Arts & Humanities

Columbia’s Neiman Center for Print Studies Celebrates 25 Years

Kiki Smith, Kara Walker, Dana Schutz, and other notable artists have left their imprints on the space — and on a generation of students.

By
Paul Hond
|
Winter 2022-23



Trenton Doyle Hancock, "The Year: Voices of Rasp Ring Colors to Grasp," 2009.

In 1995, the artist LeRoy Neiman and his wife Janet Neiman gave $6 million to endow the Neiman Center for Print Studies, which they envisioned as a hothouse for pedagogy and printmaking. Located on the ground level of Dodge Hall, the center, composed of a fine-art printshop and adjoining gallery, opened in 1996 as part of the School of the Arts. Since then, more than sixty professional artists have come to campus as Neiman Fellows to make art, teach Columbia graduate students, and collaborate with the shop’s master printers.

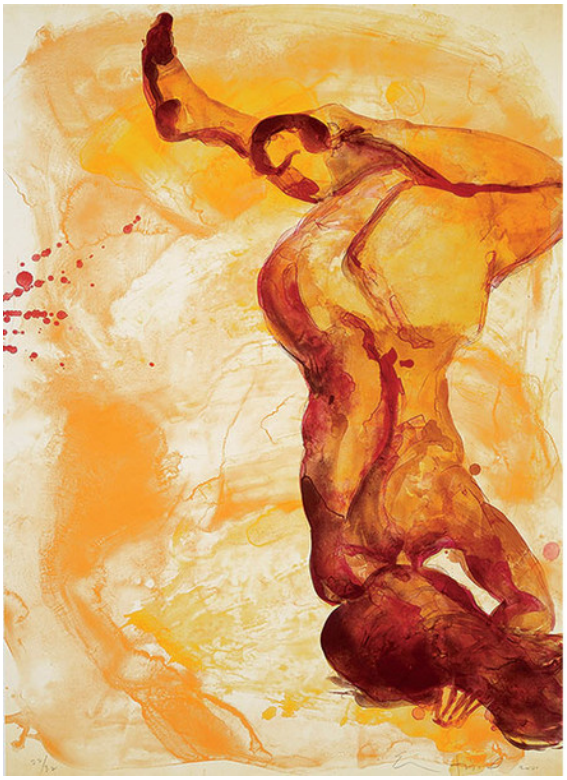
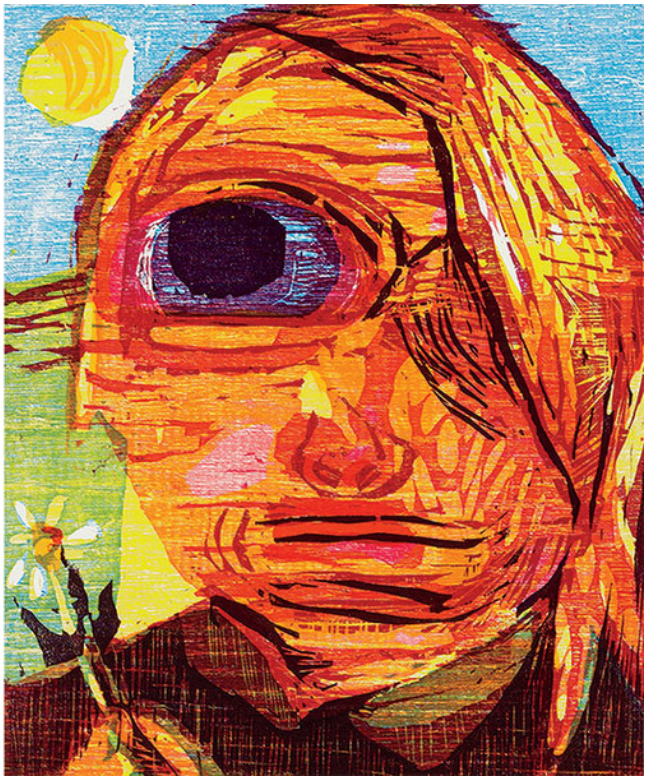


Trenton Doyle Hancock at work at the Neiman Center.



Kayla Mohammadi, "Shifting Pier I," 2018.

Led by artistic director Tomas Vu-Daniel (also the school’s Leroy Neiman Professor of Visual Arts), associate director Samantha Rippner, and master printer Nathan Catlin ’12SOA, the center has published close to six hundred editions by such artists as Kiki Smith, Kara Walker, Sarah Sze, William Kentridge, Nicola López ’98CC, ’04SOA, Jasper Johns, and Neiman himself, who was famous for his colorful lithographs of athletes. The center sells the editions to help fund the program. According to Vu-Daniel, Neiman, who died in 2012, “cared about young people more than anything else” and emphasized education above all. In the shop, with its drafting tables, basins, rags, reams, and massive machinery — the offset press with its ink rollers, the etching press with its wheels and gears — students train with established artists in a variety of printmaking techniques, including intaglio, lithography, screenprinting, relief printing, and digital imaging, creating a symbiotic ecosystem of intrepid printmakers. As Smith says, “It’s exciting because the students are way ahead of you, into the next generation of things.”

Left: Eric Fischl, "Tumble," 2001. Right: Dana Schutz ’02SOA, "One Eyed Girl," 2005.

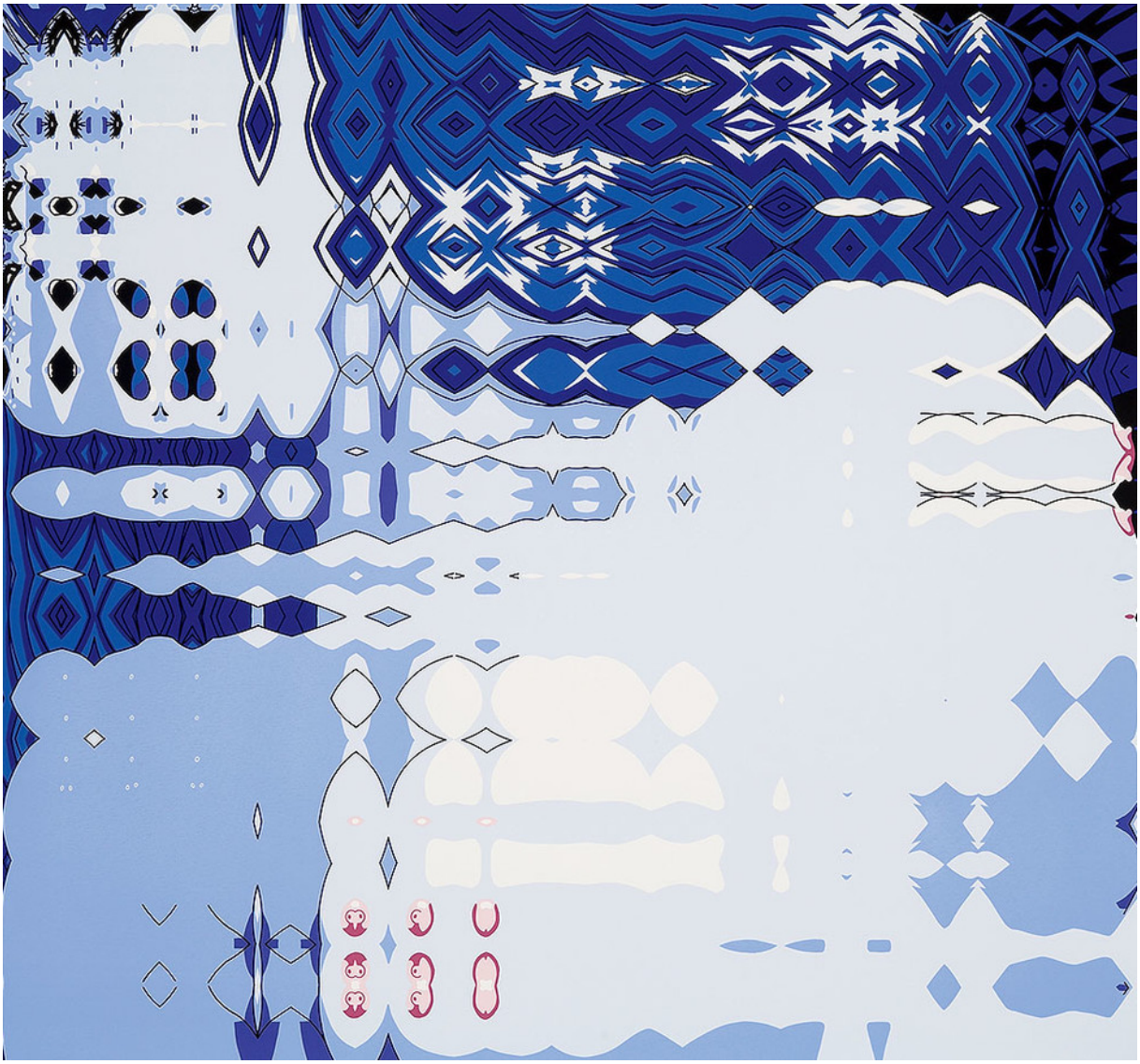


Kiki Smith, "Tidal," 1998.

To celebrate twenty-five years of artistic experimentation and risk-taking, of teaching and learning, of publishing and community-building, the center has been holding a series of exhibits that continue into April, featuring the work of Neiman Center artists. These images, spanning the panoply of printmaking methods, expand our sense of what art can be and never fail to leave an impression.



Kara Walker, "Harper’s Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Exodus of Confederates from Atlanta," 2005.



Carl Fudge, "Tattooed Blue," 2002.

Images courtesy of the Leroy Neiman Center for Print Studies.

This article appears in the Winter 2022-23 print edition of Columbia Magazine *with the title "Fresh Prints."*

Read more from ***Paul Hond***

Guide to school abbreviations

All categories >
*Read more from **Paul Hond***