

Other Octaves

Curated by Jennie C. Jones

Other Octaves is the first exhibition curated by artist Jennie C. Jones. It traces a loosely connected group of artists active during the 1960s and 1970s who have held personal significance for her. “These artists have offered me many gifts, insights, and inspiration,” Jones notes. “They hold a kindred energy.”

Spanning sculpture, painting, printmaking, conceptual practices, and performance, the works in this exhibition are linked by several thematic threads. Many of the artists worked outside the prevailing movements of their time, forging unique paths for themselves. Guided by investigations of color and emotion, several of the artists distilled their personal observations and experiences into abstract forms. They often embraced low-risk and unconventional materials such as found paper, plastic resin, and homemade pigments or tools. Some developed conceptual prompts and experimental scores that blurred the boundaries between visual art and music.

By bringing these trailblazing figures together, Jones invites viewers to consider the connections between the visual and sonic avant-garde. Collectively, *Other Octaves* amplifies a chorus of voices who pushed against the boundaries of art, expanding its definitions and reshaping the cultural dialogues of the twentieth century.

Other Octaves is on view Sept 5, 2025 - Feb 1, 2026.

This exhibition is curated by Jennie C. Jones.



To listen to a playlist created by the artist, use the QR code.



Scan for the digital exhibition guide on the free Bloomberg Connects app.

17. **Jennie C. Jones** (American, b. 1968)
Standing and Moving #1-2, 2024
Collage and acrylic on paper
Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New
York, © 2025 Jennie C. Jones

18. **Jennie C. Jones** (American, b. 1968)
Standing and Moving #6, 2024
Collage and acrylic on paper
Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New
York, © 2025 Jennie C. Jones

In these works on paper (#17 and #18), Jones collaged cut pieces of paper, adding color and texture to their surfaces with layers of acrylic paint. They were partially inspired by the work of Anne Truitt, on view in this gallery. The soft lavender and warm yellow hues resemble the color scheme of *Harvest Shade* (#19), and the orientations of some of the collaged papers seem to recall its tall, rectangular shape. As in much of Jones's work, sound is subtly alluded to—evident in the presence of staff lines, the notational framework composers use to write music.

19. **Anne Truitt** (American, 1921–2004)
Harvest Shade, 1996
Acrylic on wood
Private Collection

Anne Truitt used geometry and color to evoke memories and emotions. Her sculptures often take the form of rectangular columns, carefully painted with as many as forty layers of acrylic. Truitt typically sanded their surfaces to remove all traces of her brushstrokes, creating a polished appearance. Some, like *Harvest Shade* (#19), have subtle changes in hues along their faces. In contrast to the smooth planes of her sculptures, Truitt left her brushstrokes visible in two works on paper nearby (#20 and #21). With these works, some of the last she produced before her death, she used the textured surfaces and vibrant colors to evoke the sensations of sound. In 1965 Truitt wrote, “What is important to me is not geometrical shape per se, or color per

se, but to make a relationship between shape and color which feels to me like my experience.”

20. **Anne Truitt** (American, 1921–2004)
Sound Nine, 2003
Acrylic on paper
Steve Elmendorf

21. **Anne Truitt** (American, 1921–2004)
Sound Fourteen, 2003
Acrylic on paper
Steve Elmendorf

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22. **Agnes Martin** (American, born Canada, 1912–2004)

Benevolence, 2001

Acrylic and graphite on canvas
Dia Art Foundation; gift of the artist

With works like *Benevolence*, Agnes Martin distilled feelings and emotions into her art. Warm hues alternate across the surface of the canvas, producing soft planes of color. Martin hoped that people would visually “step into” her paintings. Originally from the prairies of Saskatchewan, Canada, Martin lived in New York City between 1957 and 1967 and spent much of the rest of her life and career in rural New Mexico, finding inspiration in the desert landscape. Other touchstones were meditation and solitude, which Martin considered paths to self-reliance, comfort, and happiness. She said, “If you wake up in the morning and feel very happy about nothing . . . that’s what I paint about.”

23. **Anne Truitt** (American, 1921–2004)

Spring Dryad, 1975

Acrylic on wood
Steve Elmendorf

24. **Mildred Thompson** (American, 1936–2003)

Wood Picture, ca. 1966

Found wood and acrylic paint
New Orleans Museum of Art, Museum Purchase, Leah Chase Fund, 2016.49

While Mildred Thompson is best known for her colorful paintings, she also worked in printmaking, sculpture, and pastels. In addition to being an artist, she was a poet, writer, professor, and performing musician. By the early 1970s, she turned almost entirely to abstraction in her visual art, which she felt granted her a sense of expressive freedom. *Wood Picture* belongs to a series the artist made from found wood. Its improvisational configuration seems to evoke the form of a musical instrument while remaining abstract. Unlike most of her other wood pictures, which she left with the material’s natural grain and color, Thompson painted this surface white, directing the viewer’s attention to the geometry and dimensionality of the planks and strips.

25. **Carmen Herrera** (Cuban-American, 1915–2022)

Borealis, 1966/2016

Acrylic and aluminum
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Broughton

Originally trained as an architect in her hometown of Havana, Cuba, Carmen Herrera began making sculpture and painting after she moved to New York in 1939. She developed her signature abstract style—which fused color, geometry, and form—while studying in Paris from 1948 to 1953.

Herrera often investigated the relationships between positive and negative space or figure and ground. In *Borealis* (#25), she painted the sculpture’s edges green to delineate its white surface, which might otherwise disappear against the wall. For *Pavanne (Green)* (#27), which the artist conceived as a memorial to her late brother, three separate shapes interlock into a cube-like form. Herrera attributed her spatially oriented approach to her early training, stating, “I wouldn’t paint the way I do if I hadn’t gone to architecture school. That’s where I learned to think abstractly.”

26. Ellsworth Kelly (American, 1923–2015)
Talmont, 1951
Oil on canvas
Collection Jack Shear © Ellsworth Kelly
Foundation

Ellsworth Kelly keenly observed built and natural environments and distilled them into form and color. Like his monumental wall sculpture *Blue Black*, permanently on view in the main gallery, *Talmont* uses bold colors and clean, striking shapes. The artist made this painting during a six-year stint in Paris. He often took photos of the urban landscape, including the curved shadows cast by stairways, railings, and balconies. These shapes would become references for works like *Talmont*. The artist cut papers into improvisational forms, arranged them into a grid, and painted the composition. Kelly was influenced not only by the sights of his adopted city, but also by German French artist Jean Arp, who made collages from random arrangements of scrap paper.

27. Carmen Herrera (Cuban-American, 1915–2022)
Pavanne (Green), 1967/2016
Acrylic and aluminum
Courtesy of Lisson Gallery

28. Carmen Herrera (Cuban-American, 1915–2022)
Untitled, 2015
Acrylic and pencil on paper
Courtesy of Lisson Gallery

29. Alma Thomas (American, 1891–1978)
Red Tree in High Winter, 1968
Acrylic and graphite on canvas
Colby Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine.
Museum purchase from the Jere Abbott
Acquisitions Fund, 2017.383

In *Red Tree in High Winter*, Alma Thomas used dabs of color to evoke the sights and sensations of the natural world. The overlapping greens, reds, and pinks suggest the feeling of a landscape, rather than a realistic representation of one. Thomas was an art teacher and painter for most of her life. She only developed the abstract style for which she has become known after she retired in 1960, when arthritis prevented her from painting precise lines. Thomas was inspired by gardens, the cosmos, and seasonal change as well as the twentieth-century “Color Field” painting style, in which planes of color are used to create various optical, visual, and emotional effects.

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30. **Lorraine O'Grady** (American, 1934–2024)
Cutting Out CONYT 26, 1977/2017
Letterpress printing on Japanese paper,
cut-out, collage on laid paper
Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New
York

For six months in 1977, Lorraine O'Grady made a weekly poem from headlines she cut out of *The New York Times*. By combining unconnected words and phrases, O'Grady explored the expressive potential of language. With these “cutout” works, she formed abstract links between descriptions of current events and her personal experiences. She revisited the work in the 2010s, recombining the original headlines into an entirely new set of poems. In addition to writing poetry and serving as an arts and culture critic, O'Grady made major contributions to performance and conceptual art. Her practice often centered on the complex intersections of race, gender, and identity.

31. **Louise Nevelson** (American, born Ukraine, 1899–1988)
Untitled, 1972
Collage on paper
Whitney Museum of American Art, New
York; gift of Jean and Howard Lipman,
97.113.4

32. **Louise Nevelson** (American, born Ukraine, 1899–1988)
Untitled, 1972
Paper collage and colored pencil on board
Whitney Museum of American Art, New
York; gift of Jean and Howard Lipman,
97.113.3

Louise Nevelson created a large body of works on paper, in addition to her better-known sculptures made of salvaged wood. In these two collages (#31 and #32), the artist layered scraps of paper into abstract compositions. Some of the materials are rectilinear while others are torn and frayed. The contrast between the geometric and irregular shapes creates a sense of movement, heightened by the unexpected angles at which their contours intersect and overlap. By using only two shades of paper—light and dark—Nevelson demonstrates how two-dimensional materials can create a sense of volume and space.

33. **Mildred Thompson** (American, 1936–2003)
Untitled, 1969
Paper collage
Private collection

34. **Mavis Pusey** (Jamaican, 1928–2019)
Study, ca. 1970
Lithograph on wove paper
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond,
Aldine S. Hartman Endowment Fund and
National Endowment for the Arts Fund for
American Art, 2022.58

35. **Benjamin Wigfall** (American, 1930–2017)
Nine Part Black Theme, 1971
Etching on Arches wove paper
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond,
Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment,
2022.214

36. **Martin Puryear** (American, b. 1941)
Métissage/Camouflage, 2016
Woodcut on Torinoko paper
Courtesy Universal Limited Art Editions

Although Martin Puryear is best known for his large-scale sculptures, he also makes prints. *Métissage/Camouflage* features inky patches that almost look like torn scraps of paper assembled into a collage. At the center, outlined by alternating colors, is the shape of a Phrygian cap. This hat was a symbol of liberty during the French Revolution (1789–99) and is a recurring theme in Puryear's work. The print's title and two-toned color scheme add layers of meaning—"Métissage" refers to the ethnic and cultural mixing as a result of French colonialism. With works like this one, Puryear reflects on human histories and notions of freedom while exploring the basic qualities of shape and form.

37. **Mavis Pusey** (Jamaican, 1928–2019)
Untitled (Abstract), 1963
Lithograph on wove paper
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Reba and Dave Williams Collection, Gift of Reba and Dave Williams, 2008

38. **Mavis Pusey** (Jamaican, 1928–2019)
Quiet Movement, ca. 1965
Etching and aquatint on paper
Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African American Art

Mavis Pusey moved to New York City from Jamaica when she was eighteen. She was captivated by the hustle and bustle of city life, representing what she called its "tempo and movement" in her abstract, geometric style. Equally important was her interest in classical music and experimental jazz. Many of her works attempt to translate the moods, rhythms, and energy of music into two dimensions. After studying art in Europe during the mid-to late 1960s, Pusey returned to New York. She set up a studio at Robert Blackburn's Printmaking Workshop, where she came into contact with a number of other artists who were pushing the expressive limits of printmaking.

39. **Zarina** (American, born India, 1937–2020)
Wall, 1969
Relief print from collaged wood, printed in burnt umber on Indian handmade paper
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase, with funds from the Print Committee, 2011.10

After studying printmaking in Paris in the mid-1960s, Zarina established her own studio in New Delhi, India. Some of her earliest works were made from discarded items she found while walking the city's streets. In *Wall*, she arranged wooden planks into an irregular rectangle, inked them, and printed an impression of their surfaces. She was influenced by the abstract styles of modern artists like Kazimir Malevich and Constantin Brancusi, in addition to the materials and architecture of South Asia.

When Zarina moved to New York in the mid-1970s to further her career, she got in touch with master printmaker Robert Blackburn (see #s 55 and 56 nearby), who helped connect her to the city's wider artistic community.

40. **Agnes Martin** (American, born Canada, 1912–2004)
Untitled, 1953
Pen and ink, brush and ink, and wash on paper
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of the Walter family in honor of May E. Walter, 91.29

41. **Jack Whitten** (American, 1939–2018)
Psee II, 1978
Acrylic on canvas
Collection of Lizbeth and George Krupp

In the 1960s Jack Whitten was influenced by the Abstract Expressionist movement, which united gesture, color, form, and feeling. By the 1970s he had developed a new style, in an attempt to deepen the flat planes of painting and embody the improvisational feeling of music.

Psee II belongs to the artist's *Greek Alphabet* series (1975–78). Whitten laid canvases on the floor and placed objects under them. He pulled paint across their surfaces with metal blades, ice picks, saws,

screwdrivers, electric polishers, and string. The underlying objects created layered silhouettes while the tools left horizontal striations. To keep the works purely abstract, without narrative or emotional associations, Whitten titled the works with letters of the Greek alphabet.

42. **Fred Eversley** (American, 1941–2025)
Untitled (Parabolic Lens), 1970
Cast polyester
Private collection

Fred Eversley was associated with the Light and Space movement, a loose group of artists who used nontraditional materials to explore sight and perception. Building on his early training as an engineer, Eversley developed innovative techniques for working with polyester resin, plastic, and industrial dyes and pigments. He would spin the liquid resin, using centrifugal force to create convex sculptures with thick edges and thin centers. The resulting sculptures, which he referred to as lenses, convey an interest in how we see, since we experience these works by looking through them. In addition to clear lenses like this one, Eversley experimented with colors, their hues appearing darker or lighter depending on the polyester's thickness.

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43. **Charles Gaines** (American, b. 1944)
Incomplete Text #6 "E", 1978–1979

Photostat (a); pen and colored inks, correction fluid, and graphite pencil on paper (b); pen and colored inks and graphite pencil on paper (c)
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Meredith Palmer in honor of Adam D. Weinberg, 2010.226a–c

In *Incomplete Text #6 "E"*, Gaines used passages from a book to make a three-part artwork. He removed letters from the original text (left) and transferred them, in order, to a grid (center). Then, he scanned the leftover letters for “false” words, formed by chance through their adjacency in the deconstructed texts. The “false” words gain new meanings when placed into a poem-like format (right). Gaines was one of the first Black artists to create conceptual art. By developing systems that engage grids, codes, equations, and notation, he undermines our expectations of art as something that represents personal experiences and perceptions rather than objective realities.

44. **Hanne Darboven** (German, 1941–2009)
Month III (March), 1974

Ink on thirty-one pieces of transparentized paper
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection Gift, 2005

Hanne Darboven invented complex systems to visualize the passage of time, rejecting the traditional calendar for more conceptual approaches. In *Month III (March)*, she developed a formula to represent each day of the month in numerical terms. Line bars toward the bottom of each page provide an alternate timeline. A leading figure in conceptual art, Darboven valued these meticulous notations as “a way of writing without describing.” With works like this one, the artist documented her life, but her complex code keeps any personal content obscured.

45. **Benjamin Patterson** (American, 1934–2016)

String Music, 1960
Black ink on folded paper (reproduction)
Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (890164)

46. **Benjamin Patterson** (American, 1934–2016)

Variations for Double-Bass and Duo for Voice and a String Instrument, performed during *Kleines Sommerfest: Après John Cage*, Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal, West Germany, June 9, 1962
Facsimile, printed 2025 from an original gelatin silver print on board
Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY

47. **Benjamin Patterson** (American, 1934–2016)

Variations for Double-Bass (page 1), ca. 1962
Facsimile, printed 2025 from an original typed carbon paper transfer on paper
Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY

Ben Patterson was a classically trained musician who became an early member of Fluxus after moving to Europe in the 1960s. This international group of experimental artists and composers sought to expand the definitions of art. These materials, produced during Patterson’s time abroad, highlight his inventive relationship to music and performance. For *String Music* (#45), Patterson composed the visual outline of a musical score instead of using traditional sheet music. He prescribed some elements, but the performer was allowed to “freely determine” the rest. *Variations for Double-Bass* (#47) instructs musicians to play the instrument with unconventional methods and objects. The photos nearby (#46) show him engaging with the bass in a number of nontraditional ways. He drags ropes and feather dusters across the strings, holds it upside down, and plays it with paper, rubber, and metal.

48. **Hanne Darboven** (German, 1941–2009)
Untitled, 1969
Offset lithograph
Collection of Jennie C. Jones

Hanne Darboven inscribed this card with instructions for how to create one of the numbers-based artworks for which she is best known (see #44 nearby). Along with dozens of other artists, Darboven was sent a blank index card by art historian Lucy Lippard, who used the responses to create works for a pair of exhibitions in Seattle and Vancouver in 1969 and 1970. The two shows, titled *557,087* and *955,000* after the cities' respective populations at the time, were among the earliest and most influential surveys of conceptual art. Adrian Piper (see #49) and Richard Serra, whose *Joe* is on permanent display in the Pulitzer's courtyard, also participated.

49. **Adrian Piper** (American, b. 1948)
Untitled, 1969
Offset lithograph
Collection of Jennie C. Jones

50. **Maryanne Amacher** (American, 1938–2009)
Score for *Adjacencies*, 1965
Reproduction
New York Public Library/Estate of Maryanne Amacher

51. **Maryanne Amacher** (American, 1938–2009)
Instructions for *Adjacencies*, 1965
Reproduction
New York Public Library/Estate of Maryanne Amacher

52. **Maryanne Amacher** (American, 1938–2009)
Instructions for *Adjacencies*, 1965
Reproduction
New York Public Library/Estate of Maryanne Amacher

Maryanne Amacher was an early practitioner of sound-based and installation art. She used her work to heighten our perception of sound and its psychological effects. *Adjacencies* (#50) illustrates her interest in innovative musical notation. The score is meant to be played by two percussionists, whose sound is sent

to speakers arranged in each corner of the performance space. Symbols instruct each musician on which instruments to use and what types of sounds to produce, rather than prescribing a set tune or rhythm. Written instructions (#51 and #52) help the musicians interpret the score. This approach is a hallmark of Amacher's experimental process, which sought to flatten hierarchies and create space for more creative license among musicians.

Use the QR code to watch a recent performance of *Adjacencies*.



53. **Julius Eastman** (American, 1940–1990)
Score for *Stay On It*, 1973
Distributed by G. Schirmer and Wise Music Group

Julius Eastman was an experimental composer, musician, and teacher who pushed the boundaries of music. With *Stay On It*, he offered performers a basic score and set of guidelines, along with a call to interpret the work as they saw fit. The resulting song is open-ended, its sound and rhythm shifting based on the performers' improvisations and desires. The original score for *Stay On It* was a set of handwritten instructions given to the performers. The version on display here was created by a group of musicians seeking to resurrect Eastman's legacy after his untimely death at age forty-nine.

Use the QR code to watch a recent performance of *Stay On It*.



54. **Adrian Piper** (American, b. 1948)
My Calling (Card) #1, 1986
Offset lithograph
Collection of Jennie C. Jones

Conceptual artist Adrian Piper addresses issues of race, gender,

and social conditions, often rooting her work in personal experiences. As a light-skinned Black woman, she has found herself subjected to racist remarks from people unaware of her ethnic identity. This card, along with many of the artist's other artworks and writings, explores the complexities of "passing" for a different race or ethnicity. As Piper wrote, *My Calling (Card) #1* "fights a stereotype by giving the offender a concrete experience of what it is like to be the object of one."

55. **Benjamin Wigfall** (American, 1930–2017)
Robert Blackburn, Master Printer and Founder of the Printmaking Workshop will be at Communications Village, 1974–1978
Poster
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Margaret R. and Robert M. Freeman Library, VMFA Archives, Richmond, Virginia, VA12.04.4.001

After he moved to New Paltz, New York, for a university teaching job in 1963, Benjamin Wigfall realized there was a wider need for local arts education and mentorship. By 1973 he had turned his personal studio into Communications Village, a printmaking workshop and community center that provided teenagers with opportunities to learn artmaking. The workshop also hosted early career artists such as Mavis Pusey and Charles Gaines, who went on to make works included elsewhere in this exhibition. As its reputation grew, Communications Village attracted some of the foremost printmakers of its day, such as Robert Blackburn (#s 55 and 56), whose own support of emerging artists was a model for Wigfall. Although it closed in 1983, the workshop's support of Black artists' careers had considerable impact on artmaking in the later twentieth century.

56. **Rose Tripoli** (American, b. 1942)
Untitled (Robert Blackburn and Benjamin Wigfall in Doorway of CV [Communications Village]), ca. 1974–1976
Silver gelatin print on wove paper
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment, 2022.239