

# Alter Hall Art Collection

**CURATED BY BRIDGETTE MAYER**  
WITH ESSAY BY GERARD BROWN

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AT THE FOX SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

**CURATED BY BRIDGETTE MAYER**

WITH ESSAY BY GERARD BROWN

## **Publisher's Notes**

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## Letter from the Dean

Alter Hall, the new home of the Fox School of Business, is truly state-of-the-art.

The approximately 200 pieces of artwork that make up the Alter Hall Art Collection are as inspiring, diverse and creative as the students and faculty who pass by and interact with the art every day.

From the three-story kinetic flag sculpture in our atrium to the art that lines the walls of my office, the stunning pieces add color and energy to the building. The collection also represents our school's core themes of globalization, information technology, innovation and entrepreneurship while signifying our commitment to this region, as local artists created many of the works.

Visitors we have hosted in the building have universally praised the collection as providing a background of excitement and wonder to Alter Hall, and we have all embraced and grown to love the collection. We thank Dennis Alter, whose vision and commitment made our building possible, and Bridgette Mayer, the curator of the collection.

We have often said that Alter Hall should be more than simply a space for classrooms and offices. It should be a place where students, faculty, staff, alumni and guests connect and collaborate. During the design and building process, every decision was made with that theme in mind.

The Alter Hall Art Collection encourages curiosity and creativity. It promotes discussion and debate. And it makes Alter Hall a place to call home.

Best regards,

Moshe

M. Moshe Porat, PhD, CPCU  
Dean  
Fox School of Business  
School of Tourism and Hospitality Management  
Laura H. Carnell Professor







## Letter from Bridgette Mayer

Dear Friends,

It is with a sense of pride and joy that I present to you the Art Collection at Alter Hall. This art collection at the Fox School of Business at Temple University spans eight floors and 217,000 square feet. It features 29 artists, most of them from the Philadelphia and New York area, along with several international artists, several artists who have graduated from Temple University's Tyler School of Art, and one painter who teaches at Tyler. The collection features original, one-of-a-kind sculptures, paintings, drawings, and works on paper, as well as several large installation pieces. Many of the works were made specifically for this Michael Graves designed building. It took about seven months to conceive and put together this collection – including weeks spent in studio visits and galleries from Miami to New York, and a long holiday weekend with a dozen art handlers installing the work on the beautiful walls of the building. This collection would not have come into existence without the generosity and vision of Dennis Alter who underwrote the collection in its entirety. He has been a strong supporter and visionary of the arts and culture in Philadelphia, as well as a major donor to Temple University.

One of my goals as the curator of the collection was to give the students a color-filled and creatively enriched building that would stimulate their studies and thinking. I wanted to highlight artists from their time so that they might relate to the ideas being discussed in the artworks. I also wanted to feature international artists who might capture some of the flavors of the home countries of the Fox School's diverse student population.

The architecture and design of the building afforded many wonderful installation opportunities for the art collection. Light-filled hallways and softly colored walls in blues, greens and beiges created ideal backdrops for the art. Dramatic ten and twenty-foot wall spans offered great installation spaces and a chance to show large artworks. Long expanses of hallways created wonderful opportunities to highlight an entire collection of an artist's work.


Pieces of note in the collection include a large 7-by-9-foot acrylic painting by Tyler professor Odili Donald Odita. Selected for the entrance of the building, *Possibility* is a highly patterned, vividly colored painting featuring dynamic compositions and color in unexpected combinations. Odita states, "The organization and patterning in the paintings are of my own design. I continue to explore in the paintings a metaphoric ability to address the human condition through pattern, structure and design, as well as for its possibility to trigger memory. The colors I use are personal: they reflect the collection of visions from my travels locally and globally."

In the entrance of the building is a large installation by Maine artist Paul Oberst. *Temple Totems* features seven carved wood sculptures boldly patterned in black and white banding and topped by an architectural temple form. Oberst has been designing and building structures since he was a child. In 1981, he reduced this playful exploration to the architectural "temple" form. For Oberst, the archetypal temple is a cubic or rectangular form with a passage or door and a chimney-like structure connecting the ground to that above. It is the primal home, locus of being or connection to other realms. He states, "The temple is a soul, a journey, a doorway, a map or a marker." Oberst's temples have been shown in gallery, museum, and university exhibitions, site-specific installations and performances.

Also of note in the collection is the second-floor installation *Abyss* by Philadelphia artist and Pew Fellowship winner Rebecca Rutstein. *Abyss* features twenty-one painted panels and a wall painting spanning 66 feet. In this series, Rutstein has focused on the exploration and mapping of the ocean floor. She was inspired by the world-renowned oceanographer Marie Tharp, who spent over 30 years mapping the unseen topography of the entire sea floor, completing over 25,000 drawings. Rutstein states, "The *Abyss* series is an exploration of the deep ocean floor. Using ship track data, topographic maps and other materials, I have imagined the place that spans so much of our globe, the site where geologic processes begin, and the entity, that to this day, holds such profound mystery."

Moving up to the seventh floor is an installation of digital giclée prints by Pakistan-born and Brooklyn-based artist Seher Shah. The ten prints are selected works from a larger series titled *Black Star Project*, which explores architectural forms and universal geometries. The layered nexus of these two notions implicates questions of identity and association through the inclusion of cultural, at times specific and at times more general, symbols, icons, and texts. The resulting lexicon stands as a platform for questioning identity as a codified quality. The images, stripped of any color, allow for a refined and open exploration of universal space and symbols.

These artists are only several examples of the two hundred incredible artworks on view in Alter Hall. It is my hope that generations of students, faculty and the public will enjoy this collection for years to come!



Bridgette Mayer





**Alter Hall Art Collection**

## ELYCE ABRAMS

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Born: 1973, Johannesburg, South Africa

Residence: Philadelphia, PA



Elyce Abrams received her BFA in 1996 from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, MA) and her MFA in 2004 from the University of the Arts (Philadelphia, PA). Abrams has received awards including an Artist's Grant from the Vermont Studio Center (Johnson, VT) and an MFA Merit Scholarship from the University of the Arts. Her recent work has been included in solo and group shows at Bridgette Mayer Gallery (Philadelphia, PA), Blank Space Gallery (New York, NY), Hillel Center at Ohio University (Athens, OH), Gallery Imperato (Baltimore, MD), the Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art (Philadelphia, PA), Miami University (Oxford, OH), The State Museum of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg, PA) and the University of the Arts.

“My paintings depict deconstructed landscapes spanning vast physical and emotional distances. The paintings, at times progressing from dark to light and alternating between dense and bare fields, explore the tension, atmosphere, noise or silence of a conceptual place. They document the experience of a journey from one point to another, and recognize that there remains a long distance still to go. Vertical columns in the foreground lend weight and dimension, both obstructing the landscape and providing a visual frame of reference for the viewer. The repetition of these columns portrays the gathering of individuals in some of the paintings; in other paintings they signify permanent structures within the landscape.”

(1) UNHURRIED, 2008, Acrylic on Panel, 12 x 36",  
*installation view*

(2) 12-PANEL INSTALLATION, 2007,  
Acrylic & Oil on Panel, 16 x 16" each, *installation view*

(3) WITH YOU HERE, 2008, Acrylic on Panel, 12 x 36"



(1)





(2)



(3)

## NEIL ANDERSON

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Born: 1933, Chicago, IL

Residence: Lewisburg, PA



- (1) TRAVELS OF ORPHEUS, 2008, Oil on Linen, 66 x 50",  
*installation view*  
(2) SUMMER OF '09, 2009, Oil on Linen, 76 x 50"  
(3) DREAMS OF REASON, 2010, Oil on Linen, 56 x 54"

Neil Anderson received his MFA from The University of Iowa (Iowa City, IA) and was a Professor of Painting at Bucknell University (Lewisburg, PA) until 1999. Anderson's recent work has been included in solo shows at Bridgette Mayer Gallery (Philadelphia, PA), Center Gallery (Lewisburg, PA), Gettysburg College Art Gallery (Gettysburg, PA), and Fischbach Gallery (New York, NY). He has also taken part in group exhibitions at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (Philadelphia, PA), Center for the Arts Gallery (Towson, MD) and The State Museum of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg, PA). Anderson's work is included in public and private collections, including Albright College (Reading, PA), The Museum of Modern Art (New York, NY), the Utah Museum of Fine Arts (Salt Lake City, UT), Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, MI) and Iowa State University (Ames, IA).

"I begin working from random and chaotic details recorded from the natural terrain. From this beginning I gradually find order. This process is informed by my commitment to the tradition of non-representational painting. My purpose is to make paintings that, in their resolution, reflect the stillness that fosters extended visual contemplation. This is how I explain my daily pursuit of formal perfection through abstraction.

For me the essence of painting, that is, the purely formal relationships of shape, color and texture, is found within the tradition of abstract or non-representational painting. In my mind the painting is a physical object, every square inch of the painted plane receiving the same attention.

My recent work has placed an even greater emphasis on color and texture developed in the areas between the linear elements. I have also focused on a divided plane or the joining of two separate canvases composed as one. The line created by the joined planes has become a significant compositional element in resolving this work."

– Neil Anderson





(1)



(2)



(3)