today.

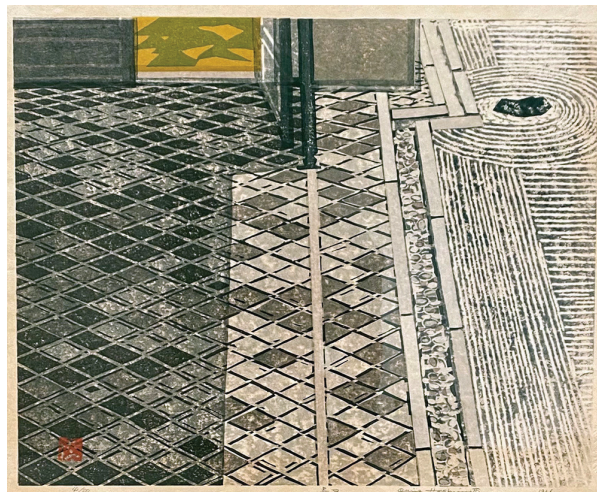
Zoe Strauss also captures familiar landscapes that evoke a sense of emptiness. A photographer from Philadelphia who uses the city as her muse, Strauss typically photographs overlooked (or purposefully avoided) details with a humanist perspective and eye for composure seeking to find the beauty and difficulty of everyday life.¹ In her photograph titled *Everything*, an nearly empty parking lot of a local convenience store looks like it could have been taken yesterday rather than in 2008. The lonely figure of a woman carrying a child into a space that

¹ Smith, Roberta (July 12, 2012), "Art in Review Zoe Strauss: '10 Years, a Slide-show'." *The New York Times*

is normally bustling with activity brings into question if the store is actually open and why there are no other customers nearby.

Other photographs in the exhibition include the poetic and powerful imagery of the Southwest captured by Ansel Adams. While the work of Zoe Strauss omits figurative representation for the most part and is rooted in an urban environment, *Jeffery Pine, Sentinel Dome* by Ansel Adams depicts a landscape that includes a tree exuding dynamic gestural movement. Interestingly, the absence of the human form in *Jeffery Pine, Sentinel* is not as starkly noticed as in Strauss's work since the pine becomes a surrogate for the human form. Adams's attention to not only the technical skill of exposure and printing of the photograph, but also the composition, or how he chooses to place his subject matter within the photograph, demonstrates his commitment to promoting photography as an art form – a viewpoint that was relatively new during the 1920s.²

Abstraction is represented throughout the exhibition with work from Spanish artist Joan Miro, American artist Romare Bearden, and several Japanese artists who helped bring the Japanese woodblock print into a form of art practice that mirrored Western art production. This movement is known as *sōsaku-hanga* and took place in the early 20th century.³ Okiie Hashimoto's depiction of a courtyard in his piece titled *Shunjitsu (Spring Day)* verges on abstraction as it pivots the viewer's perspective of the tiled geometric floor and the methodically raked stones in the garden. The contrast between the linear rows and the geometric tiles create a pattern



Okiie Hashimoto, *Shunjitsu*, 1966. 19 in. x 23 in. Woodcut.



Romare Bearden, *In the Garden*, 1979. 22 in. x 16 in. Lithograph.

² Alinder, Mary Street (1996). *Ansel Adams: A Biography*. New York: Henry Holt and Company. p. 87.

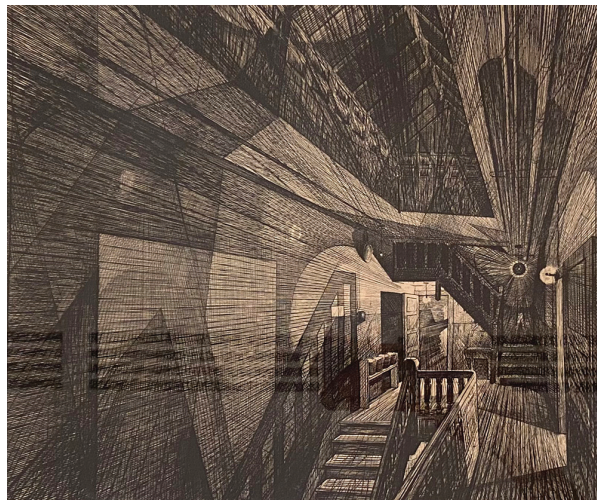
³ Kawakita, Michiaki. *Contemporary Japanese Prints*. Tokyo and Palo Alto: Kodansha, 1967

that unfolds into a space used for meditation and contemplation. Similar flatness and compression of the picture plane takes place in Romare Bearden's *In the Garden* created in 1979. *In the Garden* is a lithograph, a printed image on paper, representing Bearden's interest in celebrating Black lives through the use of vivid bold colors and distinct patterns.

Another interior space to explore is that of Walt Hatke's *Hidden Words*. The painting depicts a former Odd Fellows house, a secret society prominent in the United States during the mid-19th century established as an alternative to freemasonry. Hatke fills the room with suggestive symbolism.⁴ The two chairs in the mid-ground are joined by a string, the ladder is propped up in the background, and the open book that lays face down on the table in the foreground all suggest a human presence that has departed mid act.

There are many other works including videos by American artist Joan Jonas and South African artist William Kentridge that explore concepts of contemplation and reflection through their artistic practice. Situated between two Japanese screens that depict serene images of wildlife, the videos are not that dissimilar in provoking the viewer to immerse themselves in a moment of reflection. Collectively, the work in this exhibition invites viewers to temporarily travel to places of serenity, some that are often overlooked in a hurried fast paced world, and consider the beauty found in the mundane moment looking out a window or the monumental beauty of the world in all its forms.

Maggie Leininger
Director and Curator of Exhibitions



Armin Landeck, *Stairhall*, 1928-1959. 11 1/2 in x 14 in. Etching.



Walt Hatke, *Hidden Words*, 1995-2004. 32 in. x 54 in. Oil on canvas.

Cover image: Glenn Cooper Henshaw, *Sunset in New York*, 1929, Oil on board, 47" x 35"

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10 W. Hanna St., Greencastle, IN 46135

Hours: Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.;
Sun. 1-5 p.m. Closed during university breaks and holidays.

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depauw.edu/arts-and-culture/arts/peeler/