









# Introduction

With the support of the Herb Jackson and Laura Grosch Gallery Endowment and Davidson College Friends of the Arts, the Van Every/Smith Galleries at Davidson College are pleased to present *Paul Stephen Benjamin: Black Form*. The exhibition includes several new works in diverse media that continue Benjamin's explorations of the color and the sound of black as conceptual entry points for dialogue around identity.

Benjamin draws on aspects of formalism and Minimalism to create his large-scale works that often rely on the arrangement of many like components. Variations of a grid recur throughout, as individual works come together to create large-scale installations such as *Black Thought*, a presentation of a hundred silkscreens in five rows of twenty. Repetition—whether of imagery, phrases, or sounds—is also a key part of his work. *Sonata in Absolute Black: All the Black Keys*, for example, is a multichannel video spanning thirty-six identical monitors; each video depicts the artist's hand playing one of thirty-six black keys on a piano.

We intended to display this work over a year ago. This exhibition was just one more thing upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. But now, the presentation seems even stronger and more important. The contradictory words we may use to describe the works on view in *Black Form* could easily describe our lives at the moment: at once both uniform and varied, apparent and obscure, urgent and languishing. We hope these characteristics, along with the overall meditative nature of the presentation, provide you with the opportunity to explore the works formally in terms of structure, materiality, and shape, while also inviting deeper, conceptual conversations around identity, race, and masculinity.

We extend deep gratitude to Paul Stephen Benjamin for his commitment to this project and his willingness to share his work with our community. We are also grateful to Hallie Ringle for her insightful words included in this brochure. Thanks also to everyone who made the exhibition possible, including Marisa Pascucci, David Sackett, Clayton Venhuizen, Adrienne Lee '21, Marquia Humphries '22, Graham McKinney, and Stephanie Cash.

— **Lia Newman**, *Director/Curator*









# Black Form

In 1967, Raymond Saunders wrote an essay called *Black is a Color* in which he untethered art made by Black artists from associations of race and lived experience. In this text, he argued, “no artist can afford to let them obscure what runs through all art—the living root and the ever-growing aesthetic record of human spiritual and intellectual experience. Can’t we get clear of these degrading limitations, and recognize the wider reality of art, where color is the means and not the end?” For Atlanta-based artist Paul Stephen Benjamin, it’s exactly that, a means. Succinctly put, Benjamin’s work can be described as material explorations of the color black. Benjamin puts color at the center of his practice, considering it as an expressive form, as material, and it’s also about Black as a racial designation and cultural identity.

Seen in dialogue, the works on view in *Black Form* are questions, answers, and complications to the artist’s historic use of the color. Benjamin is influenced by such artists as Kazimir Malevich, whose *Black Square* layers shades of black in a thick accumulation of paint on the canvas’s surface. In Malevich’s “Suprematist” style (the artist’s term), he asserted the importance of color and form over subject or, in other words, he made color and form the subject of the painting.

Yet, in 2015 an X-ray examination of *Black Square* found two compositions underneath the top coat, one of which conveys a racist joke.<sup>1</sup> Researchers believe the text was inscribed by Malevich in response to an 1882 painting by French writer and humorist Alphonse Allais, a similarly racist work. Malevich explored formal qualities of the color black by layering different colors, giving the color depth while degrading Blackness. Over four decades after Malevich created *Black Square*, Frank Stella’s *Black Paintings* series appeared in the Museum of Modern Art’s exhibition *Sixteen Americans*. This group of black paintings arguably helped launch Minimalism, which gave rise to Conceptualism in the next decade. His famous quote “What you see is what you see” encapsulates Stella’s desire to divorce color and form from any burdens of representation or deeper meaning.

Referencing Malevich’s and Stella’s articulation of black as color and form, Benjamin maps new ways for us to consider the use of black. In *Black Haiku*, Benjamin, like Stella, uses black house paint. Rather than a canvas, he applies paint directly to the gallery wall. Overlaid in black vinyl letters, the words “Black is a color / Every black is beautiful / Black is a beautiful” repeat like a mantra. Benjamin creates a tension between the legibility of the words and the expressive value of the color. His use of black is far more expansive than Stella’s and Malevich’s, demanding a

<sup>1</sup>Dunne, Carey. “Art Historians Find Racist Joke Hidden under Malevich’s ‘Black Square.’” *Hyperallergic*, November 17, 2015. <https://hyperallergic.com/253361/art-historian-finds-racist-joke-hidden-under-malevichs-black-square/>

Kishkovsky, Sophia. “There Is More to Malevich’s Black Square than a Hidden Racist Joke, Moscow Curators Reveal.” *The Art Newspaper*, September 28, 2021. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2015/11/18/there-is-more-to-malevichs-black-square-than-a-hidden-racist-joke-moscow-curators-reve>

look at the friction between creating work devoid of meaning and using colors that have deep historical and social resonance.

In addition to refiguring the form of the haiku, breaking its traditional structure of three brief lines in favor of long single lines of text, Benjamin also experiments with the form of sonatas. In *Sonata in Absolute Black* (2020), Benjamin plays a composition on the black keys of a Steinway piano. Like classical four-hand piano sonatas, *Sonata in Absolute Black* also layers sound. Installed as a thirty-six-channel video, the effect is intense and chaotic. One could read the composition as highlighting the black keys set against the background of the white keys. Like the white border of Malevich's *Black Square*, or Zora Neale Hurston's famous quote, "I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background" the importance of choosing the black keys over and over becomes explicit when repeated thirty-six times.

Seriality is an important part of Benjamin's practice. For the past three years, Benjamin has created a work every day as a kind of daily meditation on the word "black." The resulting *Black Thought* serigraphs, based on these daily collages, include phrases like "I am Black and I'm Proud" and "Almost Black," snipped from magazines, newspapers, and food packaging, and pasted onto a white background that serves as a structuring device, ensuring they maintain the same boundaries. The regularity and scale at which the artist completed these hark back to conceptual practitioners like Charles Gaines, Josef Albers, and Sol LeWitt, who sought to create work based on predetermined equations and intervals.

Even Benjamin's seemingly unique monoprints can be viewed as serial iterations. Over the last decade, Benjamin has revisited the flag as subject in various forms. For example, in *Black Cotton Flag Made in Georgia*, he rendered an American flag in shades of black. Its monumental form conjures a nation in mourning and raises questions of race, patriotism, and national identity. Similarly, Benjamin's flag monotypes *Black Flag #1* and *Black Flag #2* show two flags reduced to black and white. These works bring to mind David Hammons's body print, *America the Beautiful*, which the artist made in 1968. In this, Hammons's body is enveloped by an American flag, the stars and stripes rendered in bold colors in stark contrast to the artist's black and white form. In the monoprints, Benjamin's flags fade in and out—similar to Hammons's figure in *America the Beautiful*. These washed-out prints challenge the strength communicated by the red, white, and blue of the American flag. Where Hammons's flag appears as part blanket and part weight, Benjamin's flags seems to be worn and broken.

This exhibition represents an evolution in the artist's practice. Each of the works on view takes a different form—text, video, print—yet each breaks art historical conventions by resisting any type of categorization. In some works, Benjamin subtly transforms unassuming objects like black lights to emphasize color as formal ground for examination, while in others he manipulates language to test the boundaries of color definition. Each work, in its various material forms, insists on a more spacious definition of race, identity, and patriotism, one that compels us to move beyond simple interpretations into spaces where multiple truths are embraced.

— Hallie Ringle

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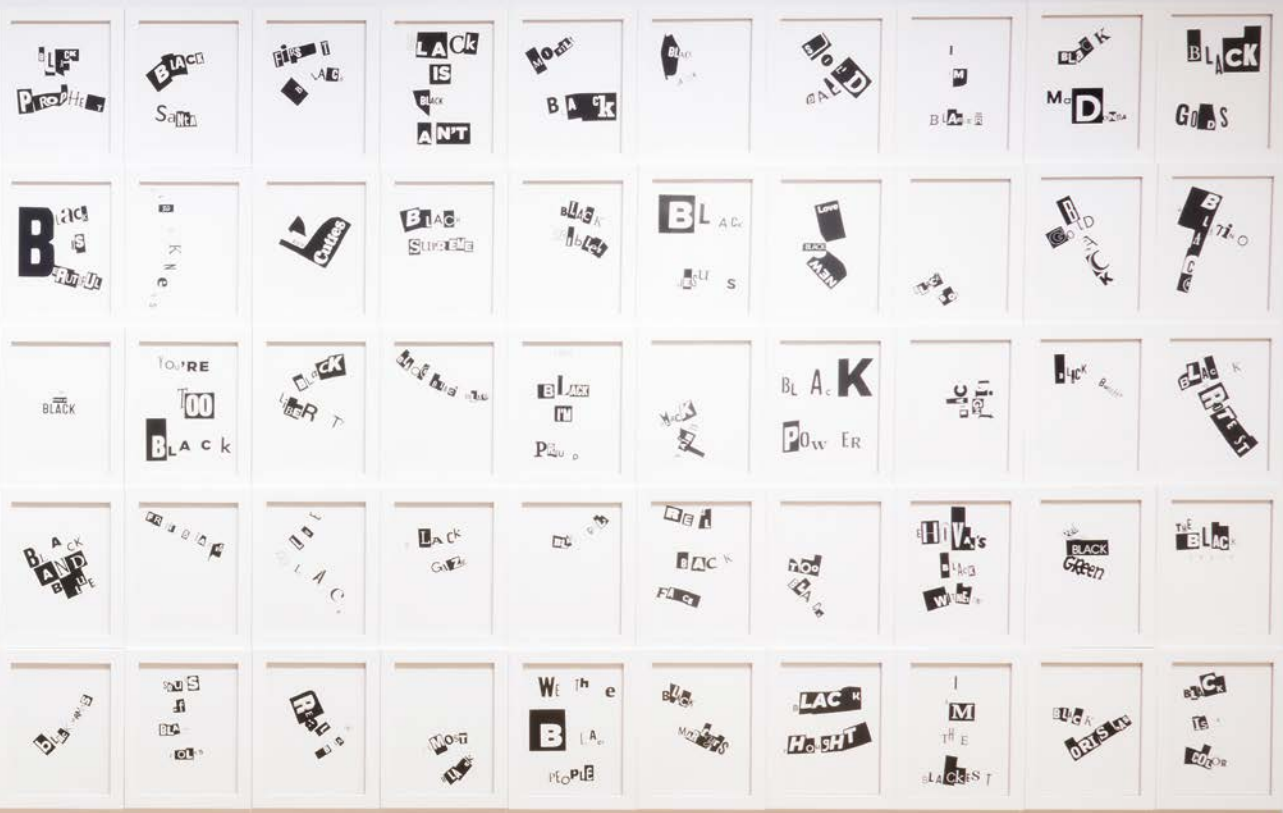
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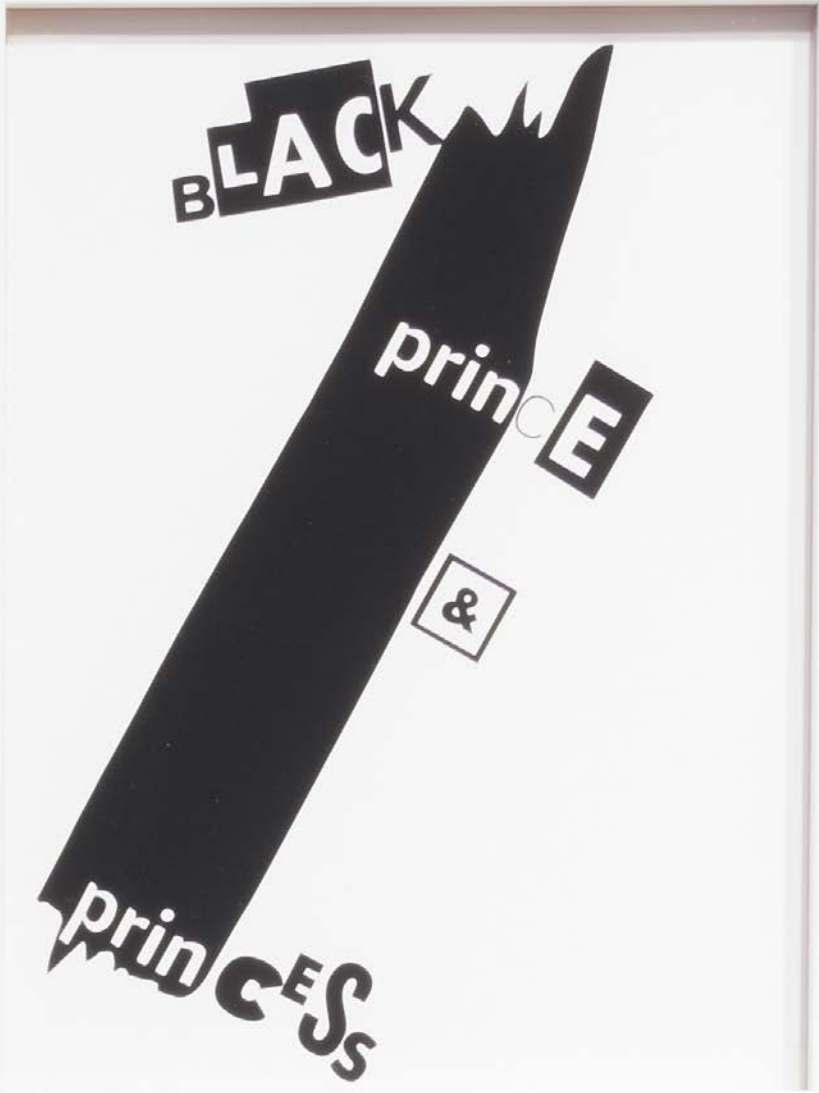
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SHOWN ON PAGES 8 AND 9:

*Black Haiku, 2022*

Vinyl on matte Black Magic PPG paint

~550 square feet

Three phrases are featured in *Black Haiku*, Benjamin's new vinyl installation for the Van Every/Smith Galleries. The lines are randomly dispersed throughout the three-wall installation, though the complete haiku is presented on the main wall, opposite the gallery doors:

Black is a color  
Every black is beautiful  
Black is beautiful

The Black is Beautiful movement came to prominence around the same time Benjamin was born, in the 1960s, with the goal of shifting and redefining standards of beauty to empower black women (and men). For the past few years, for several hours per day, the refrain "Black is beautiful" has been part of the artist's daily, meditative practice. He repeatedly types the phrase on an old typewriter; when he fills a sheet, he starts anew. Benjamin has accumulated thousands of pages bearing the statement. As his mind wanders, new words come into consciousness and are added to the sheet. This original process is reflected in *Black Haiku* through the font choice (Courier), through irregular, random capitalization that occasionally occurs when Benjamin types, and of course, through the additional two phrases, *Every black is beautiful* and *Black is a color*.

To create *Black Haiku*, black, glossy vinyl letters were applied to walls painted in a flat paint named Black Magic. When immersed in the installation, the repeating phrases seem to emerge from the background: *Black is a color. Every black is beautiful. Black is beautiful. Black is a color. Every black is beautiful. Black is beautiful. And again. And again. And again.* It becomes a mantra, and thus, an internalized truth.

PREVIOUS SPREAD AND LEFT:

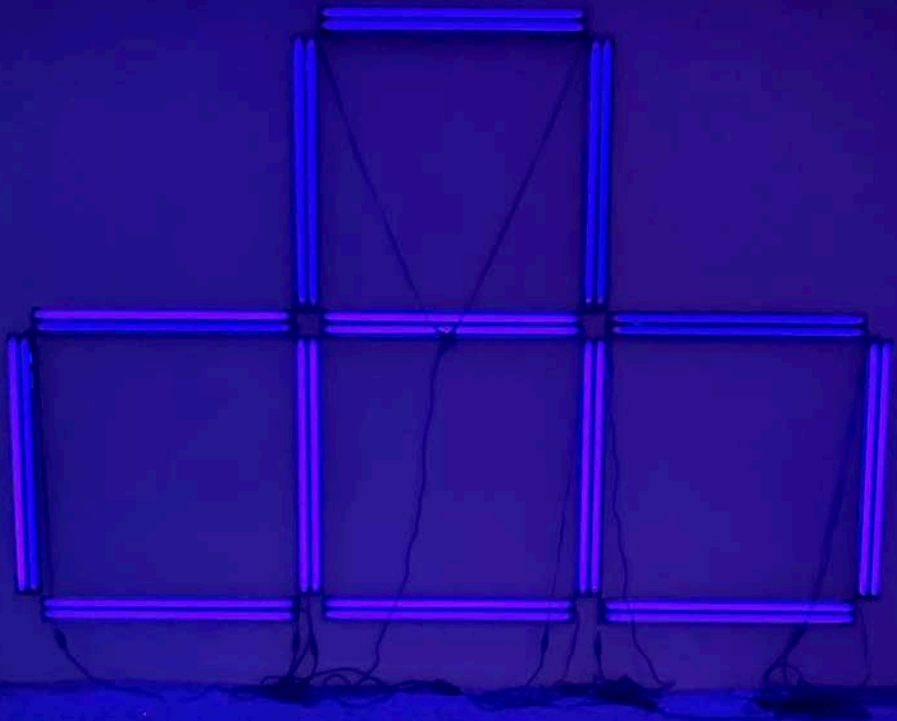
*Black Thought, 2021*

One hundred silkscreens on Stonehenge paper

12 x 19 inches each unframed; 14 x 21 inches each framed

Repeating the multipart grid seen throughout Benjamin's exhibition, *Black Form*, *Black Thought* presents one hundred small framed silkscreens, each bearing a short phrase containing the word black. Although the works are screenprints, Benjamin's process is visible: words are composed of letters of various fonts and styles, as if cut out of magazines and collaged together. Phrases such as *Black Jesus*, *Black Power*, *Too Black*, *Pure Black*, *Black Jews*, and *Mostly Black*, are printed in black ink and float within a white field. The arrangement of the phrases varies—some are linear, some sweep diagonally across the page, others positioned vertically.

Reading the phrases to oneself is akin to being part of the artist's daily, meditative practice, where the word black is the mantra. It becomes a point of departure. New phrases are recorded and, as his mind wanders, he brings his attention back to the word black.



### *Black Gold, 2022*

Black light fixture, black power strip, black extension cord

8 x 8 x 12 feet

*Black Gold* is constructed of thirteen fluorescent tubes, arranged in a half-cross form, 12 feet long by 8 feet tall. The industrial, commercially sourced light fixtures recall Dan Flavin's 20th-century Minimalist light sculptures and installations. Similar to Flavin, and with a nod to Sol LeWitt's modular cubes, Benjamin uses the light tubes to create simple geometric forms or shapes in light. While Flavin used fluorescent tubes of various colors, Benjamin only uses black lights to create his work.

The black glass tubes block out most visible light but emit long-wave UV-A light along with some blue and violet visible light. Thus, the room where *Black Gold* is installed seems to glow, bathing visitors in radiant, lilac-colored light. Blacklights are generally used to reveal or detect something, from forged antiques and counterfeit bills, to fingerprints, bodily fluids, and leaks in machinery. Black lights, in their ability to uncover, expose, and luminesce, defy assumptions about blackness and darkness.

### *Shattered, 2022*

Tempered glass

Variable dimensions

Minimalist aesthetics are evoked in Benjamin's glass installations in which broken glass is piled up a few inches thick in a rectangular shape on the gallery floor. Previous renditions were titled *Glass Ceiling*, a reference to the proverbial "glass ceiling," a phrase coined by Marilyn Loden at the 1978 Women's Exposition when speaking about the systemic, invisible barriers that prevent women and people of color from advancing their careers.

The title of Benjamin's new work, *Shattered*, may imply that women and people of color have made some strides, essentially breaking through the glass ceiling. The choice of material may serve to contradict this illusion: the glass is sparkly and alluring, but it's sharp and can still cause injury. Additionally, the artist's decision to completely cover the floor of one room of the gallery with glass shards, thus restricting visitor access to the space, is a reminder that obstacles do still exist. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, it was widely reported that women and people of color working in service and retail industries were more exposed to health risks and economic precarity.





PREVIOUS SPREAD:

*Sonata in Absolute Black: All The Black Keys*, 2021

36-channel color video with sound, looped

7 x 28 feet

Much like *Black Haiku*, Benjamin's thirty-six channel video, *Sonata in Absolute Black: All the Black Keys*, seems to stem from Benjamin's daily, meditative practice. For several hours per day, Benjamin repeatedly types the phrase Black is beautiful on an old typewriter. When he fills a sheet, he starts anew. Over the past few years, Benjamin has accumulated thousands of pages bearing the statement. In this video however, he traded his typewriter for a musical instrument.

In *Sonata in Absolute Black: All the Black Keys*, thirty-six flat-screen TVs are stacked in three rows of twelve, stretching almost the entire length of the Van Every Gallery. Each of the thirty-six videos depicts an overhead view of the artist's hand playing one of the thirty-six black keys on a piano. His fingers move deliberately, quickly, frantically.

In both *Black Haiku* and *Sonata in Absolute Black*, Benjamin uses his hands to assert a phrase, through an immersive text installation in the former and through sound and moving image in the latter.

When asked about his video installations more generally, Benjamin noted, "I use TVs as an audio-visual medium to answer a question I have been considering in my work: "If the color black had a sound, what would it be?" If *Sonata in Absolute Black: All the Black Keys* intends to answer that question, one might conclude that the sound of the color black is complex. It is layered, persistent, repetitive, rhythmic, emotional, meditative, varied, and urgent.

*Black Flag #1*, 2021 (shown on page 2)

*Black Flag #2*, 2021

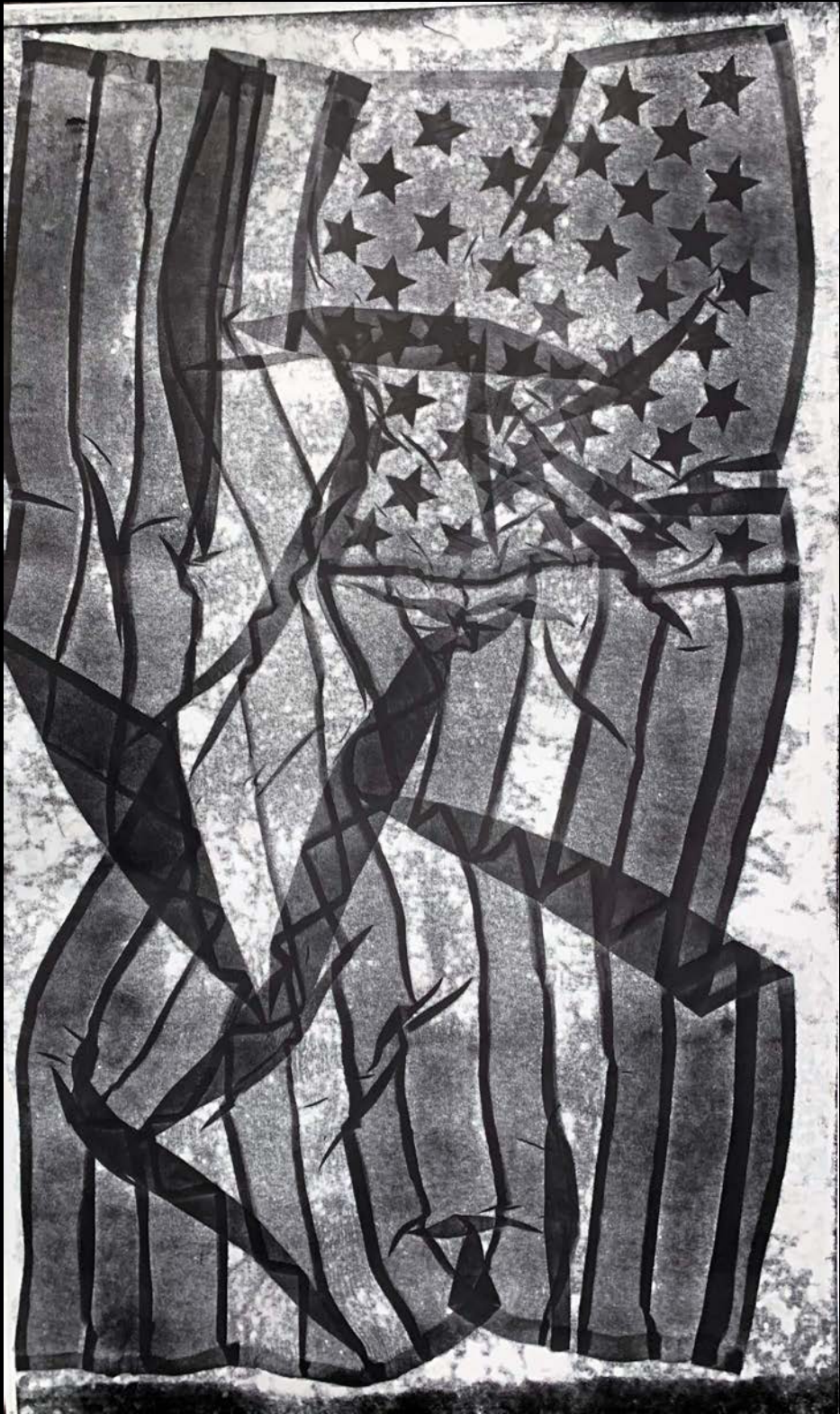
Monotype on Strathmore paper

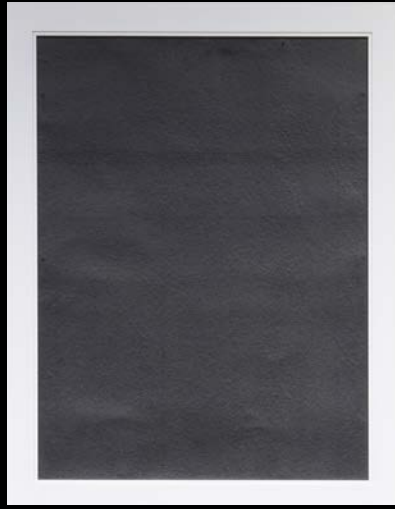
53 x 32 inches each

Flags are signifiers of identity and belonging; they may represent allegiance to a nation, ideology, or movement. The American flag, one of the most provocative global symbols, has been appropriated and reinterpreted by countless modern and contemporary artists, perhaps most famously (and in the greatest abundance) by Jasper Johns beginning in the 1950s, but at various times by others, including Robert Longo, AA Bronson, David Hammons, and Barbara Kruger, to name a few.

Benjamin has been working with flags since 2012; he's most interested in flags as symbols of inclusion and unity. Like many artists using the American flag, Benjamin alters the flag's colors as a way to subvert meaning. Traditionally, the red on an American flag symbolizes hardiness and valor; white represents purity and innocence; and blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice. Benjamin does not present an actual American flag; instead, he coats in black ink a flag he previously made (repurposed from an earlier work) and uses it to transfer an impression of a flag onto Strathmore paper. The nature of his process picks up the texture and folds in the fabric, resulting in variegated images of flags. With their mottled appearance, the flag prints speak to the complicated relationship between individuals and nationality, in this case, Black Americans.

When asked about the significance of using a black cotton American flag made by the artist, a Black American residing in Georgia, to create new versions of black flags, the artist said, "I'm just presenting the facts; viewers load them with meaning based on their own understanding of Blackness, the South, etc."







TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:

*Onyx 5229C, 2022*

Color Place Onyx 5229 latex paint on tar paper

*Black Magic 6991, 2022*

Valspar Black Magic 6991 latex paint on tar paper

*Noir 4009-2, 2022*

Valspar Noir 4009-2 latex paint on tar paper

MIDDLE ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:

*Black Panther 2125-10, 2022*

Valspar Black Panther 2125-10 latex paint on tar paper

*Almost Black 2130-30, 2022*

Benjamin Moore Almost Black 2130-30 latex paint on tar paper

*Space Black 2119-10, 2022*

Benjamin Moore Space Black 2119-10 latex paint on tar paper

BOTTOM ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:

*Very Black 5001-2, 2022*

Valspar Very Black 5001-2 latex paint on tar paper

*Dark Kettle Black 4001-2, 2022*

Valspar Dark Kettle Black 4001-2 latex paint on tar paper

*Soot 2129-20, 2022*

Benjamin Moore Soot 2129-20 latex paint on tar paper

28.25 x 21.25 inches each

Scientifically, a color is defined as visible light with a specific wavelength. Because white contains all visible wavelengths and black is the absence or complete absorption of visible light, neither are considered colors. Symbolically, white is sometimes used to signify light, purity, and daylight, while black is often used to represent darkness, evil, or nighttime.

In an effort to negate the accepted scientific definition, Benjamin's series asserts that black is indeed a color, and further, it is expansive and diverse. To create these works, the artist painted on textured tar paper with various black paints including Benjamin Moore's Space Black, Soot, and Almost Black as well as Valspar's Onyx, Black Panther, and Noir.

To discern the subtle differences among the nine seemingly indistinguishable black rectangles, the viewer must exercise patience and spend time intensely looking at these artworks. Much like Mark Rothko's fourteen massive, seemingly all-black paintings in the Rothko Chapel, an interfaith sanctuary in Houston, Texas, Benjamin's series of paintings reminds us that much can be gained with consideration, contemplation, and meditation. Extrapolated to the notion of identity, Benjamin's investigation aims to counter the one-dimensional, stereotypical generalizations sometimes ascribed to Blackness. The artist's choice to frame the works with highly reflective glass forces the viewer to confront their own image—and other objects and people—when looking at these works.

## Selected Solo / Two-Person Exhibitions

- 2022** The Van Every/Smith Galleries at Davidson College, *Black Form*, Davidson, NC, curator Lia Newman
- 2021** Gavlak Gallery, *Black is a Color*, Los Angeles, CA
- 2020** Hudgens Center for the Arts, *Compositions in Absolute Black*, Duluth, GA
- 2019** Marianne Boesky Gallery, *Pure, Very, New*, New York, NY, curator Lisa Freiman  
Atlanta Contemporary, *Black is Beautiful*, Atlanta, GA, curator Daniel Fuller
- 2018** Telfair Museums, *Reinterpreting the Sound of Blackness*, Savannah, GA, curator Rachel Reese  
Tacoma Art Museum, *To Sing of Beauty*, Tacoma, WA, curator Rock Hushka
- 2017** Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, *Working Artist Project*, Pure Black, Atlanta, GA
- 2016** Poem 88, *God Bless America*, Atlanta, GA  
High Museum of Art, *Black is the Color*, Atlanta GA, curator Michael Rooks  
The Department of Cultural Affairs: City of Atlanta Gallery 72, *Come Over*, Atlanta, GA, curator Kevin Sipp
- 2014** Georgia Perimeter College, *Black is a Color*, Clarkston, GA
- 2013** Georgia State University, DAEL (Digital Art and Entertainment Lab) Window Project, Atlanta, GA  
Georgia State University Welch Gallery, *Plot and Escape*, Atlanta, GA
- 2010** Rialto Center for the Arts at Georgia State University, *Between Here and There*, Atlanta, GA, curator Karen Comer Lowe  
Concordia University Chicago, Ferguson Gallery, *Antiques and Heirlooms*, River Forest, IL
- 2009** Swan Coach House, Forward Arts Foundation, Emerging Artist Award, *Transformations*, Atlanta, GA  
Nicole Gallery, *Between Here and There*, Chicago, IL
- 2008** University of Illinois, Alice Campbell Alumni Center, *Between Here and There*, Champaign, IL
- 2007** Chicago State University, *A Cut Above: Collages with Spirit*, Chicago, IL
- 2006** University of Illinois African American Cultural Center, *Defining the Lines of Color: A Patriotic View of America*, Chicago, IL

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2021** Prospect 5 New Orleans, *Yesterday we said tomorrow*, New Orleans, LA, curators Naima Joy and Diana Nawi  
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, *Dirty South*, Richmond, VA, curator Valerie Cassel Oliver  
David Lusk Gallery, *Structure Identity Transformation*, Memphis/Nashville, TN, curator Brandon Donahue  
Space One Eleven, *Just Injust*, Birmingham, AL

# Paul Stephen Benjamin

- 2020** Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, *State of the Art 2020*, Bentonville, AR  
curators Lauren Haynes, Alejo Benedetti, and Allison Glenn  
University of Kentucky Art Museum, *This is America*, Lexington, KY,  
curator Stuart Horodner  
Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University, *States of Mind: Art and American  
Democracy*, Houston, TX, curator Ylinka Barotto
- 2019** MAC Belfast, *On Refusal: Representation and Resistance in Contemporary Art*,  
Belfast, Northern Ireland  
Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, *Great Force*,  
Richmond, VA  
XIII Bienal de La Habana en Matanzas, Matanzas, Cuba, curator Maria Magdalena  
Campos-Pons
- 2018** Safe House Museum in collaboration with Atlanta Contemporary, *Measured in  
Moments*, Greensboro, AL, curator Daniel Fuller
- 2017** Studio Museum in Harlem, *Fictions*, Harlem, NY, curators Connie Choi and  
Hallie Ringle  
Hyde Park Art Center, *Virtue of The Vicious*, Chicago, IL, curator Allison Peters Quinn  
Dashboard at Marcia Wood Gallery, *Unloaded*, Atlanta, GA, curators Beth Malone  
and Courtney Hammond  
University of Kentucky, Commonwealth Stadium, *Videos for A Stadium*, Lexington,  
KY, curator Stuart Horodner
- 2014** Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, *Coloring*, Atlanta, GA, curator Stuart Horodner  
Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, *Exquisite Corpse*, Atlanta, GA, curator Joey Orr
- 2013** Fieldwork Contemporary, *On Paper*, Pittsburgh, PA, curator Ayanah Moor  
University of Chicago Logan Center for the Arts, *Diasporal Rhythms*, Chicago, IL,  
curator Joyce Owens  
Tubman Museum of African American Art, *One City*, Macon, GA, curator  
Jeffrey Bruce  
Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, Decatur Book Festival, *Word*, Atlanta, GA,  
curator Stuart Horodner  
Hudgens Center for the Arts, *The Dream: Five Artists, Five Voices*, Duluth, GA,  
curator Angela Nichols
- 2011** Southwest Arts Center, *The Painted Photograph*, Atlanta, GA, curator Lisa Tuttle  
Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library, *G2: Transformations*,  
Atlanta, GA  
Texas Tech University Landmark Gallery, *Bring It*, Lubbock, TX
- 2010** Swan Coach House Gallery, *Little Things Mean a Lot*, Atlanta, GA, curator Marianne  
B. Lambert  
South Suburban College, The Lee E. Dulgar Gallery, *Interpretations*, South Holland,  
IL, curator Julian Williams
- 2009** South Side Community Art Center, *In the Community of Others*, Chicago, IL, curator  
Faheem Majeed

Swan Coach House Gallery, *Little Things Mean a Lot*, Atlanta, GA, curator Marianne B. Lambert  
Cultural Arts Council Douglasville/Douglas County, Douglasville, GA, curator Annette Cone-Skelton  
Tubman African American Museum, *Urban Chrysaliosis*, Macon, GA, curator Michael Scoffield  
Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, *Dissolving Stereotypes/Forging New Dialogues: An Exhibition Beyond Race*, Atlanta, GA, curator Larry Walker  
Madison-Morgan Cultural Center, *The Reclamation of Memory*, Madison, GA, curator Lynn Marshall-Linnemeier

**2008** Hyde Park Art Center, *Not Just a Pretty Face*, Chicago, IL  
South Shore Arts: The Center for Visual and Performing Arts, *The Daniel Texidor Parker Collection*, Munster, IN  
Museum of Science and Industry, *Black Creativity*, Chicago, IL

**2007** Orleans Street Art Gallery, *Re-Fuse*, St. Charles, IL, curator Anni Holm  
Spruill Gallery, *Looks Good on Paper*, Atlanta, GA  
ARC Gallery, *Re-Assignments: Creative Changes*, Chicago, IL  
Susan Woodson Gallery, Chicago, IL  
Swan Coach House Gallery, *Constructed Images: The Art of Collage*, Atlanta, GA  
City of Atlanta Department of Cultural Affairs, *2007 Pinup Show*, Atlanta, GA, curator Freddie Styles  
City of Evanston Noyes Cultural Art Center, *Personal Journeys*, Evanston, IL

**2006** South Side Community Art Center, *A.Q: After Qualls*, Chicago, IL, curator Faheem Majeed  
Museum of Science and Industry, *Black Creativity*, Chicago, IL

## Education

**2013** Master of Fine Art in Studio, Concentration in Sculpture, Welch School of Art and Design, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

**1988** Bachelor of Art, University of Illinois, Champaign, IL

## Awards

**2019** Hudgens Prize  
**2019** Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Grant  
**2019** Hambidge Distinguished Fellow  
**2018** Southern Prize by South Arts  
**2018** State of Georgia Art Fellowship  
**2016/17** Working Artist Project MOCA GA Fellow  
**2014** Artadia The Fund for Art and Dialogue  
**2013** Winnie C. Chandler Art and Design Fellowship  
**2013** Atlanta Contemporary Art Center Studio Program  
**2009** Forward Arts Foundation Emerging Artist Award  
**2009** Diasporal Rhythms Artist Recognition Award

## Lectures

- 2021** Lipscomb University, *Being a Contemporary Artist*, Nashville, TN
- 2018** University of Puget Sound, *2018 Race and Pedagogy National Conference*, Tacoma, WA
- 2018** Tacoma Art Museum, *To Sing of Beauty*. Discussion with Rock Hushka, Tacoma, WA
- 2018** Telfair Museums, *Reinterpreting the Sound of Blackness*, discussion with Rachel Reese, Savannah, GA
- 2017** MOCA GA, Working Artists Program, *Pure Black*, Atlanta, GA
- 2017** Georgia State University, *Contemporary Views on Being an Artist* with Jill Frank, Atlanta, GA
- 2017** Emory University, *Discussions in Black Aesthetics* with Dr. Michael D. Harris PhD, Atlanta, GA
- 2016** Savannah College of Art and Design with Gail O'Neill, Atlanta, GA
- 2016** Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs Gallery 72 with Kevin Sipp, Atlanta, GA
- 2014** Georgia Perimeter College, Clarkston, GA
- 2012** Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, *Looking Closely at a Work of Art* with Stuart Horodner, Isolde Brielmaier and Jason Francisco
- 2010** Rialto Center for the Arts at Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
- 2010** Concordia University Chicago, Ferguson Gallery, River Forest, IL
- 2009** Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, *Dissolving Stereotypes/Forging New Dialogues: An Exhibition Beyond Race*, Atlanta, GA, with Larry Walker
- 2009** Madison-Morgan Cultural Center, Madison, GA
- 2009** Swan Coach House Forward Arts Foundation Emerging Artist Award, with Marianne Lambert, Atlanta, GA
- 2006** University of Illinois Chicago, *A Patriotic View of America*, with Krista Thompson and Phillip Royster

## Collections

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts  
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art  
High Museum of Art  
Telfair Museums  
Vanderbilt University  
Zuckerman Museum  
Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia  
Thoma Foundation  
Clark Atlanta University  
Concordia University  
City of Chicago Percent for the Arts

# Biographies



## Hallie Ringle

Hallie Ringle is the Hugh Kaul Curator of Contemporary Art at the Birmingham Museum of Art, where she curated *Celestia Morgan: REDLINE* and *Wall to Wall: Merritt Johnson* (co-curator). She was formerly Assistant Curator at The Studio Museum in Harlem, where she curated *Maren Hassinger: Monuments*, *Firelei Baez: Joy Out of Fire*, *Fictions* (co-curator), *Rico Gatson: Icons 2007–2017*, *Video Studio: Meeting Points*, *Palatable: Food and Contemporary Art*, and *Salon Style*. She is a fall 2018 Andy Warhol Curatorial Fellow. She has a BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MA from the University of Texas at Austin.

## Lia Newman

Lia Newman has held the position of Director/Curator of the Van Every/Smith Galleries at Davidson College since January 2013. From 2002 to 2012, Newman was Director of Programs and Exhibitions at Artspace in Raleigh, NC. She earned a BA in Art History and a BFA in General Studio with concentrations in sculpture and photography from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC, and an MA in Liberal Studies from Duke University, Durham, NC. Newman is responsible for curating exhibitions, developing exhibition-related programming, and overseeing and growing Davidson College's Permanent Art Collection, including the campus sculpture program.

This publication was produced in conjunction with  
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**Van Every/Smith Galleries**

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