

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The late Curtis Barnes, Sr. was a noted artist and educator as well as a celebrated icon of the Dayton art scene, teaching and inspiring hundreds of local students to pursue their dreams as artists. He was an art educator in the Dayton Public Schools from 1972-1977, and later taught as a Professor of Art Education at Sinclair Community College from 1977-1994. He was appointed Professor Emeritus at Sinclair in 1995. Throughout his life, Barnes was committed to forming a network of collaboration and support to help promote the work of black artists in Dayton. This led to the founding of Genesis III, an African American art coalition in 1975, and the co-founding of the African American Visual Arts Guild (AAVAG) in 1992 with fellow artist, Willis “Bing” Davis. Barnes and Davis were also instrumental in organizing alternative arts and black culture venues such as the African American Art and Cultural Festival, the forerunner for today’s Dayton Black Cultural Festival. Barnes received the Paul Laurence Dunbar Humanitarian Award in 1994, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ohio Arts Council in 2008. His work can be found in many private collections throughout the country, as well as public collections throughout Ohio including Sinclair Community College, University of Dayton, and Dayton Public Libraries.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

All works Curtis Barnes, Sr. (1935-2019)  
All works oil on canvas, panel, or wood  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of Curtis Barnes, Jr.

*Study of Diana*, 1977  
*Self Study*, 1978  
*Portrait of Dorothy (Lady in Red)*, 1979  
*Dorothy*, 1982  
*Necé*, 1982  
*Series of Self Studies*, l-r: 2001, 2001, 1996, 2001, 1994, 2003  
*Cityscape*, 1997  
*Eliza Mitchell*, (date unknown)

*The Westwood Community Center Portraits*, 1992-2001 (center)  
Top row, all works 1995, l-r: *Edna*; *Margaret*; *Alexander*; *Oscar*; *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Dorothy*; *Ray*  
Second row, all works 1995 except where indicated, l-r: *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Tiara*; *Marvis*; *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Napolean*; *Julian*, 1996; *Juanita*; *Untitled*; *Albert*, 1996  
Third row, all works 1995 except where indicated, l-r: *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Ophelia*; *Danita*; *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Sheila*; *Always in the Spirit of Love: Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Bing*; *Untitled*, 2001; *Unknown (Love & Peace)*  
Fourth row, all works 1995, l-r: *Unknown (Love & Peace)*; *Cliff*; *James*; *Dorothy*; *Pearl*; *Denise*; *Marylène*; *Paul*; *Vivian*



Courtesy of Curtis Barnes, Jr.

SPONSORS

The Fund for Social Justice Through Art  
Presented by PNC Bank

PRESENTING SPONSOR

College of Arts and Sciences, University of Dayton

EXHIBITION PARTNERS

Curtis Barnes, Jr. and Family  
Sally Struthers

EDUCATION & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Dr. Robert L. Brandt, Jr.

In Studio: Curtis Barnes, Sr.

Thursday, April 29, 7pm | Exclusively Online  
The premiere of The Co's short film series includes an in-depth look at the artist through the eyes of Dayton-area friends. View on our YouTube channel.

GALLERY HOURS

Mon–Tue	Closed
Wed–Thu	11am–6pm
Fri	11am–8pm <i>First Fridays 'til 10pm</i>
Sat	11am–6pm
Sun	11am–4pm

The Contemporary Dayton receives operating support from Culture Works, Montgomery County Arts & Cultural District, Ohio Arts Council, the Virginia W. Kettering Foundation, and Members.



Curtis Barnes, Sr.:  
Love & Peace

The Dr. Robert L. Brandt, Jr. Gallery

Friday, April 30–Saturday, July 17, 2021

Dayton’s West Side has long produced dedicated artists and educators including Curtis Barnes, Sr., a prolific artist who exemplified a generation of black painters who came of age in the 1960s through the 1990s, and whose contributions–pedagogically, philosophically, and artistically–are still deeply felt today.

Though Barnes worked in a broad spectrum, from gestural abstraction to observational objective paintings, it was his highly expressive portraits that seemed to simultaneously speak to the memory of the late artist and to this moment as this exhibition was being organized. These portraits are more than a mere gathering of likenesses. All of these visages begin to meld with Curtis Barnes, Sr.'s “...many mask-like images that can be seen as eggs or seeds, which express the continuum of life and family,” explains Barnes' son, Curtis Barnes, Jr.

Curators Zachary Armstrong and Michael Goodson worked closely with Curtis Barnes, Jr. and Barnes' family, quite literally pulling many these paintings from a storage room on Salem Avenue. Though some of the works needed restoration and cleaning, they immediately sprung to life as they came into the light. In particular a diverse range of self portraits juxtaposed with portraits of the



women that helped to form Barnes' life as an artist–his wife, daughters, and grandmother–became the heart of this exhibition.

Another focal point became the never-before-exhibited immersive grid of 36 “community portraits” made by Barnes during his long affiliation with Dayton’s Westwood Community Center. “*Love & Peace*,” words Barnes tenderly wrote on the back of each of these community portraits, give this exhibition its title.

As one of the Inaugural Exhibitions in its new galleries, *Curtis Barnes, Sr.: Love & Peace* also stands as a signifier for The Co’s long history and newly invigorated dedication to diversity through exhibitions by artists who have helped to shape the contours of the past, present, and future of those living and working in Dayton, Ohio.



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Curtis Barnes, Sr., *Westwood Community Portraits*, 1995, oil on various media. Courtesy of Curtis Barnes, Jr.