

**MILWAUKEE
ART
MUSEUM**

**Milwaukee Art Museum Presents Acclaimed Artist LaToya M. Hobbs's
Monumental *Carving Out Time* This Fall**

The Museum will celebrate its remarkable acquisition *Carving Out Time* with a one-of-a-kind exhibition that presents the wood panels alongside the prints.



LaToya M. Hobbs (American, b. 1983) Printed by BIG INK (founded 2012), *The Studio*, from the series *Carving Out Time*, 2020–21. Purchase, with funds from the Lucia K. Stern Trust, Kevin Fahey and Ray Grzebielski Fund, Cory and Michelle Nettles, the African American Art Alliance, Brewers Community Foundation, Angela and Virgis Colbert, Print Forum, and Gregory and Lisa Wesley, M2023.282.5a-c. Image courtesy of LaToya M. Hobbs, artist, and Ariston Jacks, photographer

MILWAUKEE, WI—July 11, 2024—This September, the Milwaukee Art Museum will open *Currents 39: LaToya M. Hobbs, Carving Out Time*, an exhibition of the awe-inspiring monumental series that depicts Hobbs's day-to-day life balancing her artistic practice and family commitments. Highlighting the Museum's recent acquisition of the five woodcut prints by the groundbreaking artist, the exhibition will be on view September 6, 2024–January 5, 2025, in the Museum's Bradley Family Gallery.

“Hobbs’s *Carving Out Time* is a significant acquisition for the Milwaukee Art Museum as it is one of the most technically accomplished and awe-inspiring prints I have seen,” said **Nikki Otten, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings**. “I look forward to sharing the series with visitors, because it contributes to the legacy of Black artists shaping art history. I hope it will present opportunities for more people to see themselves and their experiences in the Museum.”

A Baltimore-based artist, partner, mother, and educator, LaToya M. Hobbs uses figurative imagery to address ideas of beauty, cultural identity, and womanhood as they relate to Black women. *Carving Out Time* (2020–21) is part of a larger body of work titled *Salt of the Earth*, which she describes as examining the role Black women play as “preservers of family, culture, and community.” In this series, Hobbs illustrates a typical day in her life. The narrative—one of balancing both professional and familial responsibilities—is simultaneously specific to Hobbs and universal to families with working parents, as well as anyone who has needed to balance competing priorities.

Unparalleled in its ambitious size and technique, *Carving Out Time* comprises five 8-by-12-foot scenes. In the first four, Hobbs illustrates her routine of waking up, homeschooling her children and managing household chores, sharing dinner with her husband and kids, and putting her boys to bed. The fifth scene is a self-portrait of Hobbs, working alone in her studio at the end of the day. Depictions of Black motherhood remain relatively rare, and Hobbs centers this subject and elevates it through the monumentality of the prints. Hobbs worked on a scale most often associated with history paintings to, as she describes, “present the everyday as triumphant.”

Representation—who’s included in the narrative and how—is important to Hobbs. She depicts her sons, as well as their art and toys, in *Carving Out Time* in hopes that seeing themselves in museums will help them feel more comfortable accessing these spaces in the future. In addition to including her family, Hobbs pays homage to the Black artists who have shaped art history and inspired her career. Featured throughout *Carving Out Time* are pieces by Kerry James Marshall, Margaret Burroughs, Elizabeth Catlett, and Alma Thomas.

“The Milwaukee Art Museum received immense support from Milwaukee-based donors and foundations to acquire *Carving Out Time*, demonstrating both the community’s and the institution’s dedication to growing the collection to tell more diverse, representative stories,” said **Marcelle Polednik, PhD, Donna and Donald Baumgartner Director**.

Currents 39 serves as the first opportunity for the Museum’s community to see the series, which was acquired in December 2023. The five prints are the Museum’s third acquisition of Hobbs’s work in recent years. In 2020, it acquired the inaugural portfolio *Continuum* (2020) by Black Women of Print, of which Hobbs is a founding member and contributing artist. In 2023, it acquired *Lore: What We Were Told | What We Saw | What We Tell Ourselves* (2023), the collective’s second portfolio. The Milwaukee presentation of *Carving Out Time* will be the first occasion when the monumental wood panels and prints will be exhibited together, presenting Midwest audiences with the rare opportunity to marvel at Hobbs’s multifaceted artistry and get a glimpse into the printmaking process.

Initiated in 1982, the Museum's *Currents* exhibition series highlights new trends in contemporary art. Throughout its 40+-year run, *Currents* has featured artists Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Kiki Smith, Ed Ruscha, Tara Donovan and, most recently, Christy Matson. The exhibition series reaffirms the Museum's commitment to providing a platform for groundbreaking contemporary artists, expanding the stories it shares with its community.

Currents 39: LaToya M. Hobbs, Carving Out Time was curated by Nikki Otten, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Milwaukee Art Museum. The exhibition will be accompanied by a roster of public programs, including Play Date with Art, Story Time in the Galleries, and an Artist Talk on Saturday, September 7, as well as a series of Gallery Talks throughout the run of the exhibition.

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The Milwaukee Art Museum extends its sincere thanks to the Visionaries

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About the Milwaukee Art Museum

The Milwaukee Art Museum is an essential destination for art and architecture and a vital cultural resource that connects visitors to dynamic art experiences and one another. Housed in iconic buildings by Santiago Calatrava, Eero Saarinen, and David Kahler on a 24-acre lakefront campus, the Museum is Wisconsin's largest art institution and home to both broad and deep collections, with exceptional holdings in American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts; conceptual and minimalist art; prints and drawings; European art from the Renaissance through the nineteenth century; photography and new media; modern and contemporary design; folk and self-taught art; and twentieth-century Haitian art. A bold symbol of Milwaukee's ambition and forward-thinking vision, the Museum is a place for community building, education, and celebration that fosters creativity, free speech, and critical discourse for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. For more information, visit mam.org.

About LaToya M. Hobbs

LaToya M. Hobbs is an artist, wife, and mother of two from Little Rock, AR, who is currently living and working in Baltimore, MD. She received her BA in painting from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and her MFA in printmaking from Purdue University. Her work deals with figurative imagery that addresses the ideas of beauty, cultural identity, and womanhood as they relate to women of the African Diaspora. Through her mixed media works, she explores the “matrix as art object,” combining key elements from both her painting and printmaking practices.

Hobbs’s exhibition record includes numerous national and international venues, including the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach, VA; SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA; Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN; and Sophia Wanamaker Galleries in San José, Costa Rica; among others. Her work is housed in private and public collections, such as the Harvard Art Museums, the National Art Gallery of Namibia, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Other accomplishments include a 2023 Distinguished Fellowship in Printmaking at the Penland School of Craft, a Studio Residency Grant at the Women’s Studio Workshop, a nomination for the 2022 Queen Sonja Print Award, a 2022 IFPDA Artist Grant, and she was the recipient of the 2020 Janet and Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize. Hobbs is a professor at the Maryland Institute College of Art and a founding member of Black Women of Print, a collective whose vision is to make visible the narratives and works of Black women printmakers, past, present, and future.

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