


A circular arrangement of hands, rendered in a dark brown, textured style, set against a dark brown background. The hands are positioned as if they are holding each other in a circle. The overall aesthetic is somber and evocative.

HIRAETH

A circular arrangement of hands, rendered in a dark brown, textured style, set against a light beige background. The hands are positioned as if they are holding each other in a circle. The overall aesthetic is warm and evocative.

*the 3.9 collective
searches for home*



Hiraeth: the 3.9 collective searches for home
Thacher Gallery
University of San Francisco
March 9–April 21, 2015

NANCY CATO
RODNEY EWING
MARK HARRIS
KEVIN B. JONES
RHIANNON EVANS MACFADYEN
RAMEKON O'ARWISTERS
WILLIAM RHODES
TIM ROSEBOROUGH
MICHAEL ROSS
RON MOULTRIE SAUNDERS



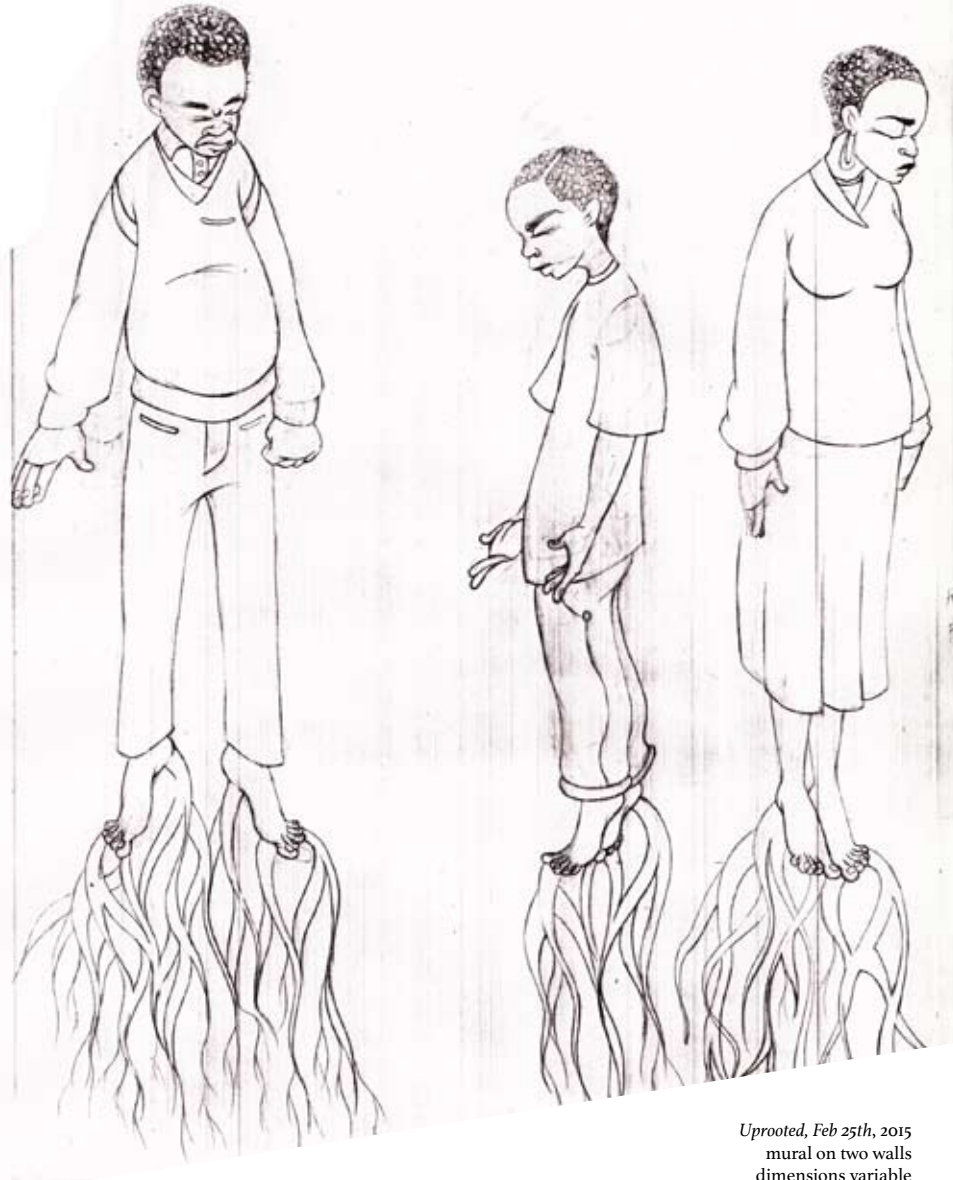
The 3.9 Art Collective is an association of African American artists, curators, and writers who came together to support San Francisco's dwindling black population and to draw attention to the historical and ongoing presence of black artists and creative expression in black communities through presentation, education, and outreach. Taking our name from a report in *The SF Bay View* that predicted that the city's black population would decrease to 3.9 percent of the population, the collective has adopted this statistic as an act of resistance and a commitment to the ideals and narratives of a diverse San Francisco.

The Welsh word *Hiraeth* roughly translates to “homesick”: a longing for a far-off home—one that may not even exist, now changed by time or idealized memory. This word resonates with 3.9 Art Collective, a group dedicated to exploring black arts in diaspora and the exodus of African Americans from San Francisco over the last couple decades. *Hiraeth* is found in layers for black American artists: the lack of ancestral history through slavery, the loss of cultural identity through pop-culture appropriation, the expulsion of black communities through gentrification (such as what happened in the Fillmore before and is beginning in Bayview/Hunter's Point now), even to the loss of space to create work, due to rapidly rising studio rents in the city.

For the exhibition at USF, ten artists from 3.9 Collective explore the concept of *Hiraeth*, the exodus of African Americans from San Francisco, and its lasting effects on art, community, and perceptions of home. The works presented span photography to installation to social practice and represent the wide range of artists in the collective. The variety of interpretations of home—from historic to current, from literal to metaphorical—signify the complexity of how we identify and define home.

Rhiannon Evans MacFadyen
Exhibition curator and member of 3.9 collective

NANCY CATO



“As an artist I feel a tremendous responsibility and desire to visually respond to the enormity of being Black in America. Our spirit and humanity has been relentlessly under attack and I would like to create work that encourages dialogue and healing. The desire comes from the love and pain of my culture that often weighs heavy on my heart. My artwork attempts to address our complex issues with wit, humor and compassion. I hope to create much needed discussion within our community towards healing.”

Motivation comes from the issues that plague our community and the resilience we embody.”

Nancy Cato, born and raised in New Haven, has been creating whimsical and socially conscious illustrations for the past 10 years. In 2000 she started her own company, Cato Creations designing t-shirts, greeting cards and logos for local businesses. In most of her work you will find that Cato's illustrations primarily center on the individual. The issue being addressed may affect the community at large, but for her the individual creates the community. This invites the viewer into an environment that hopefully becomes theirs.

*Uprooted, Feb 25th, 2015
mural on two walls
dimensions variable*

RODNEY EWING



“The idea of Hiraeth; a Welsh term meaning longing for home, longing for a place you have never been, or desiring a place that has never existed is a concept that individuals of a Diaspora heritage can identify with. Part of the history of African American people is one of displacement and invention. With this installation I am using these doors as portals to tell the story of loss, resistance, resilience and standing. Each door is double sided. The first door is a Yoruba village with a schematic of a slave ship on the other side to represent what was and what was lost. The second door features H. Box Brown (a man who escaped slavery by shipping himself North) and the schematic of a Plantation. This represents lengths a person would go to find a home, and the system that repressed them. The third door displays the residents of Freedmen’s Village VA., and a list of Black towns that were established in the United States, but lost to history. This is the establishment of a place of our choosing, by our own will. The fourth and last door is an image of James Baldwin, writer, activist, and a one of his quotes regarding the struggle and establishment of identity. This door is the voice of the stand; not merely satisfying with existence, but with thriving.”

Rodney Ewing’s drawings and installations focus on his drive to question human histories, cultural conditions, and events by pursuing a narrative that requires us to be both present and intimate. This line of questioning and observation has preoccupied his practice over the years leading to the creation of several different distinct bodies of work that challenge the narrative modes of documentation. These text-based installations and works on paper question how we view time, memory, and history as linear isolated constructs instead of concurrent moments. He has garnered critical attention in publications such as *Art News*, *Art Week*, *Artillery Magazine*, and *Black Arts Quarterly*, among others. Rodney Ewing has presented solo exhibitions at the de Young Museum, ASC Projects, IcTus Projects, and Frey Norris Gallery, and his work has been included in numerous group exhibitions locally and nationally.

rodneyewing.com

Passages, 2015
silkscreen on wood doors
four wood doors each 7 x 3 feet, installation, size variable

MARK HARRIS



Make me to your leader, 2014
mixed media photo collage on canvas
40 x 30 x 1.25 inches

"It is my opinion that the dominant culture taking over in San Francisco right now is not aligned with the spirit this city is known for, but that of aggressive capitalists, intent on exercising political power and privilege to benefit their own agenda with little regard for others. San Francisco is a city known for its free spirit, its pioneer spirit, and a lot of magic. Anything can exist here. You can walk down the street naked if you want and no one will care.

The people moving here in search of it are rapidly effacing the culture that makes San Francisco unique. Who are these disrupters? These interrupters? Creating ruptures? The 'disrupters,' or those who identify as such, are literally everywhere now. They've come to launch their disruption into the world via the allure of this great city, while their technology isolates them from the world around them.

White luxury buses with dark, privacy-tinted windows have become a symbol of entitlement to some and colonization to others. These buses transport thousands to modern-day cubicles, those on board are tasked with disruption - they are the disrupters. In the end, they displace the non-disrupters in this city. They view the non-disrupter's culture as nothing more than a foundation to build upon, believing their work is for the greater good and paramount to anything that's ever existed.

The battle for the soul of San Francisco as I came to know and love it is almost lost. No city is free from disruption and displacement; change is the ultimate driver of the universe: The great irony is those who disrupt are simply the next in line to be disrupted."

Mark Harris is a professional artist living and working in San Francisco, CA; he actively exhibits his work in the Bay Area and beyond. For the past fourteen years Mark has maintained a rigorous studio practice and relentlessly honed his craft.

During this time he has exhibited his work in museums, commercial galleries and non-profit art spaces. Some of these exhibits include The Marin Museum of Contemporary Art in Novato, CA, The Triton Museum in Santa Clara, CA, New Langton Arts in San Francisco, CA and III Minna Gallery in San Francisco.

In addition, his work is included in numerous private and public collections both domestically and internationally in such places as the SF Bay Area, Atlanta, Chicago, London, and South America. In June of 2011, Mark relocated from San Francisco to Santiago, Chile where he continued his artistic journey and held his first international exhibition. In October of 2012, Mark returned to San Francisco where he continues to paint and explore collage, photography and printmaking.

Harris' style can be described as bold and sophisticated, and his body of work demonstrates a remarkably broad range of artistic talent. Harris continues to develop his unique visual vocabulary and is an emerging artist to keep your eye on.

KEVIN B. JONES



*Slave/Share Cropper Cabin-
Sugar Plantation, Thibodaux, Louisiana, 2014
Abandoned Sugar Cane Boiling Pot, Plaquemines Parish Louisiana, 2008
photographic prints; 19 x 23 x.5 inches*

“These images were taken in southern region in the state of Louisiana. My intent is to create a sub conscious connection from the past to the present. If for only a moment, recognize and realize that the African-American community survived, despite at times under oppressing conditions. That the human (community) spirit within, helped all to survive and thrive despite the challenges that were faced. This spirit resides in all people, of all backgrounds, of all genders, in all countries, in all nations. Communities will thrive no matter the odds. When we recognize that we are all part a larger community. That our individual and group survival requires that we work together towards that goal.”

Kevin Bernard Jones was born and raised in the community of South Central Los Angeles, California. Introduced to photography at a young age, on Sunday family trips to the Los Angeles County Museum, he was given an opportunity to use the family Polaroid camera. These early experiences set the seed for his life-long passion for photography.

Primarily self-taught, he focuses his camera on the communities and places in the world that are less traveled. Kevin’s travels and photographic interests include Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and the southern region of the United States. He reaches out to connect to people, and to capture images that include those of the African Diaspora, which he is a part of.

Kevin finds great personal satisfaction working with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who support local community initiatives. He has worked with organizations based in Haiti, La República Dominicana and the United States. He uses photography as a tool to help organizations tell and share the stories about the people they support and empower.

“What I enjoy most about photography is traveling with my camera and meeting new people, along with actually seeing and experiencing places in the world that one may only have read about. My personal belief is that, at our core, we are all very much the same, no matter where we come from or where we live. I attempt to represent this with my photography.”

kbjonesphoto.com

RHIANNON EVANS MACFADYEN



Wish You Were Here II, 2015
installation: 150 postcards, poster
postcards 4 x 6 inches, poster 17 x 11 inches

“The Wish You Were Here series was inspired by the spaces we don’t notice. Moments of personal inspiration and contemplation can come when we stop and look around at the layered interventions we see in the city: graffiti-covered bathroom walls, murals on fences and rolling doors, chalk on sidewalks.

For Hiraeth, I gathered images of murals in the Mission District of San Francisco. Growing up in the city, the abundance of murals and street art in the Mission marked home for me. They were a point of pride for the community and were tended with great care—repainted when they aged and cleaned up when they were occasionally vandalized. But in a recent rash of callousness by landlords, when tagged or dirty, these murals are just painted out, leaving a sad, green or beige canvas for taggers over peeking remnants of the artwork underneath. As I watch these community expressions blotted out one-by-one, it so deeply reflects the changes this city—my home town—is suffering from, and I wonder how it’s possible that I can feel homesick without leaving home.

Wish You Were Here series presents these images as postcards to be filled out by the public and mailed to friends and family, making connections to home and community while reminding receivers of these quiet places and the city’s changing identity.”

Rhiannon Evans MacFadyen is a curator and project-based artist. A San Francisco native, having over 15 years of in-depth experience in the arts, from administration to performance and artmaking, Rhiannon has recently focused on projects that push boundaries of scale, scope, medium, venue, and content. In 2013 she founded A Simple Collective: an organization dedicated to fostering creative independence for professionals, and professional independence for creatives, and ASC Projects: an experimental project space in the Mission. Her personal works explore identity, systems, and language through a variety of mediums, including social practice, textile works, printmaking, and photography.

Deeply involved with several community-building, cultural, and arts marketing organizations, she spearheaded the creation and curation of Yerba Buena Night: the free outdoor arts festival in downtown San Francisco, now in its fourth year and is on the Advisory Board for WEAD (Women’s Environmental Artist Directory) and Curatorial Committee for Root Division. In addition to ongoing exhibitions at ASC Projects, she has curated exhibitions at Visual Aid Gallery, the New Media Lounge at Yerba Buena Night, ASC Projects, and SCOPE New York, and her shows and words have been included in The New Asterisk Magazine, SFArts.org, Art Practical, and KQED, among other publications.

pushingart.wordpress.com

RAMEKON O'ARWISTERS



Have You a Little Fairy in Your Home?, 2013
fabric
96 x 100 x 8 inches

“When I was growing up in North Carolina, I helped my paternal grandmother, Celia Jones Taylor (1896–1982) make quilts. Quilt-making with her is one of my fondest childhood memories, for I was embraced, important, and special. I was a little black boy hiding my queer self from my family during the harsh reality of the Jim Crow South of the 1960s and before the turbulent years of the Civil Right Movement that spread throughout the country.

The Welsh word Hiraeth, a longing for the past or a place, describes in a way the passion I have for my social art practice, Crochet Jam, which, at its core embodies tenderness. Crochet Jam is about bring people together to participate in crocheting large free-form rag rugs in public, that’s rooted in my cherished childhood memory. My grandmother let me add any color or pattern I wanted to her quilt. It didn’t matter if the strip of fabric that I selected did not fit the color scheme or any particular standard quilt-making pattern, that wasn’t important. Togetherness, sharing stories and feelings while calming quilting was important. There was no judgement, and she resisted trying to tell me which colors or patterns add. Our quilting bees were calm, relaxing, and peaceful, just the type of atmosphere a confused little black queer boy needed when world outside of her house was often negative, hostile, and unforgiving.

I decided to start a community art project that enabled groups of people to collectively work on a piece of art with a focus on relaxation and human connection, done in public with strangers. Crochet Jam is an activity that engendered compassion and warmth. I want participants to be in a creative mindset without anyone dictating the creative process nor concerned about the finished product. Crochet Jams are how I make liberation a form of art.”

Ramekon O’Arwisters, a native of Kernersville, North Carolina, is a curator of exhibitions at SFO Museum (SFOM), starting at SFOM in 1996 and joining the curatorial staff in 2007. He earned a B.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a M.Div. from Duke University, and has published artwork, poetry, and short stories in *Zyzyyva*, *James White Review*, and in the anthology *Paper Thin/Soul-Deep: A Collection of Personal Letters and Journal Entries of African-American Men*. Prior to joining SFOM, O’Arwisters was the curator and gallery director for the Richmond Art Center (RAC), in Richmond, California, and gallery director at the San Francisco African American Historical Society. He has served on the curatorial committee at Root Division and SOMArts, and was a panelist for the San Francisco Arts Commission, Murphy and Cadigan Fellowship Awards, and Visions from the New California, an initiative of the Alliance of Artists Communities. In addition to his work as a curator, he is also an award-winning artist, and has earned grants from the San Francisco Foundation, the San Francisco Art Commission Cultural Equity Program, and Artadia: The Fund for Art and Dialogue, New York, New York. He is a 2014 Eureka Fellow, awarded by the Fleishacker Foundation, San Francisco.

crochetjam.com

WILLIAM RHODES



Guardian of Forgotten Actions, 2014
suitcase, neon glass, paint, thread and photograph
29 x 9 x 18 inches

“At the start of my project I have begun to interview several residences in the San Francisco Bayview community. What makes these residences different from others living in San Francisco is the fact that they are homeless. These are people that have family roots that run deep in this community but, for a variety of reasons they are now homeless. They are Mothers, Fathers, and former teachers. Some even served in the armed forces. Through their life stories I felt a strong connection with all of the people. I asked each person the question; what does the concept of home mean to you? Everyone made it clear to me that they carry home with them wherever they go. Home for them is in their hearts, minds and in their rolling suitcases filled with photos and personal belongings. It amazed me how spiritual and grateful these people were beyond their material despair. I wondered how you can stay positive and optimistic with no physical place to call home.”

All the interviews help inspire my Suitcase Series. The works are made from various old suitcases which are weathered, travel-worn luggage. There are 3 pieces in the series. Upon opening the suitcases, instead of an empty shell, the inside reveals a shrine. Each suit case contains the personal history of a specific homeless person from the Bayview community. I include found objects, paint and Neon glass in each piece. The Bayview community is currently undergoing gentrification and placing many of its residents at a difficult crossroads. While the Bayview has a reputation for high crime and drug use, it is also a historic Black neighborhood with a rich history. Many Bayview residents have expressed the unsettling experience of losing the landmarks of their community and the instability which results from displacement.”

I began my creative journey at the Baltimore School for the Arts. I then earned a BA in Furniture Building and Design from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and a MFA from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. My creative works are in the collections of various galleries and museums and featured in several major publications and video shorts. I am a woodworker by trade, an artist by choice. I strive to blend fine craft, sculpture, and design with meaning and function.

My art has been strongly influenced by my travels, particularly to Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. This allows the work to explore themes of hidden knowledge, iconographic imagery and form, and variation in meaning depending on the cultural context. Explorations into the contrast between these traditional cultures and our modern one have also added depth to the narrative quality to my work. I am interested in exploring harmony with nature, longevity and Feng Shui.

I also dedicated part of his time to educating children through the “Dare to Dream Program” at the Bayview Opera House. My teaching allows me to give back to the community and participate in artistic synergy. I am also the co-founder of a Black art collective in San Francisco. The 3.9 Art Collective was formed in 2011 in response to the declining Black population in San Francisco.

williamrhodesart.com

TIM ROSEBOROUGH



Post-Black Is The New Black, 2014
laser cut and etched acrylic, glue
3 Pieces: 18 x 24 x 1 inches each

“My Englyph series of works features text that is reconfigured in my Englyph writing system. For the Hiraeth show, I submit works from my series titled, “Post-Black Is The New Black.” The title of the series, as well as the text that forms the artworks, is derived from an excerpt of the introduction to the catalogue for the 2001 exhibition, “Freestyle,” at the Studio Museum in Harlem, written by Thelma Golden. In the essay, Ms. Golden discusses the trend she discerned in recent art by persons of African descent: an art that she describes as “Post-Black.” I translated the following quote from her essay into Englyph:

So, at the end of the 90s, Glenn and I began, more and more, to see evidence of art and ideas that could only be labeled (both ironically and seriously) in this way—post-black. Glenn was better at identifying the traces and instances of it than I was, but the moment he said it, I knew exactly what he meant. It was a clarifying term that had ideological and chronological dimensions and repercussions. It was characterized by artists who were adamant about not being labeled as “black” artists, though their work was steeped, in fact deeply interested, in redefining complex notions of blackness. In the beginning, there were only a few marked instances of such an outlook, but at the end of the 1990s, it seemed that post-black had fully entered the art world’s consciousness. Post-black was the new black.”

Tim Roseborough is a digital artist and musician. His artwork and exhibitions can be seen in numerous publications, including Artforum, Art In America, ARTnews, Hyperallergic.com, the San Francisco Chronicle, SF Arts Monthly, the SF Examiner, and the San Francisco Bay Guardian. He has performed and shown artwork at the M. H. de Young Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the 2012 and 2010 ZERO1 New Media Biennials, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, SOMArts, Pro Arts Oakland, Root Division, Performance Art Institute, and the Garage, San Francisco. He was a nominee for the 2012 SFMOMA SECA Award and has been awarded residencies at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, ASC Projects in San Francisco, and the School of Visual Arts in New York.

www.timroseborough.com

MICHAEL ROSS



The piece Up Home/Down Home began with thoughts about my childhood home in the rural Deep South that was built by my father's hands when my parents were newlyweds approximately 70 years ago in the mid 1940s. I have looked at my father's act of constructing a house as both model and metaphor.

My father utilized wood and nails and concrete to make a space for our immediate family to be nurtured and sheltered. I have used needle and thread and fabric to create a space in which to open myself to the expression of ideas and emotions and memory. I carry thoughts and memories and lessons about the ways that my late parents constructed and created "home" in the mid 20th century South when a significant portion of their Black American friends and relatives were migrating to the North and West.

In creating this art piece I have thought about the Black migration out of the South in the mid 20th century and the Black migration out of San Francisco and other rapidly changing cities in the early 21st century. I constructed this house to honor the complex emotions visited on those who stay behind during mass migration and to honor those who set out to move themselves and parts of their culture to new places to establish new homes.

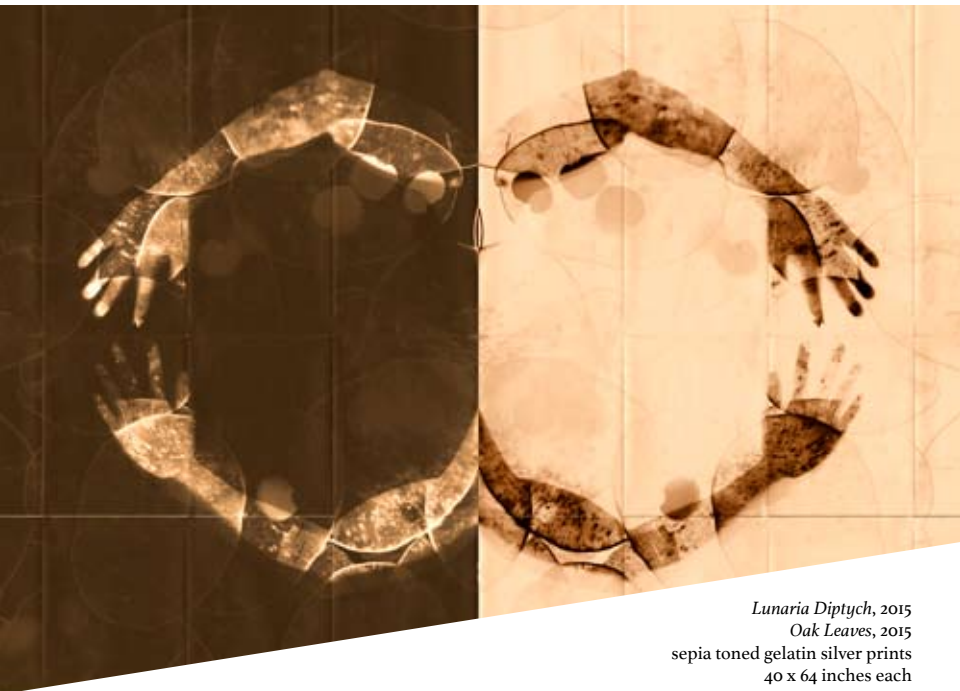
Michael Ross was born in Laurel, Mississippi. He obtained degrees in art from both the University of Mississippi and Northern Illinois University.

Michael thought of himself as an artist even at age 6 or 7. However, it was in high school that he was first able to take an art class and study technique. It was during those same high school years that he discovered the poetry of Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sterling A. Brown, Nikki Giovanni, Don L. Lee (Haki Madhubuti) and others. Although he did not realize it at the time, the poetry's influence would teach him lasting lessons about immediacy and personal expression and cultural inspiration and how to marry those elements with technique and formal study in the approach to his own continued artistic expression.

After Michael completed his studies at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) and went on to complete graduate studies at Northern Illinois University, he then moved to San Francisco in the late 1980s. Since that time he has lived and worked in San Francisco and exhibited in group shows and solo shows throughout the Bay Area. He has curated art exhibitions and he has joined with poets to illustrate some of their published volumes. He has joined with musicians to hang work and create a visual atmosphere for their performances. He has joined with theatrical composers having images of his work projected and superimposed onto stage sets.

Up Home/DownHome, 2015
hand-sewn fabric
96 x 32 x 20 inches

RON MOULTRIE SAUNDERS



Lunaria Diptych, 2015
Oak Leaves, 2015
sepia toned gelatin silver prints
40 x 64 inches each

"For series, "Mama can I come home?"

By wrapping myself in objects from my "home" can I cure myself of homesickness? I left the home of my childhood almost 40 years ago but I can still conjure up strong pictures that soothe me. I continue to long for the shade of the enormous Oak tree that grew in my neighbor's backyard. The majestic strength and stature of this old Oak always comforted me. I never climbed this Oak tree but I played in it's brown leaves it deposited in my backyard with great joy. The strong fresh earthy smell of crushed leaves intoxicated me.

Can I wrap myself in water and be comforted when I remember the smells of the salt water from Jamaica Bay near JFK Airport?

I wrap myself in objects to create photograms: photographs that are made without the use of a camera. I place natural elements such as water and plants onto the surface of silver-based photographic paper. The paper is exposed to light multiple times to create a shadowy silhouette image which results in a collage affect. To capture the essence of a home I can no longer return to I will integrate elements of my childhood with my body to recall feelings, experiences and places."

Ron is a San Francisco-based photographic artist, landscape architect and teacher. His work is in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection and permanently installed in the San Francisco Library, Bayview Branch in 2013 and Laguna Honda Hospital. The San Francisco Arts Commission is commissioning him to create work for the Southeast Community Facility in San Francisco for the Public Utilities Commission. His work has been exhibited throughout the US including "The Secret Life of Plants", solo shows (San Francisco International Airport, 2013, CordenPotts Gallery, San Francisco, CA 2010 and, Middle Collegiate Church, New York, NY), and group shows "Exposed: Today's Photography/Yesterday's Technology" (San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art 2010), "Measure of Time" (Oakland Museum of California at City Center, 2009). His work is published in several books including "Self Exposure: The Male Nude Self-Portrait" and "From Art to Landscape". He was an artist-in-residence at Rayko Photo Center for six months in 2014. He holds a Master's in Landscape Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master's of Social Welfare from UC Berkeley. And is an artist-in-residence at STAR (Shipyard Trust for the Arts) in the Hunter's Point Shipyard through December 2015.

ronmsaunders.com

Hiraeth: (Welsh) longing, homesickness, a yearning for a place removed in space or time

The University of San Francisco community welcomes the 3.9 collective to the Thacher Gallery for *Hiraeth*: the 3.9 collective searches for home. The artworks selected by curator Rhiannon Evans MacFadyen reveal deeply personal investigations of history, family, community, and memory as the artists search for what home means to them. As artist Kevin B. Jones explained to USF students, “We all want home and we all want a sense of place. We are all connected in some way no matter where we live.” These often haunting artworks remind us of these human connections—some broken, others tightly bound—that make up our idea of home. The artworks remind us of those who have served their communities, building homes here and elsewhere for their families and other artists. They recreate the early sensory imprints from childhood that so often form our lasting definitions of home. They speak directly to the legacies of slavery and racism, and expose overlooked alterations to San Francisco’s landscape caused by gentrification and displacement. Each artwork invites us to re-consider what constitutes home. Is it shelter? A place for family? A place of acceptance? A place of connection? Or, as the definition of *hiraeth* suggests, a place that exists only in our imaginations?

*Glori Simmons, Director
Thacher Gallery, University of San Francisco*



UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Thacher Gallery