

# PAPER IS PEOPLE:

DECOLONIZING GLOBAL PAPER CULTURES

Saturday, October 28 – Sunday, December 22, 2023

Curated by Tia Blassingame and Stephanie Sauer



*Paper Is People: Decolonizing Global Paper Cultures*, co-curated by Tia Blassingame and Stephanie Sauer, offers a new definition of paper within a global and decolonial framework. Featuring works by local, national, and international artists, this exhibition explores the vital role substrates play in human communities and how meaning is made from what we might call paper and papermaking.

Viewed together, the works on display seek to open a conversation around what paper is across cultures today: a vessel for collective memory, a body, a site of meaning, a living ancestor, and a form of cultural survival and resistance. To appreciate global paper cultures in a decolonial context, it is important to consider definitions of paper that move beyond those created and sanctioned by imperial powers. In the Indigenous and oral cultures represented here, baskets, tapestries, and other handmade substrates act as vessels and embodiments of culture and memory. Some even hold status as animate members of their community. Among peoples subjugated under slavery and denied access to literacy and the requisite tools for creating paper and books, maintaining and building upon their threatened cultural knowledge required creativity like those exhibited in African American quilts. *Paper Is People* presents each cultural substrate as a new definition within contextualized multimedia displays that invite thoughtful participation and engagement of the senses.

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## **ARTWORK CHECKLIST:**

Alisa Banks (Dallas, Texas)

*Lineage* (2011)

Cloth, thread, hand and machine sewn

Hannah Chalew (New Orleans, Louisiana)

*Study for Collapsosophy* (2022)

Iron oak gall ink, ink made from coal pollution runoff, and chalk ink on paper made from sugarcane and shredded disposable plastic waste (*plasticane*)

Hong Hong (Beverly, Massachusetts)

*Holding & Grasping: the Wet + the Dry, 3* (2022)

Mulberry bark, sun, dust, water, hair, fiber-reactive dyes, repurposed paper

Kelly Church (Allegan, Michigan)  
*Turtle, Dragonflies, Butterflies* (2022)  
Birch bark

*Dragonflies and Flower* (2023)  
Birch bark

Aimee Lee (Cleveland, Ohio)  
*Peculiar & Commonplace* (2018)  
Pen, pencil, and inkjet printing on hanji, handmade papers, thread, manipulated papers and materials  
(including but not limited to natural dye, beeswax, ink, suminagashi, woven and knitted paper, ribbon, and  
fabric)

*Indigenous* (2016)  
Pencil and persimmon dye on hanji, woven hanji buttons, thread

*Young* (2017)  
Natural dyes, handmade papers, paper yarn, thread

Chenta Laury (Ha'iku, Hawaii)  
*ReStoryation* (2021)  
Tapa (wauke/paper mulberry bark cloth), thread

Seringô Collective (Castanhal, Pará, Brazil)  
*Jaioba* (2023)  
Organic Latex

*Vitória Regia Rectangular* (2023)  
Rubber made from native Latex/Borracha de latex nativo  
Native latex, vegetable fibers, açai byproduct

Page Pūko'a Chang (Waimanalo, Hawaii)  
*Pūko'a Li'ilī'i, Small Reef* (2023)  
Hawaiian Wauke fiber and Kapa (Paper Mulberry), natural dyes

*Kapa Pukapuka* (2019)  
Wauke fiber

*Ka Hele O O'opu, Journey of the O'opu* (2022)  
Kapa Wauke, 'Uki'uki Berry Ink, Traditional Chinese Ink

Kapa earrings, *Niho Māno, Shark Tooth* print (2022)  
\$65.00

Kapa Hat Band, *Po'okela*, *Champion* print (2022)

Kapa, Traditional Black Chinese Ink

Radha Pandey (Lillesand, Norway)

*Jaali*, 2022

Kozo, machine-made papers, thread

rhiannon skye tafoya (Cherokee, North Carolina)

*Ul'nigid'* (2020)

Letterpress on handmade and Colorplan paper with Colorplan paper weavings

Julio Laja Chichicaxtle (Tulacingo, Mexico)

*Papel Amate 01*

*Papel Amate 02*

*Papel Amate 03*

All: Otomí Bark Paper

Veronica Pham

*Across Oceans*, 2023

Mulberry

*Forgotten Letters*, 2023

Handmade paper mulberry, indigo dyed gampi, recycled black cotton, bamboo, and silk thread

Trina Michelle Robinson

*Liberation Through Redaction*, 2022

Photopolymer intaglio print, ink made with soil collected from Senegal, charred cedar, bone black dry pigment, sisal dyed with hibiscus from Senegal, raw cotton paper sourced from a Black-owned farm in North Carolina

Steph Rue (Sacramento, CA)

*You Are Here* (2017)

Paper bojagi. Persimmon juice on Korean mulberry paper

*Cloud Study No. 1* (2019)

Letterpress printed drumleaf book on handmade Korean paper, with french fold. Seven spreads. Enclosed in custom portfolio wrapper with bone clasp.

*Cloud Study No. 2*, (2019)

Two paper bojagis. Hand-stitched letterpress printed Korean mulberry paper.

*Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, (2019)

Hand-stitched accordion paper bojagi book made from Korean mulberry paper and dyed with persimmon juice; cotton thread.