

Celebrating 50 years

Charlotte[®]

MAGAZINE

Menu Topics About Us

Art Review: Under Construction at Mint Museum Uptown

BY ANDY SMITH

1

Published: 2018.12.07 01:00 PM



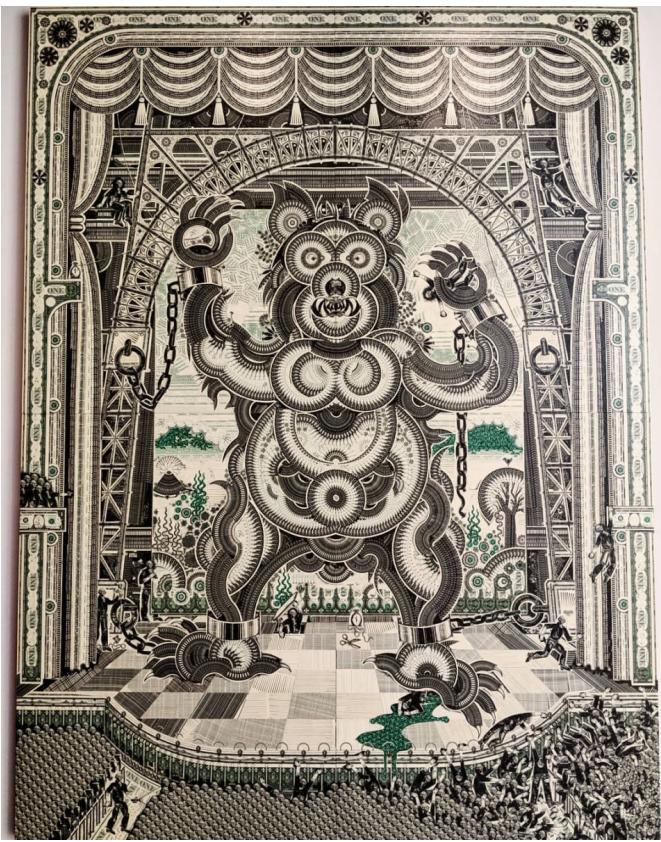
The exhibition's front display is interactive, with viewers encouraged to pull sheets from the title that reveal a guide on each's underside.

printmakers inspired by the medium.

Bearden isn't the only Charlotte artist highlighted; contemporary regionals like Felicia Van Bork and Anne Lemanski are sprinkled throughout the exhibition. This feature is tethered to a broader strategy from the museum to invest more of its energy into the local cultural sector. Like the uptown Mint's permanent galleries, senior curator Dr. Jonathan Stuhlman chooses to illustrate diversity through our own practitioners and Charlotte-bred sensibilities.

Outside artists provide several highlights from the exhibition, as well. The work that will likely appear in the most selfies will be a Shepard Fairey portrait of Obama, a massive piece acquired after the 2012 DNC in Charlotte. Another bright spot is Mark Wagner's stirring currency collages, works made entirely from domestic and international money. Multiple pieces by Wagner are included, but the biggest

A 1988 *New York Times* obituary referred to Romare Bearden as “the nation’s foremost collagist.” The Charlotte-born artist’s impact on the form is so immense and multi-faceted that the curatorial team at Mint Museum Uptown integrated his work throughout their sprawling new display, *Under Construction*. The first-ever collage-centric exhibition at the Mint contains more than 50 international artists and more than 100 works of art —showing not only collagists, specifically, but the painters and



Mark Wagner's "Ladies and Gentlemen There is No Cause for Alarm."

and most impressive is the striking "Ladies and Gentlemen There is No Cause for Alarm." (Though, the wonderful, betentacled "Octopi Wall Street" is the most pleasing for lovers of wordplay.)

The Mint also didn't leave out the digital collage, another current and vital subset of the medium. Loris Cecchini's textured laser print on Plexiglas shows how using modern technology doesn't mean you have to sacrifice the tactile appeal of collage. The sprawling Marek Ranis piece "Panzerwerk Carin," digitally printed on aluminum, underscores this idea, as well.

As a whole, *Under Construction* does a profound service to the oft-overlooked medium of collage, whether in the form of layered paper, objects packed into an assemblage, or dissonant, yet absorbing video work. This field may not have the widespread appeal of painting or photography, but its post-war renaissance only expanded over the past several decades as artists think of new ways to disassemble and recontextualize existing imagery. During his life, Bearden innovated the form. This exhibition shows that today's practitioners—even some within county limits—have continued that thread.

ALSO ON DISPLAY THIS MONTH:

Sozo Gallery: *FIVE*

The uptown gallery marks its anniversary with the show *FIVE*, with the work of five of its artists: Kenny Nguyen, Robert Langford, Wendy Bilas, Alicia Armstrong and Scott Gardner. Nguyen was a [2018 Best of the Best Award](#) winner in the category "Artist to Watch."

SOCO Gallery: *Robert Lazzarini: Wound*

Lazzarini returns to the Myers Park venue with new perception-challenging pieces, which the gallery says "conjures the relationship between a violation of the home and both physical and cognitive exposures." He's also showing paintings and sculptures in the Mint



Cristina Toro's work in *Under Construction* is all paint, but the artist is heavily influenced by collage.

Museum's fifth-floor expansion space.

Related Stories

[MORE »](#)