

## Contemporary Collection

The Harn Museum's collection of contemporary art encompasses international art in all media created between 1945 and the present. The collection includes more than 1,700 objects with exemplary works from major contemporary art movements and recent works by emerging artists from around the world. In 2005, the contemporary collection gained 7,500 squarefeet of exhibition space with the addition of the Mary Ann Harn Cofrin Pavilion and the adjacent Robert and Nancy Magoon Garden.

Global in perspective, the collection focuses on the dominant issues and ideas in contemporary art practice. Thematic currents in the collection include subjective and psychological approaches, an emphasis on social and political conditions, a concentration on materials and process, and a conceptual mode of practice. Several works in the contemporary collection focus on the subjective experience. Antoni Tàpies draws on the influences of surrealism and abstract expressionism, and the importance of the subconscious mind and intuition. Multimedia artists Louis Bourgeois and Yayoi Kusama explore the psyche through works that reference the body, a tendency that infuses the work of the younger Ana Mendieta, a feminist photographer, and performance and conceptual artist. These artists emphasize the materiality of memory, dreams and desire.

Many artists in the collection take a greater interest in politics, popular culture and mass media. Artist Andy Warhol found the readymade in the images of everyday mass production, consumption and advertising. Using a variety of media, American artists Robert Rauschenberg Larry Rivers, Hiram Williams and Arnold Mesches analyze historic moments from the Cold War to the Vietnam War. Socially activist art is evident in work of artists that focus on identity politics of gender and race including Carrie Mae Weems, Cindy Sherman, Nan Goldin and Nikki Lee. Other artists such as Allan Sekula, Zwelethu Mthethwa, Carlos Garaicoa, Catherine Opie, Los Carpinteros and Kehinde Wiley look at global systems through the lens of history and economics. A powerful set of sculpture and prints by South African artist William Kentridge reflect on collective memory and a life under apartheid. El Anatsui combines traditional art, contemporary practice and the conflicted history of Africa in his richly colored metal tapestry.

Another trajectory of the collection focuses on artists who move away from the spare and geometric dictates of minimalism to create more expressive work that incorporates various directions such as, performance, body art, earth art and site-specific art that emphasizes materials and procedures. Artists in the collection such as John Chamberlain and Frank Stella push the boundaries between painting and sculpture. Painter Eric Fischl examines American suburbia with his multi-canvas, neo-expressionist painting, while Ross Bleckner explores phenomenology and process of perception. Charles Arnoldi and Jun Kaneko transform the cubes and circles of minimalism though a new sensibility that focuses on nature. An outdoor sculpture by Jonathan Borofsky introduces figuration in large-scale public art. Lastly, the collection represents work by artists working in a more conceptual vein. German artists Bernd and Hilla Becher, whose works are included in the collection, maintained an interest in the archive and typologies, particularly in industrial architecture. Their serial and systematic approach to photography can be seen in the collection through the work of their Düsseldorf students, who include Thomas Ruff, Candida Hofer and Thomas Struth, and also in the work of Dutch artist Rineke Dijkstra. Another trajectory of conceptual art reflected in the collection concentrates on institutional critique that examines issues of art practice, display, distribution and reception, a trajectory that includes artists Louise Lawler, Sophie Calle and Dan Graham.