

Harvard Art Museums

Fogg Museum
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Press Release

LaToya M. Hobbs's Monumental Print Series *Carving Out Time* Presented in Spring 2024 Exhibition at Harvard Art Museums



LaToya M. Hobbs, *Scene 5: The Studio*, from *Carving Out Time*, 2020–21. Woodcut on cotton paper. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Margaret Fisher Fund, [2022.224.5](#). © LaToya M. Hobbs. Photo: Ariston Jacks; courtesy of the artist.

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This spring, the Harvard Art Museums will present LaToya M. Hobbs's woodcut series *Carving Out Time*, a suite of five monumental and deeply personal prints acquired by the museums in 2022. This marks the debut presentation of these prints at the museums and of the complete series together, anywhere. The exhibition also includes a unique opportunity to view preparatory drawings for the series, generously loaned by the artist, as well as a video about the artist's practice; these, too, will be on public display for the first time. ***LaToya M. Hobbs: It's Time*** is on view March 1 through July 21, 2024, in the Special Exhibitions Gallery on Level 3 of the Harvard Art Museums. Public programming throughout the run of the exhibition will center the voices of Harvard undergraduates and young artists; programming kicks off with Hobbs participating in a moderated discussion with leading local scholars on Friday, March 1, at 4pm.

Unfolding over five large-scale scenes, *Carving Out Time* (2020–21) depicts a day in Hobbs’s life with her family, husband Ariston Jacks and their two children, Ade and Theo. Each 8 × 12-foot scene is a triptych made of three closely aligned prints that form a composite image. In the five sequential scenes, Hobbs and her spouse are woken by their two young sons; they work and play; they eat dinner as a family; the parents put their children to bed; and Hobbs goes to her studio to paint and make woodcuts. The work was conceived in 2019 and executed during the pandemic lockdown (2020–21), adding further resonance to the location of these scenes in a domestic interior.

LaToya M. Hobbs: It’s Time was curated by Elizabeth M. Rudy, the Carl A. Weyerhaeuser Curator of Prints at the Harvard Art Museums. She worked closely with a range of museum colleagues and Harvard graduate students to develop and implement the exhibition. A core group of undergraduates, members of the Association of Black Harvard Women (ABHW), collaborated with the museums in a new partnership to provide critical feedback on the exhibition and to design the creative lineup of public programs that will take place while the show is on view.

The five scenes of *Carving Out Time* will be displayed sequentially on three adjacent walls in one gallery, and the six preparatory drawings loaned by Hobbs as well as a short video with footage captured by her husband, visual artist Ariston Jacks, will be displayed on the fourth wall of the space. The video features never-before-seen footage of Hobbs at work on *Carving Out Time*, providing a visual story of the prints: Hobbs carving the woodblocks, the artist showing the work to her family while it was in process, undertaking the actual printing with the artist collaborative BIG INK, and making the ultimate journey to Harvard. Members of ABHW devised a series of thematic questions to inspire private reflection or group conversation for visitors; the questions will be posted in the gallery. The installation will also feature rugs, floor cushions, and benches, creating a comfortable gathering space for visitors of all ages.

Hobbs shares the labor and intimacy of her private life in these prints, centering the negotiations she brokers daily to balance her manifold responsibilities—as a wife, mother, educator, and artist. The series is also a powerful statement about her influences and self-fashioning as an artist: references to paintings, sculptures, and prints by prominent artists such as Elizabeth Catlett, Alma Thomas, Valerie Maynard, and Kerry James Marshall appear throughout. A guide in the center of the gallery, and also available online (forthcoming), helps identify the artists and works depicted in the prints.

“*Carving Out Time* is a technical marvel on a grand scale, and a powerful statement about the capacity of prints to be deeply personal and universal at once,” said Rudy. “This acquisition was transformative, both for the museums’ holdings of contemporary art and for its representation of monumental prints in the long history of printmaking. It will be thrilling to explore this major work with audiences during the exhibition and to think through its multidimensional themes together.”

Carving Out Time is the largest expression within Hobbs’s ongoing *Salt of the Earth* project, which she characterizes as “the personification of Black women as salt in relation to their role as preservers of family, culture and community.” A contemplation of nuanced concepts of time and labor, the print series offers an affecting visual statement. Hobbs worked out her compositions in drawings, then hand-carved a total of 15 panels and collaborated with printers from BIG INK to make the final prints. The blocks from which the prints were created were recently acquired by the Baltimore Museum of Art and displayed in the exhibition *All Due Respect* (2021–22). The second number in the print edition was recently acquired by the Milwaukee Art Museum, and the artist’s proof remains in Hobbs’s archive.

A short companion volume will be published in 2025, after the exhibition closes, delving into the *Carving Out Time* print series, illustrating Hobbs’s art-historical references, and capturing programs and other engagements from the run of the exhibition.

On the occasion of the exhibition, the Harvard Art Museums have also acquired Hobbs's woodcut print *The Ark of Safety (Mother and Child)* from 2023. While the print will not be included in the exhibition, it is now available to view, by appointment, in the museums' Art Study Center. The work will be included in forthcoming Art Study Center Seminar programs.

LaToya M. Hobbs: It's Time will be presented in the museums' Special Exhibitions Gallery alongside *Future Minded: New Works in the Collection*, a complementary presentation of other acquisitions made by the Harvard Art Museums in recent years. The range of drawings, photographs, prints, paintings, and sculptures spanning centuries and continents that comprise the *Future Minded* exhibition are by roughly 30 artists, including Jean (Hans) Arp, Edward Mitchell Bannister, Willie Cole, Pietro Damini, Svenja Deininger, Jeffrey Gibson, Baldwin Lee, Ana Mendieta, Lucia Moholy, Zanele Muholi, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Noriko Saitō, Melissa Shook, Jane Yang-D'Haene, and many others.

LaToya M. Hobbs (b. Little Rock 1983) received a B.A. in painting from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and an M.F.A. in printmaking from Purdue University. She is a co-founder of Black Women of Print, "a collective whose vision is to make visible the narratives and works of Black women printmakers, past, present and for the future." She recently completed residencies at the Penland School of Craft and the Women's Studio Workshop. Hobbs was awarded the Janet and Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize in 2020 and was a finalist for the Queen Sonja Print Award in 2022. She teaches at the Maryland Institute College of Art. Recent solo exhibitions include *Flourish* at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (2023) and *LaToya M. Hobbs: Woodcuts* presented at the University Art Gallery, California State University, Stanislaus, and at the Academy Art Museum in Easton, MD (2023). Hobbs will also be presenting her work—including the full suite of *Carving Out Time* woodblocks—this spring at the Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN, in the exhibition *Carving a New Tradition: The Art of LaToya M. Hobbs* (January 26–April 28, 2024).

Public Programming

A range of public programs held in conjunction with the exhibition *LaToya M. Hobbs: It's Time* will bring various themes to life. All programs noted below will be held in person at the Harvard Art Museums, 32 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. Admission to visit our galleries is free, but some programs have a fee. For full details, updates, and to register, please click the links below, visit the exhibition webpage, or see our calendar: harvardartmuseums.org/calendar. Questions? Call 617-495-9400.

With a nod to the *LaToya M. Hobbs: It's Time* exhibition opening during Women's History Month in March, related public programming will kick off on Friday, March 1, at 4pm with a free Conversation with the Artist program featuring LaToya M. Hobbs, Harvard Ph.D. student Kéla Jackson, Boston College professor Jovonna Jones, and exhibition curator Elizabeth M. Rudy.

Print-making workshops held in the museums' Materials Lab on Wednesday, March 13 at noon and Saturday, May 11 at 10am will build up to a special appearance by BIG INK; the artist collaborative will assemble carved blocks made by workshop participants into one large work to be printed on their custom-designed giant mobile printing press (a.k.a. the Big Tuna), which will be set up inside the museums during the free Harvard Art Museums at Night event on Thursday, June 27, 5–9pm.

A series of free 30-minute **StoryTime for All Ages** sessions for families, in collaboration with the Cambridge Public Library (CPL), will be held in the *It's Time* exhibition gallery on select Saturday mornings at 10:30am: March 16, April 6, May 18, June 15, and July 13. Most sessions will be led by youth librarians from the CPL, and the date in June will feature a drag artist in honor of Pride Month. Other free in-gallery events in March and April will include thematic **programs led by Harvard students** including an origami flower-making activity, two poetry readings, and a talk by Ph.D. student Chassidy Winestock, who will speak about related themes in the Hobbs exhibition and her guest-curated exhibition for the Harvard Radcliffe Institute, *A Female Landscape and the Abstract Gesture*.

On Saturday, April 6, at 2:30pm, the **Boston Children's Chorus** will give a free one-hour concert in the museums' courtyard, performing songs inspired by the exhibition. A free **Family Day program** with various activities inspired by the exhibition will take place on Saturday, April 13, from 1 to 4pm. On **Mother's Day**, Sunday, May 12, from 10 to 11:30am, the museums will host a free in-gallery giveaway of origami flowers for the first 100 guardians and caregivers who visit the exhibition.

Credits

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Exhibition Webpage

harvardartmuseums.org/latoyamhobbs

About the Harvard Art Museums

The Harvard Art Museums house one of the largest and most renowned art collections in the United States, comprising three museums (the Fogg, Busch-Reisinger, and Arthur M. Sackler Museums) and three research centers (the Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, the Harvard Art Museums Archives, and the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis). The Fogg Museum includes Western art from the Middle Ages to the present; the Busch-Reisinger Museum, unique among North American museums, is dedicated to the study of all modes and periods of art from central and northern Europe, with an emphasis on German-speaking countries; and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum is focused on art from Asia, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. Together, the collections include over 255,000 objects in all media. The Harvard Art Museums are distinguished by the range and depth of their collections, their groundbreaking exhibitions, and the original research of their staff. Integral to Harvard University and the wider community, the museums and research centers serve as resources for students, scholars, and the public. For more than a century they have been the nation's premier training ground for museum professionals and are renowned for their seminal role in developing the discipline of art history in the United States. The Harvard Art Museums have a rich tradition of considering the history of objects as an integral part of the teaching and study of art history, focusing on conservation and preservation concerns as well as technical studies. harvardartmuseums.org

The Harvard Art Museums receive support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Hours and Admission

Open Tuesday–Sunday, 10am–5pm; closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is free to all visitors. For further information about visiting, including general policies, see harvardartmuseums.org/visit.

For more information, please contact

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