

Boi v'Shalom - Come in Peace

Anna Hendrick Karpatkin Benjamin

West Bay View Foundation Fellowship 2018

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Growing up in New York City, Benjamin attended Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, where she studied weekly, became Bat Mitzvah and attended services with her family. This synagogue had two large and welcoming doorways, which the artist came to recognize as a symbol of community; filled with light, color, and song. A few years later, Benjamin visited the Neue Synagogue in Berlin with her grandmother, which had a reconstructed entry and facade after being destroyed during World War II. The architecture of these buildings left a mark with the artist, shown through her series created at Dieu Donn .

Benjamin began her work in the studio with drawings, which she then hand-cut into mylar stencils. For the building facades, mylars were used for short cotton blowouts as well as to add pigmented linen pulp paints. Benjamin focused on the detailed and rigid outlines of these brick and glass structures, while the interior of the sanctuaries allowed the artist to play with color, letting these patterns tell a story. Using multiple layers of abaca and cotton, Benjamin used numerous stencils to create colorful and delicate portraits of these places of worship.



In October 2018, the week after the attacks on the Tree of Life Congregation in Pittsburgh, Benjamin attended Shabbat services with her family at Stephen Wise. The sanctuary within was filled with community, joining together in words, song and action. At one point in the service, the entire congregation stood and turned towards the doors to the sanctuary in an act of welcoming: Boi v'Shalom, Come in Peace.

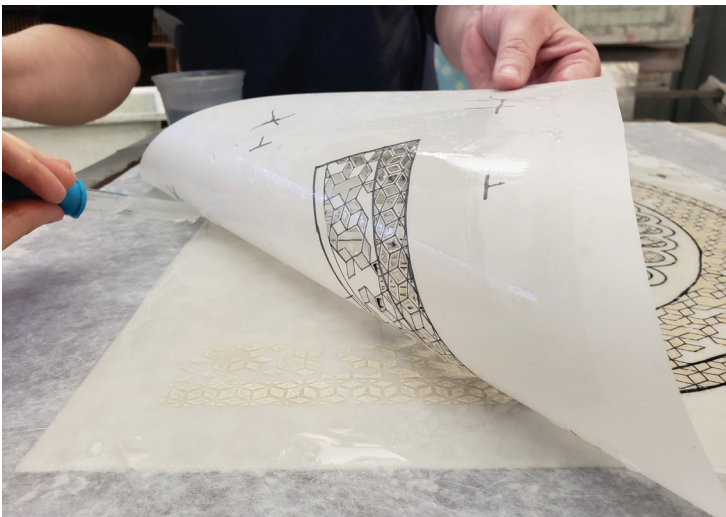
Throughout my Fellowship at Dieu Donn , I was exposed to an incredibly wide range of approaches to using hand-made paper. The opportunity to observe and assist in the work being produced in the studios evolved my practice to places I wouldn't have reached without Dieu Donn .

Working with Studio Co-Directors Amy Jacobs and Tatiana Ginsberg was not simply an execution of a fully laid out plan, but a true collaboration. Their expertise and ideas pushed the work in unexpected ways, our choices often reactions to how the fibers themselves were behaving. While my approach has always been one of precision and planning, I felt encouraged to let the paper itself take the lead. Dictating the layering and imagery, the paper acted as another collaborator in the studio.

-Anna Hendrick Karpatkin Benjamin

*18% of profits from these works will be donated to HIAS.

IMAGE CAPTION: Anna Hendrick Karpatkin Benjamin, *Neue Synagogue*, Cotton blowout with hand cut stencil on abaca base sheet. 29.75 x 22 inches.



About the Artist

Born and raised in New York City, Anna Hendrick Karpatkin Benjamin currently lives and works out of her home studio in Philadelphia, PA. Beginning her arts education at LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, she continued at Haverford College where she received a B.A. in Fine Art (Printmaking) and Education. After teaching in museums, schools and community art centers in the Philadelphia area, Benjamin went on to receive an M.F.A. in Printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design. She utilizes print, drawing and hand cut papers to construct spaces through pattern, repetition and ritual. In addition to her personal practice, Benjamin is the Lead Organizer of Prints for Protest, a collaborative portfolio project raising funds for communities at risk. Her work has been exhibited in New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Japan. annabenjamin.com

About Dieu Donn 

Dieu Donn  is a leading cultural institution dedicated to serving established and emerging artists through the collaborative creation of contemporary art using the process of hand papermaking.

About the West Bay View Foundation Fellowship

Established in 2018, the West Bay View Foundation Fellowship offers an immersive studio mentorship for a visual artist. This inaugural Fellow studies with Dieu Donn  master papermakers, gaining practical experience working in a professional papermaking studio. For more information, please contact kflaherty@dieudonne.org

Support

The artistic and educational programs at Dieu Donn  are made possible with public funds from the West Bay View Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and Foundation support including: Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Inc., Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Inc, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation - Good Neighbor Program, The Greenwich Collection Ltd., Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The Minnow Fund, The New York Community Trust, The O'Grady Foundation, The Partnership Fund for New York City, The Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts, and the Windgate Charitable Foundation along with major individual support.



IMAGES: Anna Hendrick Karpatkin Benjamin stenciling the synagogue facades in the Dieu Donn  studio (top) and in the process of a stencil blowout of wet paper pulp alongside Studio Co-Director and Master Collaborator Amy Jacobs (bottom).



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