



PAUL WATERS: IN THE BEGINNING, PAINTINGS FROM THE 1960s AND 70s

Paul Waters In the Beginning

Paintings from the 1960s and 70s

ERIC FIRESTONE GALLERY



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40 Great Jones Street New York, New York 10012 646 998 3727



Paul Waters

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Essay by Erin Jenoa Gilbert

Eric Firestone Press
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Paul Waters: Radical Simplification

by Erin Jenoa Gilbert

Like many great artists, Paul Waters's paintings tell a story. Seemingly simple, these snapshots capture the ethos of a specific time and place. Like Norman Lewis and Jacob Lawrence, Paul rendered compositions in semi-abstract form. In them, silhouettes of human bodies take on animal characteristics. Birdlike forms float across the picture plane. Cutting from the pages of magazines and pasting to the canvas, Waters creates mathematically balanced monochromatic vignettes. Composed between 1965 and 1973, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, his paintings not only convey images of the African American community, but also are closeups of intimate moments in his personal and professional life. Titles such as *Victims* (pl. 3) and *Freedom Dream* (pl. 18, both 1971) demonstrate Waters's engagement with the social, political, and economic conditions of African American life during that time. The bird is a metaphor not only for the migration from the rural South to the urban North, but also for the cage-like conditions of segregation and discrimination, and the freedom to move throughout the world uninhibited.

While his subject may evoke images of Norman Lewis's *Migrating Birds* or *Birds in Flight* (both 1953) and Jacob Lawrence's *Migration* series (1940–41), Waters's style was completely distinctive, influenced more directly by African art than the aforementioned masters whose works grace museum walls internationally. Waters was in fact an active member of the community of artists, musicians, poets, and authors who lived in New York's Bowery in the 1960s, '70s, '80s, and '90s. He recounts conversations with Romare Bearden, Eva Hesse, and Robert Rauschenberg, Charles Mingus, Miles Davis, and James Baldwin in the same breath. But his consciousness was that of a community

activist. Through his artistic practice he related stories from the Essex County Youth House School, a juvenile detention center where he served as principal for almost four years, and The Newark Museum of Art, where he served as director of community affairs for three years. He received the appointment in 1972 after curating *Black Artists: Two Generations* in 1971. Cementing his place in the canon and documenting his relationships with twenty-seven of his peers, *Black Artists: Two Generations* featured luminary figures living in New York and New Jersey. The exhibition placed Waters alongside Lewis, Bearden, Lawrence, Barbara Chase-Riboud, Betty Blayton-Taylor, Joe Overstreet, Haywood "Bill" Rivers, and Charles White, among others. This exhibition brings Paul Waters back into the spotlight, out of the shadows.

I've always been fascinated by the shadow. I think about walking down the street as a little boy and noticing how the light reflects on you, and how it changes as you gain distance. You realize you can tell time by the sun. I've always been fascinated by that. I still am. Maybe that has something to do with my cut-outs.

As a young man, every Saturday Paul attended the Fleisher Art Memorial school affiliated with the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where he was allowed to paint with his fingers and where he first encountered Matisse's cut-outs. In 1906 Matisse acquired a small Villi sculpture from the Democratic Republic of Congo at the curio shop Père Sauvage in Paris for fifty francs. Matisse traveled to Africa in 1912 and returned several times, amassing a collection of sculptures, masks, and Kuba textiles throughout his lifetime, which he installed in his studio. It is well-documented that the geometry, symmetry, and reductiveness of African Art changed the course of Matisse's career, and that he and Picasso shared an

obsession with African Art that inspired the invention of both Fauvism and Cubism.

West and Central African sculpture taught Matisse that form could become its own logic. Unlocked from the requirements of literal representation, in these unfamiliar traditions Matisse found muscular forms and bodies that seemed solid and real. He was fascinated by the emphasis on line in the three-dimensional sculptures that he found in West and Central Africa, and he found it interesting that this line could be seen from all angles in African sculpture.¹

African Art formed the basis of Waters's visual vocabulary. He grew up in a home with Bariba, Ndebele, and Toma artwork that had been gifted by friends who traveled to Africa. He recalls vividly a mask with crocodile jaws. He also recalls the three-story building on Chestnut Street between 11th and 12th Streets that sold African arts, artifacts, and antiques. Passing it often, he would pop in to peruse through sculptures, masks, wood carvings, and textiles from various countries on the African continent. After graduating from Goddard College, where he studied math and philosophy, Waters matriculated to graduate school, completing his Master's degree and earning his teaching certificate at Bank Street College of Education. In 1962, Paul left the United States and traveled throughout the world for six years. At the advice of his father, he traveled first to Europe and then to Africa.

In France he recalls entering the Chauvet Cave before it was closed to the public. "Fascinating to see how a cave that had been closed for over 30,000 years or more, how the painting was preserved inside, how the walls were used to make the animals look like they were three dimensional."² Chauvet is the world's largest, oldest, and most sacred space of Paleolithic art.³ Inside the underground cavern

Portrait of a Young Lady, detail, 1972. Oil on cut linen collage on canvas, 96 x 42 inches

Henri Matisse, *Oceania, the Sky*, 1946. Gouache on paper cut and pasted, on paper, mounted on canvas, 70 1/4 x 145 1/2 inches (178.3 x 369.7 cm)
© 2022 Succession H. Matisse / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



are 600 chambers, each panel of symbolic art telling its own story. There are over 425 representations of animals, including lions, rhinoceroses, horses, bears, bison, and mammoths. They are pictured in motion: in a hunt, a head butt, or a walking pride. The color and texture of the limestone cave interior, the charcoal and red ochre pigment, the finger application of the pigment, and the light and shadow play giving the illusion of the animals' movement had a profound influence on Waters's painting practice.

Waters would encounter historical markings upon human dwellings again, this time on the African continent, face to face with the makers of the objects. He had seen African art in his parents' home, in that shop on Chestnut Street, and at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, but on the continent, he would develop an appreciation for Africa's geographic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. Over the years he took nine different trips to Africa, traveling to seventeen countries on the continent including Algeria, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, South Africa, Angola, and Nigeria.

During this time he was exposed to hieroglyphs and Adinkra symbols. Invented by the Akan of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana during the early 1800s, "Adinkra symbols use radial or reflective symmetry and express deeply symbolic proverbs related to life, death, wisdom, and human behavior."⁴ These symbols were painted or stamped as patterns onto fabrics, etched into clay pottery, and carved into wood stools. Kwame Anthony Appiah

states that these fifty-three symbols each "encapsulate evocative messages," becoming a means for "supporting the transmission of a complex and nuanced body of practice and belief."⁵

Though these symbols were developed in specific nations, they have since been deployed internationally as a means of communication throughout the continent, by African Americans and Afro Europeans. Subjugating the written and spoken word, these symbols became a language in and of themselves. Today one of the most widely employed symbol is Sankofa, a bird whose feet face forward while the beak is turned backward. It is used in many rite of passage ceremonies as a reminder that one must know the past to understand the present and predict the future.

Waters also encountered pictorial Korhogo cloth, which was produced by the Senufo people of the Côte d'Ivoire. "As the motifs imply, Korhogo cloths use striking imagery and symbolism to tell stories. For example, motifs of fish represent life and abundance, birds represent freedom, goats represent male prowess and hunters represent the mysteries of the universe."⁶

Acknowledging the influence of African art on his practice, he presented three paintings, *Plant*, *Dialogue*, and *Flower* (all 1971) in an exhibition entitled *Africa: Emergent Artists, Tribal Roots & Influences* at the Alternative Center for International Arts in Manhattan in 1978. The exhibition featured several African and African

Pictorial Korhogo cloth with mud decoration, cotton, designed and made by the Senufo people, Ivory Coast, Africa, mid 20th century. Collection Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by in memory of Dr George Soutter, 2012. Photo: Geoff Friend



American artists, including Melvin Edwards and Faith Ringgold. *Dialogue* is particularly interesting because it features over twenty different symbol and its title alludes so specifically to the two distinct parties speaking and listening to one another. Paul, active in the Civil Rights Movement—in which innocent African Americans lost their lives, and were incarcerated or assassinated because of the aspirations they articulated—subconsciously perhaps preferred the "subterfuge of language," which privileges symbols over the representational, figurative, narrative, written, or spoken word.

Waters does not use a paintbrush; his only tools are his left-handed scissors. He acquired three pairs of metal left-handed scissors in a store in Italy in the 1960s which he still uses today. His process begins with cutting—deconstruction. As a child he cut images from the *World Almanac* and then Sears catalogues. On the physical plane one deconstructs an object by cutting it, but on the metaphysical plane cutting from an object that presents historical ideas, projects, and idealized culture deconstructs those ideas and ideologies. In *Of Grammatology* (1967) and *Positions* (1972) French philosopher Jacques Derrida coined the term "deconstruction."

Although not purely negative, deconstruction is primarily concerned with something tantamount to a critique of the Western philosophical tradition. Deconstruction is generally presented via an analysis

of specific texts. It seeks to expose, and then to subvert, the various binary oppositions that undergird our dominant ways of thinking—presence/absence, speech/writing, and so forth. Deconstruction has at least two aspects: literary and philosophical. The literary aspect concerns the textual interpretation, where invention is essential to finding hidden alternative meanings in the text.⁷

Waters did not cut out specific images that would reference specific objects in a collage; he cut shapes. Often the shapes were of geometric configuration, animals, or human-animal hybrids. These shapes are then applied to the canvas with a vegetable glue he sourced in the 1960s at New York Central Art Supply on Third Avenue.

I've been doing this pretty much all my life, the same technique. As I got older, it went from paper to cardboard, from cardboard to corrugated board, from corrugated board to canvas and linen. Sometimes cotton duck. I never liked using brushes. All the paintings that I think you've seen that are oil paintings were all done by hand by applying oil paint to canvas after pasting canvas to canvas or canvas to linen. I liked the feel of the paint.⁸

He paints with his hands—finger-painting, as he had seen in the caves in France and on the continent of Africa. Perched on the floor he primes the unstretched canvas



Paul Waters, *Mother and Her Seven*, 1970. Oil on cut linen collage on canvas, 70 x 178 inches

A.R. Penck, *Welt Des Adlers (Eagles World IV)*, 1981. 71 x 110½ inches (180.4 x 280.7 cm)
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first in Sap Green and then applies layers of Chinese White. Upon this white background Waters applies the black, red, green, and blue characters. Understanding his process inevitably leads to the interpretation that these seemingly simple surfaces might convey subversive political messages. *The New York Times* describes the political context in which these paintings were created as follows:

There was nothing but a huge red glow over the entire city. The city was in flames. You immediately took note of what you may be entering into—and that was a war zone. The fuse that ignited this city—violent clashes with the police, gunfire, flames from burning buildings—was a rumor. Word spread that a Black cabdriver had been killed inside a police precinct house. It was not true—the driver had been arrested and injured. Still, it was enough to inflame a population filled with years of pent-up grievances: not only abuse at the hands of the police, but entrenched, unaddressed poverty, urban renewal policies that bypassed Black residents and a white political power structure that had long ignored their needs. The unrest, which started on the night of July 12, 1967, and ended on July 17, came during a period when racial tensions were exploding into violent conflagrations across the country: the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles, Harlem, Detroit and nearby New Jersey communities, including Plainfield. Amid all that, what made Newark’s unrest striking was the physical

toll, placing it among the deadliest of the riots. Over several days, 26 people were killed—many of them Black residents—and more than 700 were injured. The riots caused about \$10 million in damages and reduced entire blocks to charred ruins, some of which remain vacant grass-covered lots.⁹

In *Survival Committee* (pl. 9, 1970) a broken blue line creates a cage outlining the constraints of the characters therein. Ten figures, Matisse blue, each with a bird head, open beaks, and human legs. A combination of five women and five men, they face each other, alternating in pairs. It is an image of two rival gangs in a face off. The figure at the far right has a circle at the center of her body; she is pregnant. In order to conceal their identity, ensuring anonymity, he rendered them as hybrids. This image, like the others produced between 1965 and 1972, was painted at night after he would return home from work. As director of the Essex County Youth House School, Waters observed that confrontation was a conditioned response in order to survive. The image is his memory of a meeting where he tried to convert the conflict between two gangs into a collaboration. These are caged birds, caught at an early age in a corrupt criminal justice system. He knew that many of the incarcerated youth were in fact innocent. In the aftermath of the race riots of 1967, African American youth were young birds, still with the possibility of flight if granted freedom. *Survival Committee* was so powerful

that Ken Gibson, the first African American mayor of Newark, requested that the painting be hung in his office where it remained during the sixteen years of his tenure, from 1970 to 1986.

In *Mother and Her Seven* (pl. 14, 1970) there are eight figures, composed of semicircular forms, distributed evenly across the canvas. On the left a mother holds an oversized umbrella, sheltering the two smallest children, one of whom stands on a block. There are seven children total, three girls and four boys in this home, but the man is missing. The family lived on 110th Street in Harlem. Paul met them while a math tutor for a twelve-year-old boy who lived next door. The young man was Benjamin Chaney, the brother of the late Civil Rights leader James Chaney. During the Freedom Summer of 1964, members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the NAACP rallied nationally to register African American voters in the South. James Earl Chaney, twenty-one years old at the time, was one of three CORE Civil Rights activists who went missing on June 21, 1964, in Philadelphia, Mississippi. He, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner were last seen being released from jail for a speeding ticket. Days later their empty station wagon was found, but their bodies were missing until August. The three men had been murdered by members of the Ku Klux Klan. The nationally televised court case, which lasted three years, would be known as Mississippi

Burning. “The murders galvanized the nation and provided impetus for the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 on July 2.”¹⁰ The painting begs the question, has the father been abducted, has he been arrested, or is he absent because of the state-sanctioned ADFC “man in the house” rule?

Aesthetically, Waters can be compared to A. R. Penck. Born Ralf Winkler in 1939 in Dresden, Germany, Penck who was self-taught because he was rejected from art academies, went on to become one of the most famous Neo-Expressionist painters of his generation. As a child, Penck was traumatized by witnessing the aerial bombing that decimated Dresden in February of 1945, during World War II. Exiled from East Germany in 1961, Penck refused to create Social Realist art for propaganda and needed to subvert language for political reasons. He too created his own visual language. Coined “standart,” his visual vocabulary was also influenced by hieroglyphics, prehistoric cave painting, mathematics, and jazz music. In Penck’s paintings, striated lines and silhouettes of stick men with spears in hand question the role of surveillance in political systems and rebel against oppressive government regimes. Changing his name several times to protect his identity and smuggling art across the border to be sold abroad, Penck used symbolic art to subvert the police state. Through personal allegory he addressed the trauma of World War II on politically marginalized populations.



Kara Walker, *Slaughter of the Innocents (They Might be Guilty of Something)*, 2016. Cut paper and acrylic on linen, 79 x 220 inches (200.7 x 558.8 cm) Artwork © Kara Walker, courtesy of Sikkema Jenkins & Co. and Sprüth Magers

Penck’s visual language, which he termed “standart” is, on the surface at least, one that could be mastered by anyone. There is a “building block system,” as he once said; a glossary of motifs to be picked out and played with on a whim. In fact, few would bring the rhythm and lyricism that Penck, a jazz fan, brought to the canvas. With their profusion of wide eyes, humanoid forms, beasts, and birds, his paintings are suggestive of the real world, but they also lean on theories of abstraction, in which noughts, crosses, and other symbols flirt across a work’s surface with a pride in pure painterly gesture.¹¹

Kara Walker, arguably one of the most important artists of the twenty-first century, operates with the same methodology and technology as Waters. She too uses cut-outs to tell a story. Walker’s historical fictions emerge from the shadows of slavery in the antebellum South, vacillating between the picturesque and the grotesque. Her cut-outs are rendered first as drawings, then cut out of black paper and pasted directly upon a concave white wall, challenging the viewer to confront his or her complicity in the physical and psychic violence of the contemporary moment. The black silhouettes on white walls draw an immediate comparison to race relations in the United States. Considering the legacy of the KKK and

its lineage with the police system, in works that have caused great controversy Walker traces a through line connecting the past and present; her works allude to Emmett Till, Rodney King, James Byrd, and Trayvon Martin. She states, “Silhouettes are reductions, and racial stereotypes are also reductions of actual human beings.”

The silhouette technique has its roots in the sentimental Victorian “ladies’ art” of shadow portraits, but the scale of Walker’s work also alludes to the 360-degree historical cycloramas popular during the post-Civil War era for the depiction of battle scenes. Walker has continued to use both the silhouette and cyclorama forms to explore the nature of race representation as well as the history of figuration and narrative in contemporary art.¹²

Waters’s compassion for the complexity of human beings and his consciousness of how racial stereotypes dehumanize African Americans caused him to engage deeply in the Civil Rights Movement. He spent hours speaking with James Baldwin; he recounts reading an early unpublished edition of *If Beale Street Could Talk*. Over lunch and dinner he gave Baldwin his feedback, and when Baldwin returned the manuscript it had been revised, taking Waters’s feedback into full consideration.

While one might pass this off as two friends sharing meals, the significance is in the novel’s content. Published in 1974, set in Harlem, *If Beale Street Could Talk* is a portrait of African American life in the 1970s. Based on a true story, its central characters are Fonny, a sculptor, and his girlfriend, Tish. Fonny is accused of raping a White woman and is jailed without trial. Tish is pregnant. Waters was uniquely qualified to comment, not just because he, like Fonny, was an artist, but because he had worked inside the juvenile criminal justice system and had seen situations like that of Fonny and Tish. He saw firsthand that a young Black man could be arrested for a crime he did not commit. He knew firsthand what it looked like for a young Black woman to raise a child without the father present. He knew firsthand how families advocated for the freedom of their incarcerated loved ones. Waters is aware of the power of words, but also of the power of silence and of the subversion of words.

Paul Waters created his own pictographic language: twenty-seven symbols, which, like hieroglyphs and Adinkra symbols, would be repeated and rearranged throughout each composition. Functioning like musical notes, together they have rhythm, balance, and harmony. In *The Beginning* (pl. 1, 1970), the pictographic story of his life, features twenty of these symbols. Waters’s compositions may be thought of as mathematical equations. His artistic practice, which flourished during his tenure as principal of The Essex County Youth House School, was a therapeutic and a meditative activity in which he engaged as response to the post-traumatic stress syndrome in the school population. In describing his paintings Waters often uses the phrase, “I was trying to figure out. . . .” An African American man constantly mediating conflict within the juvenile criminal justice system, negotiating space for African Americans within a mainstream museum was “trying to figure out” how to address the social, economic, and political conditions in African American communities during the Civil Rights Movement. Titles such as *Freedom Dream* (pl. 18, 1971), *Syllables of Survival* (pl. 10, 1969), and *Dialogue* imply direct linkages between the act of creating these works and the speech act. What Kara Walker, A. R. Penck, and Paul Waters share is the use of a seemingly simple set of silhouettes and symbols, very often rendered in dark pigment upon a white background, to comment on

the trauma of the Civil War, World War II, and Civil Rights. To protect his protagonists and to protect himself, in Waters paintings, humans take on the shape of birds. Their open or closed beaks, stride, and wingspan are character descriptions, disguising specific people in specific situations. Symbols are the text that tell the story. In African and African American communities the bird symbolizes freedom. A repeated symbol in his compositions is that of the triangle. In mathematics, it means “change.” Reading these deconstructed texts through the lens of radical simplification—these seemingly simple forms, which juxtapose the bird with the triangle, in fact propose radical systemic changes in society that would lead to African and African American freedom.

Notes

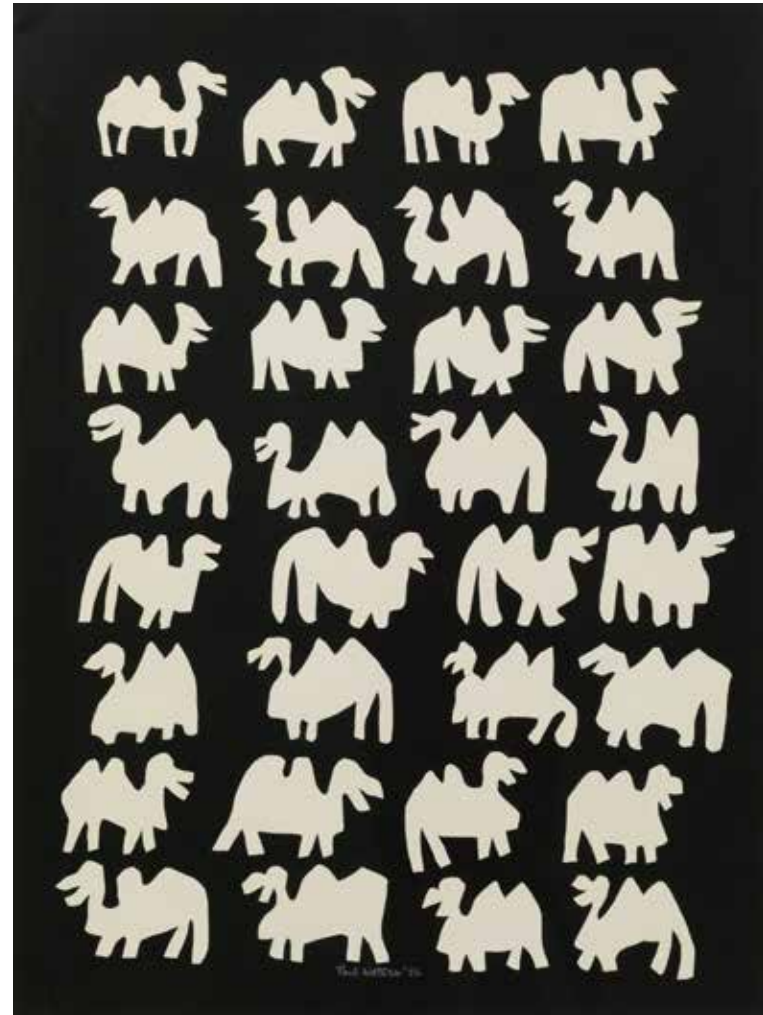
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ERIN JENOA GILBERT is a New York-based curator and art advisor. She is a specialist in modern and contemporary African and African American Art with a focus on abstract, conceptual, and performance practices. The former Curator of African American Manuscripts at the Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Gilbert has also held positions at The Studio Museum in Harlem and The Art Institute of Chicago. She received a B.A. in Political Science and a B.A. in African and African American Studies from the University of Michigan, and an M.A. in Contemporary Art from the University of Manchester.





1
IN THE BEGINNING 1970
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
70 X 237 INCHES



2
HAPPY DREAM TIME I 1972
PAPER COLLAGE ON BOARD
40 1/4 X 30 1/4 INCHES



3
VICTIMS 1971
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
34 X 30 INCHES



4
YOU AND ME 1969
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
45½ X 60 INCHES

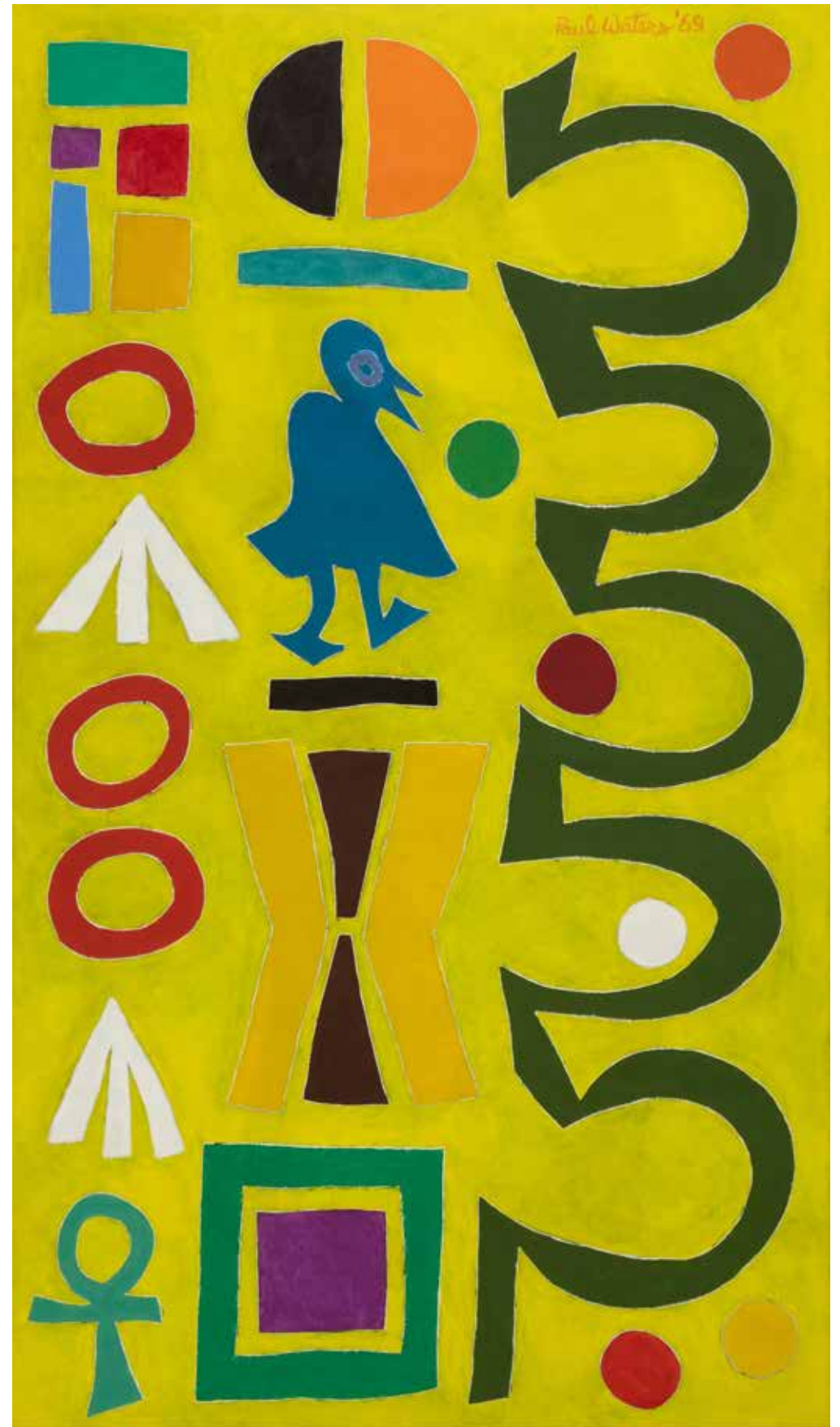


5

ENDURING LIFE 1969

OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS

76 X 44½ INCHES







6
THREE FACES 1971
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
44 X 75 INCHES

7
HAPPY TIMES 1972
COLLAGE ON BOARD
40 1/4 X 30 1/4 INCHES





Paul Waters '69

8

ANOTHER TIME, 1969

OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS

65 X 45½ INCHES







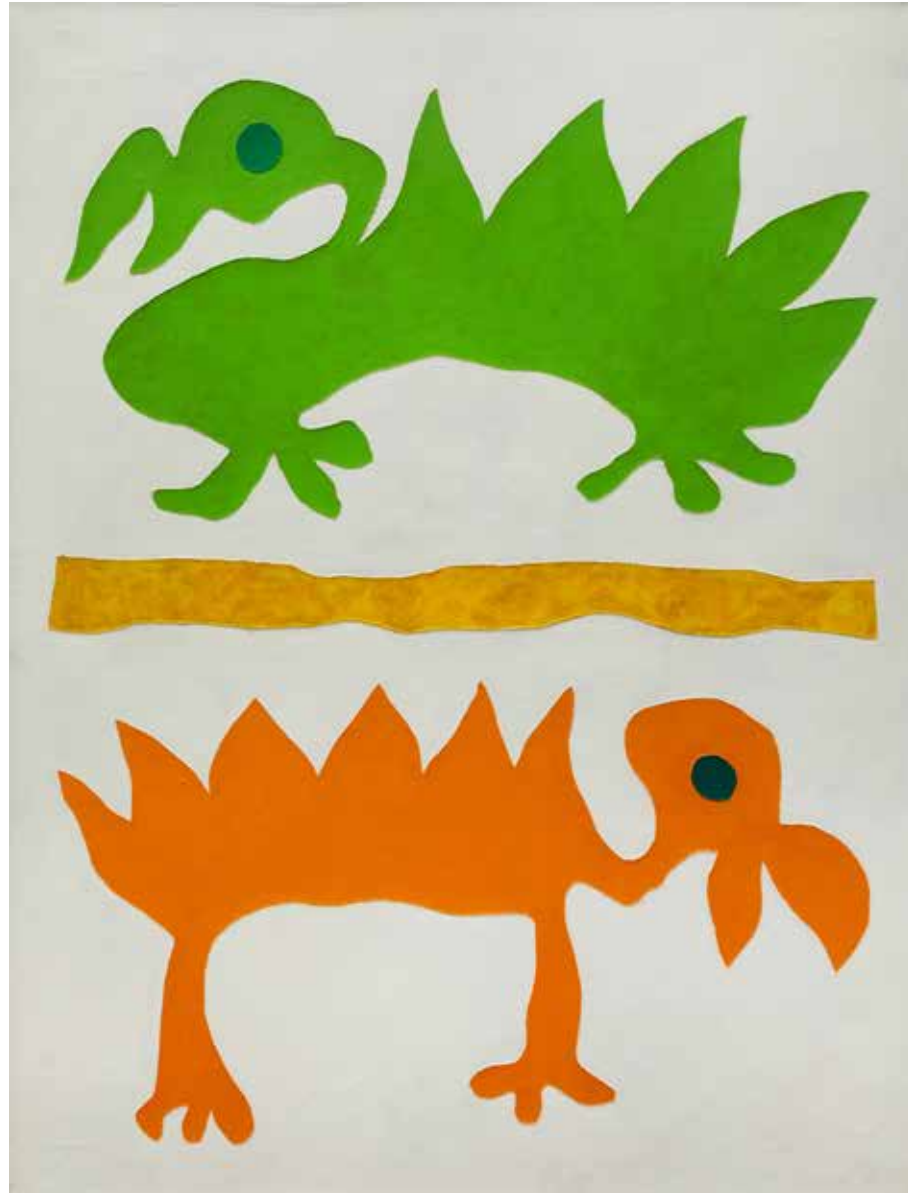
9
SURVIVAL COMMITTEE 1970
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
50 X 136 INCHES











11
TWO BIRDS 1972
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
48 X 36½ INCHES

12
PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG LADY 1972
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
96 X 42 INCHES







13
THE SWEET BYE AND BYE 1971
OIL ON CUT LINEN
COLLAGE ON CANVAS
60 X 75 INCHES





14

MOTHER AND HER SEVEN 1970

OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS

70 X 178 INCHES



15

BEAUTIFUL DANCER 1972
CUT PAPER COLLAGE ON PAPER
35 X 23 INCHES



TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT

16
EIGHT BIRDS 1972
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
30 X 36¼ INCHES



17
QUIET LISTENING 1972
PAPER COLLAGE ON BOARD
44 X 28¼ INCHES

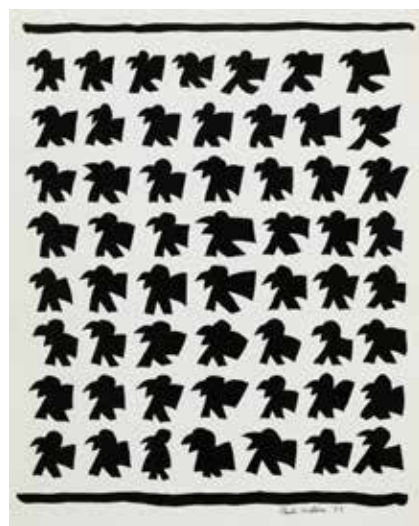


18
FREEDOM DREAM 1971
CUT PAPER COLLAGE ON PAPER
23¼ X 34¼ INCHES



BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT

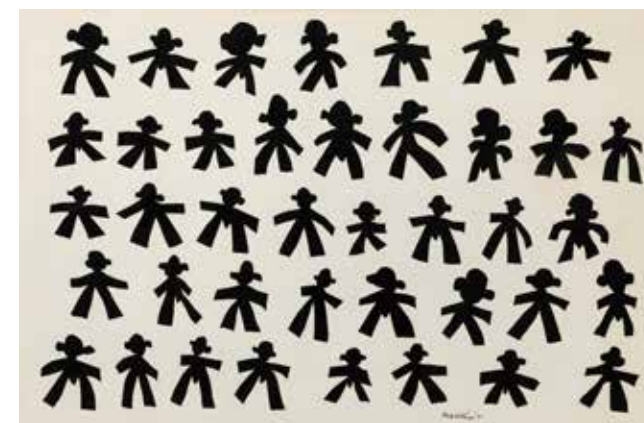
19
LOVE BIRDS 1973
INK ON PAPER
29 X 23 INCHES



20
CIRCLE SURVIVAL DREAMS 1971
CUT PAPER COLLAGE ON PAPER
23 X 34¼ INCHES



21
FAITH AND FEAR 1971
CUT PAPER COLLAGE ON PAPER
23¼ X 34¼ INCHES





22
TWO WOMEN 1970
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
60 X 46½ INCHES



23
LOVE STORY 1970
OIL ON CUT LINEN COLLAGE ON CANVAS
60 X 46½ INCHES



Paul Waters b. 1936 Philadelphia, PA

EDUCATION

Goddard College, Plainfield, VT
Bank Street College of Education, New York, NY
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Paul Waters: In the Beginning, Paintings from the 1960s and 70s*,
Eric Firestone Gallery, New York, NY
1968 *Animals*, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1985 *20th Century Afro-American Artists: Selections from the
Collection of the Newark Museum*, Newark Museum of Art,
Newark, NJ
1978 *Africa: Emergent Artists, Tribal Roots and Influences*,
Alternative Center for International Arts, New York, NY
1977 *Contemporary Black Art: A Selected Sampling*, Florida
International University, North Miami Campus, Miami, FL
1976 *Contemporary American Art*, Jamaica Arts Center, Jamaica, NY
1974 *African American Artists*, Newark Museum of Art, Newark, NJ
1971 *Black Artists: Two Generations*, Newark Museum of Art,
Newark, NJ
1970 *Afro-American Artists: New York and Boston*, Museum of Fine
Arts, Boston, MA
1968 *Black Artists*, Firehouse Plaza Art Gallery, Nassau Community
College, Garden City, NY

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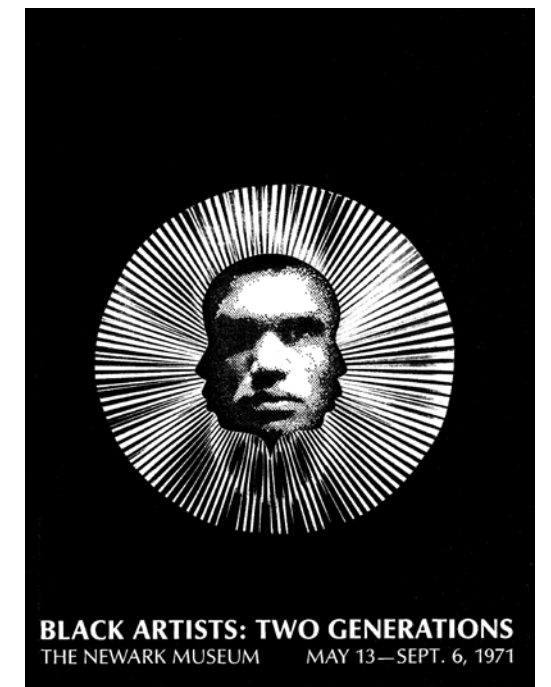
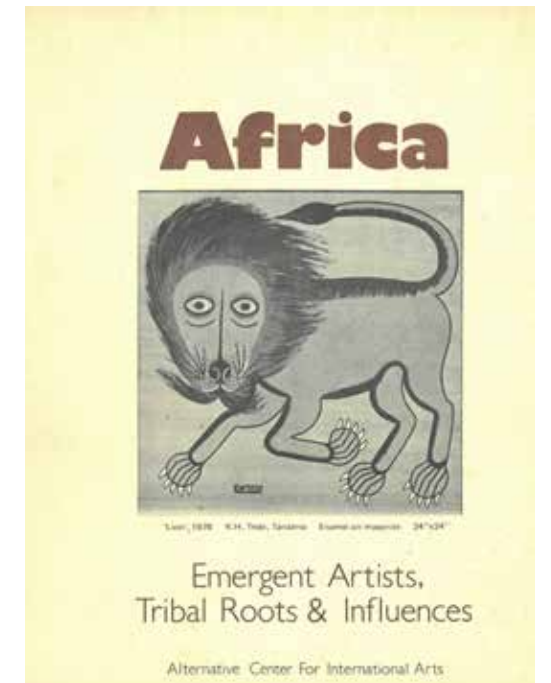
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Boston* at Boston Museum of Fine Arts, *The Boston Globe*,
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SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Newark Museum of Art, Newark, NJ

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1975–79 Director of the Jamaica Arts Center, Jamaica, NY
1975 Curator, Robert Blackburn—Master Printmaker, Jamaica Arts
Center, Jamaica, NY
1972–75 Director of the Department of Community Affairs, Newark
Museum of Art, Newark, NJ



Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Paul Waters for entrusting us with the presentation of his significant early work. Without his support, this exhibition would not have been possible. We also acknowledge the assistance and support provided by his studio assistant, Tom Chan, and his daughter Cybele J. Waters.

We are very grateful to Erin Jenoa Gilbert for her thoughtful and insightful essay on Paul Waters, and the larger context of his work, in this volume.

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Eric Firestone

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4 Newtown Lane

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Eric Firestone Gallery

40 Great Jones Street, 4th floor

New York, NY 10012

646-998-3727

4 Newtown Lane

East Hampton, NY 11937

631-604-2386

ericfirestonegallery.com

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Director of Research: Jennifer Samet

Project Management: Kara Winters

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