

Aspects of Appearance: Portraits from the Collection in Context

February 25–June 30, 2024 at the Derfner Judaica Museum



Romare Bearden (b. Charlotte, North Carolina, 1911–d. New York, New York, 1988), *Queen of the Blue Sea*, 1973. Varnished fabric and paper collage with ink and acrylic on paper mounted on Masonite, 23 x 17 in. Gift of Steven M. Jacobson, HHAR 6103. © Romare Bearden Foundation/Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

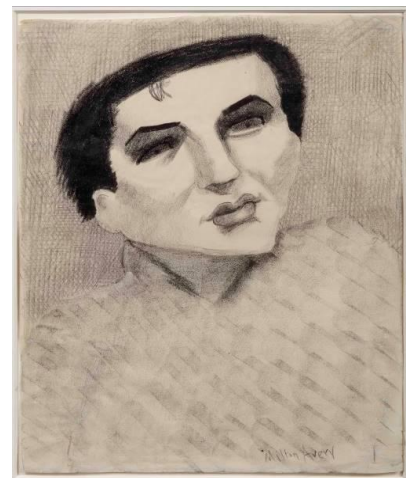
Romare Bearden's (b. Charlotte, North Carolina, 1911–d. New York, New York, 1988) mythic vision of a royal figure related to African American culture. Hyman Bloom (b. Riga, Latvia, 1913–d. Nashua, New Hampshire, 2009) depicts a rabbi, whose personal identity is less important than the enduring traditions of the religion he represents. Similarly, Max Weber (b. Bialystok, Russian Empire, now Poland, 1881–d. Great Neck, New York, 1961) focuses on expressing the spiritual solemnity of Judaism in a portrait of an unknown sitter. Like Auerbach-Levy, both David Levine (b. Brooklyn, New York, 1926–d. New York, New York, 2009) and Abraham Walkowitz (b. Tyumen, Russian Empire, now Russia, 1878–d. New York, New York, 1965) focus on types—the ordinary people they might observe on New York City streets, though during two very different eras.

Portraits typically represent a unique individual, their character, inner life, and place in society. Artists such as Milton Avery (b. Altmar, New York, 1885–d. Bronx, New York, 1965), Ilarion Golitsyn (b. Moscow, Russian SFSR, now Russia, 1928–d. Moscow, Russia, 2007), Gerta Nemenova (b. Berlin, Germany, 1905–d. Leningrad, Russian SFSR, now Saint Petersburg, Russia, 1986), Georgy Vereisky (b. Proskurov, Russian Empire, now Khmelnytsky, Ukraine, 1886–d. Leningrad, Russian SFSR, now Saint Petersburg, Russia, 1962), Andy Warhol (b. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1928–d. New York, New York,

Derfner Judaica Museum + The Art Collection at Hebrew Home at Riverdale is pleased to announce our upcoming exhibition, **Aspects of Appearance: Portraits from the Collection in Context**, which will be on view from February 25 through June 30, 2024. Admission to the Museum is always free. Photo I.D. required for entry.

Aspects of Appearance: Portraits from the Collection in Context features thirty-one works in a range of media by twenty-seven artists. The artworks in this exhibition span more than a century, from William Auerbach-Levy's (b. Brest-Litovsk, Russian Empire, now Brest, Belarus, 1889–d. Ossining, New York, 1964) rigorously naturalistic depictions of types encountered on New York's Lower East Side to Maryna Bilak's (b. Rakhiv, Ukraine, 1984) hauntingly beautiful, contemporary portrait of her aging mother-in-law. From strangers to intimate portraits of family members, the artists included here reveal the character of their subjects, while at the same time positioning them in wider social and cultural contexts.

A portrait, at its essence, is a matter of identity and identification. Yet they also may be great works of imagination—opportunities for artists to explore their own memories and fantasies—as exemplified by



Milton Avery (b. Altmar, New York, 1885–d. Bronx, New York, 1965), *Belle Gross*, ca. 1935–1943. Lithographic crayon and charcoal on paper, 17 x 14 in. Gift of George and Gail Feher, HHAR 6358. © Milton Avery Trust/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



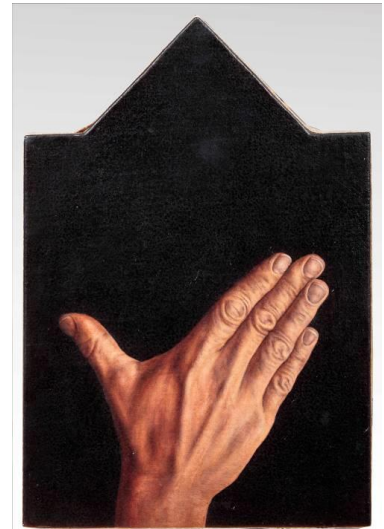
Bill Sullivan (b. New Haven, Connecticut, 1942–d. Hudson, New York, 2010), *Untitled (Self-Portrait in Studio)*, ca. 1976. Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in. Gift of Gil Einstein, G.W. Einstein Company, HHAR 6070.

1987), and Shai Zurim (b. Israel, 1972) portray their friends, members of their artistic circles, and cultural icons. Others focus on self-identity, like Menashe Kadishman (b. Tel Aviv-Yafo, Mandatory Palestine, now Israel, 1932–d. Ramat Gan, Israel, 2015) and Bill Sullivan (b. New Haven, Connecticut, 1942–d. Hudson, New York, 2010). Still others, for example, Rifka Angel (b. Kalvarija, Russian Empire, now Lithuania, 1899–d. New York, New York, 1988), Alex Katz (b. Brooklyn, New York, 1927), and Joan Linder (b. Ossining, New York, 1970), explore the nuances of family relationships. Some, like Raphael Soyer (b. Borisoglebsk, Russian Empire, now Russia, 1899–d. New York, New York, 1987) and Benjamin Levy (b. Tel Aviv, Mandatory Palestine, now Israel, 1940)—both from immigrant families—are inspired by old family photographs, while Till Friewald (b. Lima, Peru, 1963) bases his paintings directly on his own photographs of other people.

Portraiture also provides a lens onto politics and history, for example in Chaim Gross's (b. Ökörmező, Hungary, now Mizhhirya, Ukraine, 1904–d. New York, New York, 1991) commemorative print of Martin

Luther King, Jr., following his death in 1968, and Oskar Kokoschka's (b. Pöchlarn, Austria, 1886–d. Montreux, Switzerland, 1980) portrait of Golda Meir. Other works demonstrate modernism's impact on portraiture, from expressionistic and semi-abstract paintings and prints by Harold Baumbach (b. New York, New York, 1904–d. San Francisco, California, 2001), Moise Kisling (b. Kraków, Austria-Hungary, now Poland, 1891–d. Sanary-sur-Mer, France, 1953), and Pablo Picasso (b. Málaga, Spain, 1881–d. Mougins, France, 1973) to conceptual examples by Dan Witz (b. Chicago, Illinois, 1957).

This exhibition gives viewers an opportunity to consider the varied ways in which portrait subjects are represented. As artists fashion resemblance, they also construct meaning and connect viewers with aspects of their own identities.



Dan Witz (b. Chicago, 1957), *Frank*, 1983. Oil on canvas on board, 12 1/2 x 8 1/2 in. Gift of Steven M. Jacobson, HHAR 5617. © 2023 Dan Witz/Artists Rights Society (ARS).

Museum Hours

Museum hours: Sunday–Thursday, 10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Photo ID is required for all visitors to the Hebrew Home campus. Call 718.581.1596 or email art@riverspring.org to schedule a visit, in-person or virtual group tours, or for holiday hours. For further information, visit our website at www.derfner.org.

About Hebrew Home at Riverdale

As a member of the American Alliance of Museums, the Hebrew Home at Riverdale by RiverSpring Living is committed to publicly exhibiting its art collection throughout its 32-acre campus, including the Derfner Judaica Museum and a sculpture garden overlooking the Hudson River and Palisades. Derfner Judaica Museum + The Art Collection provides educational and cultural programming for residents of the Hebrew Home, their families and the general public from throughout New York City, its surrounding suburbs and visitors from elsewhere. RiverSpring Living is a nonprofit, non-sectarian geriatric organization serving more than 18,000 older adults in greater New York through its resources and community service programs.



This exhibition is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.