

## Biographical Information: From Vera Grant

We have 16 works composed of: 4 paintings (Rockburne, Diao, Frankenthaler, and Loving); 1 assemblage (Levenson); 11 prints/paperworks.

Women: 8

Artists of Color: 9

Woman artist of Color: 1

Sculptors who produced prints: Hunt, and Pepper

Artists who left the U. S. for foreign shores: Delaney and Pepper.

Artists who produced hand made papers: Gilliam, Hunt

Artists who moved from Figurative to Abstract and back: Hartigan, Delaney

Local Movements/Cooperatives: Michigan Workshop of Fine Prints, Detroit Workshop of Fine Prints, and Michigan Water-Color Society

**Mary Jane Bigler** - (1907-1955) was an American artist, co-founder of the Michigan Water-Color Society, and professor at Wayne State. She was active/lived in Michigan, Indiana; known for Painter, educator, craftsperson. Wayne State University eventually became the hub of energy for watercolor painting. Bigler was a strong influence in the Painting Department throughout her teaching career. She remained active as a Board member or advisor her entire life, encouraging innovative ideas and successful fundraising, while keeping a watchful eye for political pressures which could compromise quality exhibitions. She had an emphasis on self discovery and personal content, rather than technique alone.

**McArthur Binion** (b. 1946, Mississippi) has maintained an engaging and historic artistic practice that spans over forty years. He earned his MFA at Cranbrook (Michigan) and currently teaches at Columbia College, Chicago. Taking wax crayon as his primary medium, Binion's style performs an intentional physicality: crayon is first ground and then rubbed into wood and aluminum panels, a process that produces abstract subjects which are often mono- or duo-chromatic. In other projects, Binion juxtaposes crayon with surfaces made of repetitive Xerox imagery coated in multiple layers of ink.

**Helen Covensky** -Polish/American (1925 - 2007) Born in Poland, Covensky passed as a Polish Catholic, her father obtained false papers for his daughter. She and two other Jewish girls, also with false papers, made their way to Germany, worked in a labor camp near Stuttgart; liberated after the war and emigrated to the US. In Detroit, Helen Covensky received an art degree from Wayne State University. Divorced in 1959, she married professor of history, Dr. Milton Covensky. Helen Covensky built an outstanding career as an artist in Michigan, culminating in a one-woman show at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1983. Her work was shown in art galleries in New York City, Michigan, and Tel Aviv, Israel. Inspired by European and American Abstract Expressionism, her "action" paintings were noted for their lush texture and strong, vibrant colors. The paintings can be seen both in collections around the world and locally, including at the Kreeger Museum in Washington DC. Helen claimed that her paintings were "an affirmation of life, as each stroke of my paintings is in honor of the six million."

**Beauford Delaney** (1901-1979) was an American modernist painter. He is remembered for his work with the Harlem Renaissance in the 1930s and 1940s, as well as his later works in abstract expressionism following his move to Paris in the 1950s. By the mid 1940s he had forged close friendships with novelists Henry Miller and James Baldwin and gained wide recognition for his pastel portraits of well-known African Americans such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Duke Ellington. As comfortable with artists as with his neighbors in Harlem or Greenwich Village, Delaney conveyed his abiding love of mankind in paintings and drawings that ranged from the representational to the abstract. Abandoning the precise realism of his early academic training, Delaney developed a lyrically expressive style that drew upon his love of musical rhythms and his improvisational use of color.

**David Diao** (b. 1943, [Chengdu](#), China) completed his undergraduate degree at [Kenyon College](#) in [Gambier, Ohio](#) and in 1964 he moved back to New York. There he began working as an artist in the late 1960s. Firstly, he got the job as the sweeper-upper at the [Kootz Gallery](#). [Sam Kootz](#), the owner of this gallery, was among the first to show [Abstract Expressionism](#). In 1966 he worked at the [Guggenheim](#), where he installed shows in case some extra help was necessary. He first won acclaim and public attention with an exhibition at [Paula Cooper Gallery](#) in 1969. He is known for his simplification of form, minimal compositions, and uses of stylized text and typography.

**Grace Hartigan** (1922-2008) was a second-generation American Abstract Expressionist painter and a member of the New York School. Hartigan's work was included in the seminal Ninth Street Show, New York (1951), as well as other major group exhibitions at the Jewish Museum, New York (1957), etc. Grace Hartigan, a second-generation Abstract Expressionist linked historically to artists of the first, such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, who forged a new form of painting based on bold gesture and experimental brushwork. Though she built her early career upon complete abstraction, in 1952 Hartigan began incorporating recognizable motifs and characters from various sources into her art, and moved fluidly between figuration and abstraction throughout her long career. For this reason, her work is often considered to be a precursor to Pop art.

**Richard Hunt** - He was born in 1935 on [Chicago's South Side](#). In the seventh grade, Hunt attended the Junior School of Art Institute of Chicago where he began his interest in art.<sup>[4]</sup> Hunt also acquired business sense and awareness of social issues from working for his father in a barbershop.<sup>[5]</sup> As a teenager, Hunt began his work in sculpture, working in clay and carvings. In the 1960s and 1970s, Hunt used car junkyards as his quarries and turned bumpers and fenders into abstract, welded sculptures.<sup>[2]</sup> Hunt also focused on linear-spatial arrangement of his materials where he followed Julio Gonzalez's footsteps into three dimensional structures.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Charles McGee** was born in 1924 and has lived in Detroit since the age of 10. He is the 2008 Kresge Eminent Artist. His works are on permanent display at the Detroit Institute of the Arts and the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. Nationally, his work has shown at the Brooklyn Museum and Whitney Museum of American Art and in touring exhibitions under the umbrellas of the Smithsonian and Corcoran Gallery of Art of Washington D.C.

**Beverly Pepper** - b. 1922 - Beverly Pepper is an American sculptor known for her monumental works, site specific and land art. She remains independent from any particular art movement. She was married to the writer Curtis Bill Pepper for 65 years and has lived in Italy, primarily in Todi, since the 1950s.

**Howardena Pindell** (b. 1943, Philadelphia) studied painting at Boston University and Yale University. After graduating, she accepted a job in the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books at the Museum of Modern Art, where she remained for 12 years (1967–1979). Pindell often employs lengthy, metaphorical processes of destruction/reconstruction. She cuts canvases in strips and sews them back together, building up surfaces in elaborate stages. She paints or draws on sheets of paper, punches out dots from the paper using a paper hole punch, drops the dots onto her canvas, and finally squeegees paint through the “stencil” left in the paper from which she had punched the dots.

**Dorothea Rockburne** (b. 1932) is an abstract painter, drawing inspiration primarily from her deep interest in mathematics and astronomy. Her work is geometric and abstract, seemingly simple but very precise to reflect the mathematical concepts she strives to concretize. Rockburne studied with a mathematician, Max Dehn, in the early 1950s, and his teachings on the underlying geometries in nature and art affected her profoundly. Her Golden Section Paintings (first exhibited in 1974 at MoMA), as well as several series of works on paper that followed, refer to a mathematical ratio used by artists and architects since antiquity to produce shapes of harmonious proportions. Rockburne’s work of later decades, including recent watercolors, continues her exploration of these principles in nature, and specifically in the motion of planets.

**John T. Scott** (1940-2007, Louisiana) was an African-American sculptor, painter, printmaker and collagist. Scott is best known for creating large woodcut prints and for his African-Caribbean-New Orleans-inspired kinetic sculptures. In 2005, he was the subject of a major retrospective exhibit at the New Orleans Museum of Art entitled "Circle Dance: The Art of John T. Scott."