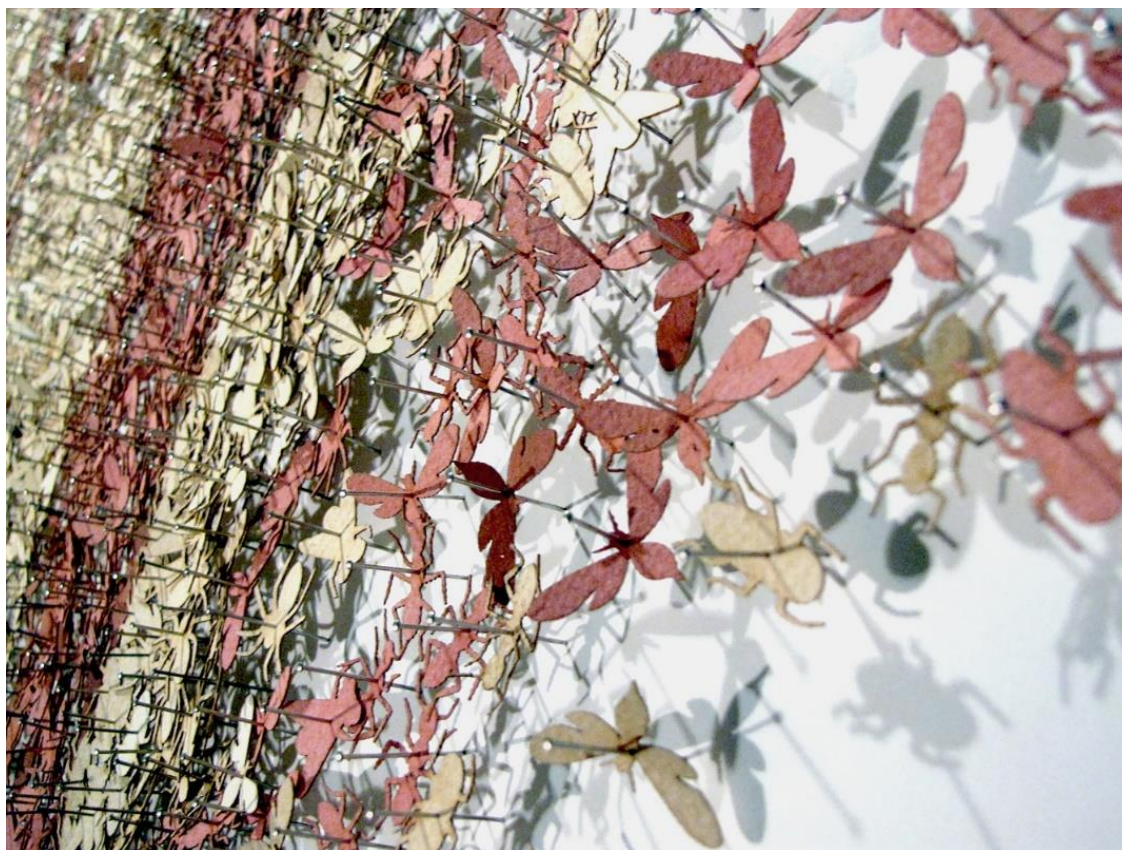


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Paper Routes—Women to Watch 2020
National Museum of Women in the Arts
Oct. 8, 2020–Jan. 18, 2021

Artists explore the transformational qualities of paper



WASHINGTON—Cut, folded, torn, glued, burned or embossed, paper becomes a transformational art medium in *Paper Routes—Women to Watch 2020*, on view at the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) from October 8, 2020 through January 18, 2021. Presenting the work of 22 emerging and underrepresented contemporary women artists from around the world, *Paper Routes* highlights the versatility of paper well beyond its traditional role as support for drawings, prints and photographs with works that range in scale from intimate to immersive. Some featured

artists highlight the delicate properties of paper through thousands of meticulous cuts, while others create surprisingly dense and monumental sculptures.

Paper Routes is the sixth installment in NMWA's *Women to Watch* exhibition series, which results from an innovative collaboration between the museum and its national and international outreach committees. The 22 committees participating in *Women to Watch 2020* selected curators in their regions who created shortlists of contemporary artists working with paper. The curators who participated in the selection of artists for *Paper Routes* are from major institutions such as the Brooklyn Museum, New York; The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Musée des Arts Decoratifs et du Design, Bordeaux. From these nominations, NMWA curators selected one artist from each committee whose work will be included in the exhibition. The artists are represented by 12 states and ten countries: Argentina, Arizona, Arkansas, Northern California, Southern California, Canada, Chile, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, the Greater Kansas City Area, Massachusetts, the Mid-Atlantic Region, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Texas and the United Kingdom.

The artists in *Paper Routes* are: Jen Aitken, Elizabeth Alexander, Natasha Bowdoin, Mira Burack, Elisabetta Di Maggio, Oasa DuVerney, Mary Evans, Rachel Farbiarz, Dolores Furtado, Angela Glajcar, Dalila Gonçalves, Julia Goodman, Joli Livaudais, Annie Lopez, Paola Podestá Martí, Echiko Ohira, Luisa Pastor, Sa'dia Rehman, Natalia Revilla, Lucha Rodríguez, Georgia Russell and Hyeyoung Shin.

"The *Women to Watch* program offers an unprecedented opportunity for women artists to show their work, often for the first time, on a national and international level," said NMWA Director Susan Fisher Sterling. "No other museum outreach effort is so targeted in its commitment to discovering and promoting women artists working today. We are delighted to welcome such a talented group to the museum."

ART AND ARTISTS

In cultures around the world, artists have explored paper as a medium in and of itself. Perhaps the best-known example is Japanese *origami*, whose practitioners deftly fold paper into myriad forms. Other traditions include intricately cut paper like *papel picado* in Mexico and *wycinanki* in Poland. The first documented papermaking process took place in China more than 2,000 years ago, but mass-produced paper—created cheaply from cellulose fibers converted into pulp—has been a staple since the 19th century. Today, paper art is a thriving and diverse genre in its own right.

Many artists who work with paper emphasize its ephemeral quality. For **Jen Aitken** (Canada, b. 1985), paper enables her to create volume without mass. She makes architectural constructions for each new exhibition space, as they respond specifically to their surroundings. The work of **Mary Evans** (United Kingdom, b. 1963) is also site-specific; she composes large-scale scenes from

cutout silhouettes that exist only for a specified timeframe. The disposability of the brown packing paper in her work carries meaning, as Evans likens it to the way in which Black bodies have historically been commodified, used and discarded.

In large quantities, paper can be heavy, unyielding and compact, a property some artists choose to exploit. The monumental sculptures of **Angela Glajcar** (Germany, b. 1970), created with multiple sheets of heavyweight white paper, demonstrate the inherent beauty of the material. Her hanging work's feathered edges result from the artist's tearing process, and the layers of paper create light caverns that contain a play of shadows. Sculptures by **Dolores Furtado** (Argentina, b. 1977) also rely on the density of material. Inspired by the transformation that paper undergoes from liquid to solid during manufacture, Furtado molds handmade paper pulp into tactile sculptures.

Artists **Sa'dia Rehman** (Ohio, b. 1980) and **Julia Goodman** (Northern California, b. 1979) allude to paper's role in recording the weight of history to reinforce the importance of their subjects. In Rehman's life-size *Family* (2017), she uses newsprint to portray her Pakistani American Muslim family, highlighting the discrepancy between her ordinary subject and the imagery of war and violence with which Muslims frequently appear in the media. Goodman plumbs the history of rag sorters to highlight the invisible labor of women who were part of the rag-based paper industry. Taking discarded material from the factory in San Francisco where these women, mostly Italian immigrants, labored until the 1960s, Goodman makes her own paper pulp, onto which she impresses their names.



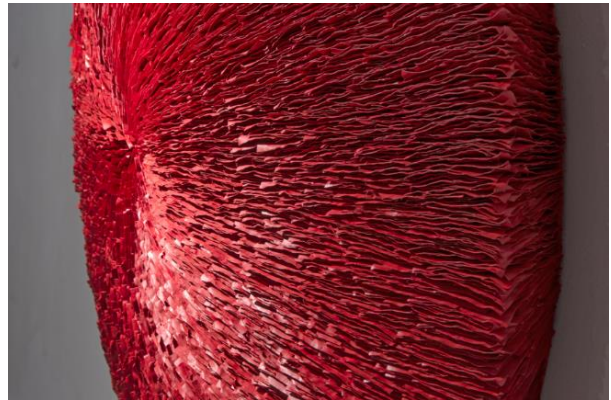
Paper cutting is a longstanding tradition in paper art and includes silhouettes, developed in 18th-century France, and the art of *scherenschnitte*, or "scissor cuts," brought to colonial America by German immigrants. **Georgia Russell** (France, b. 1974) meticulously slices, slashes and reconstructs old books, music score sheets, maps and other printed materials into lush, tendrilled sculptures and latticed cutouts. **Paola Podestá Martí** (Chile, b. 1969) re-creates large ornamental façades using thousands of individual laser-cut pieces in the shape of insects to comment on nature's reclamation of untended historical sites. Likewise, **Elisabetta DiMaggio** (Italy, b. 1964) uses a surgical scalpel to cut precise and intricate designs on large panels of fragile tissue paper that cover the walls of an entire room.

Paper's adaptability allows a multitude of techniques in addition to cutting. Applying the art of origami to her practice, **Joli Livaudais** (Arkansas, b. 1968) prints photographs of personal

subjects—family, friends, artwork and objects of beauty—and shapes them into beetles that appear in her work frequently as symbols of spiritual transformation. The time-consuming physical process of folding each photograph fosters introspection and reflection on past experiences.

Hyeyoung Shin (Greater Kansas City, b. 1973) draws on *Jiho-gibeop*, a traditional Korean method of paper casting from objects. In *Tide* (2019), inspired by the worldwide Women's March rallies in early 2017, Shin casts individuals' feet to reflect on the distinct and collective paths that people take as a result of personal and political values.

One of paper's distinguishing characteristics is its malleability, providing rich fodder for artistic innovation. **Annie Lopez** (Arizona, b. 1958) uses a cyanotype process to print personally relevant images and texts on tamale paper, sometimes stitching together as many as 40 sheets to fashion her blue vintage-style garments. Inspired by textures and forms found in nature, **Echiko Ohira** (Southern California, b. 1949), twists, tears, stacks, nails and sews layers of untreated, tea-stained or vibrantly dyed paper for her evocative abstract sculptures.



Paper Routes—Women to Watch 2020 is organized by the National Museum of Women in the Arts and sponsored by participating committees in Argentina, Arizona, Arkansas, Northern California, Southern California, Canada, Chile, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, the Greater Kansas City Area, Massachusetts, the Mid-Atlantic Region, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Texas and the United Kingdom.

The exhibition is made possible by Northern Trust with additional funding provided by the Clara M. Lovett Emerging Artists Fund and the Sue J. Henry and Carter G. Phillips Exhibition Fund. Further support is provided by Bayer AG, the Council for Canadian American Relations, and Luso-American Development Foundation.

The museum extends appreciation to the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Embassy of Italy with the Italian Cultural Institute in Washington, D.C.; and the Embassy of Peru in the U.S.

Special thanks to the Mississippi State Committee and San Francisco Advocacy for NMWA for their support of the *Paper Routes* catalogue.

PUBLICATION

Published by NMWA, the 92-page exhibition catalogue features works by and statements from each *Paper Routes* artist, as well as an introductory essay by co-curators Virginia Treanor and Orin Zahra.

WOMEN TO WATCH

Women to Watch is an exhibition series held every two to three years, developed in conjunction with the museum's national and international outreach committees. NMWA currently has 23 outreach committees with more than 3,000 dedicated members throughout the United States and around the world, and the network continues to expand. The museum's committees play a critical role in bringing NMWA's mission to regional audiences. The committees work with local museum directors, curators, education experts and business leaders to capitalize on their region's artistic, financial and educational strengths and resources in order to develop meaningful programming and build a bridge between their communities and the museum.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WOMEN IN THE ARTS

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) is the only major museum in the world solely dedicated to championing women through the arts. With its collections, exhibitions, programs and online content, the museum inspires dynamic exchanges about art and ideas. NMWA advocates for better representation of women artists and serves as a vital center for thought leadership, community engagement and social change. NMWA addresses the gender imbalance in the presentation of art by bringing to light important women artists of the past while promoting great women artists working today. The collections highlight painting, sculpture, photography and video by artists including Louise Bourgeois, Mary Cassatt, Judy Chicago, Frida Kahlo, Shirin Neshat, Faith Ringgold, Pipilotti Rist, Amy Sherald and Élisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun.

NMWA is located at 1250 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. It is open Mon.–Sat., 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sun., noon–5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for visitors 65 and over and students, and free for NMWA members and youths 18 and under. Admission is free the first and third Sunday of each month. Advance purchase of timed tickets strongly recommended. For information, call 202-783-5000, visit nmwa.org, [Broad Strokes Blog](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

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IMAGES

From top:

Paola Podestá Martí, *Vergara Palace Cornice* (detail), 2010; Foam core, aquarelle paper, and stainless steel, 78 x 118 in.; Courtesy of the artist, photo by @calipsophotography

Hyeyoung Shin, *Tide* (detail), 2019; Cast Gampi paper, dimensions variable; Courtesy of the artist; Photo by Aaron Paden

Echiko Ohira, *Untitled (red #4)* (detail), 2012; Paper, cardboard, acrylic, wire, glue, and wood backing, 50 x 50 x 12 in.; Courtesy of the artist; Photo by Gene Ogami