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NEWS

MIT Students Can Now Borrow Works by Jennie C. Jones and Nayland Blake

The MIT List Visual Arts Center added nine new works to the Student Lending Collection for its 49th anniversary.



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Installation view of the 2023 *Student Lending Art Program* exhibition at MIT List Visual Arts Center
(photo Gwyneth Koeckhoven, all courtesy MIT List Visual Arts Center)

Celebrating the 49th year of its beloved Student Lending Art Program (SLAP), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) List Visual Arts Center has added nine acquisitions to its collection, available for students to borrow for free. Among over 700 framed artworks are new additions from artists including American Artist, Jennie C. Jones and Nayland Blake — all of which will be exhibited at the List Center at the end of the month.

Since 1977, the program has enabled students to customize their living space with a work of museum-quality contemporary art for the academic year. The Student Lending Collection will be displayed in its entirety at the List Center from August 31 through September 13, during which students can peruse and apply for their preferred artworks through the program's lottery system.

Those who aren't selected via lottery are still able to choose a remaining artwork on a first-come, first-served basis.

“We want students to understand that art and museums are here for them, and that living with art can encourage slow looking, curiosity, and new ways of creative thinking,” said List Center Director Paul Ha in a statement, adding that the new acquisitions are entwined with the museum's programming, the Boston art scene, and the broader contemporary art landscape.



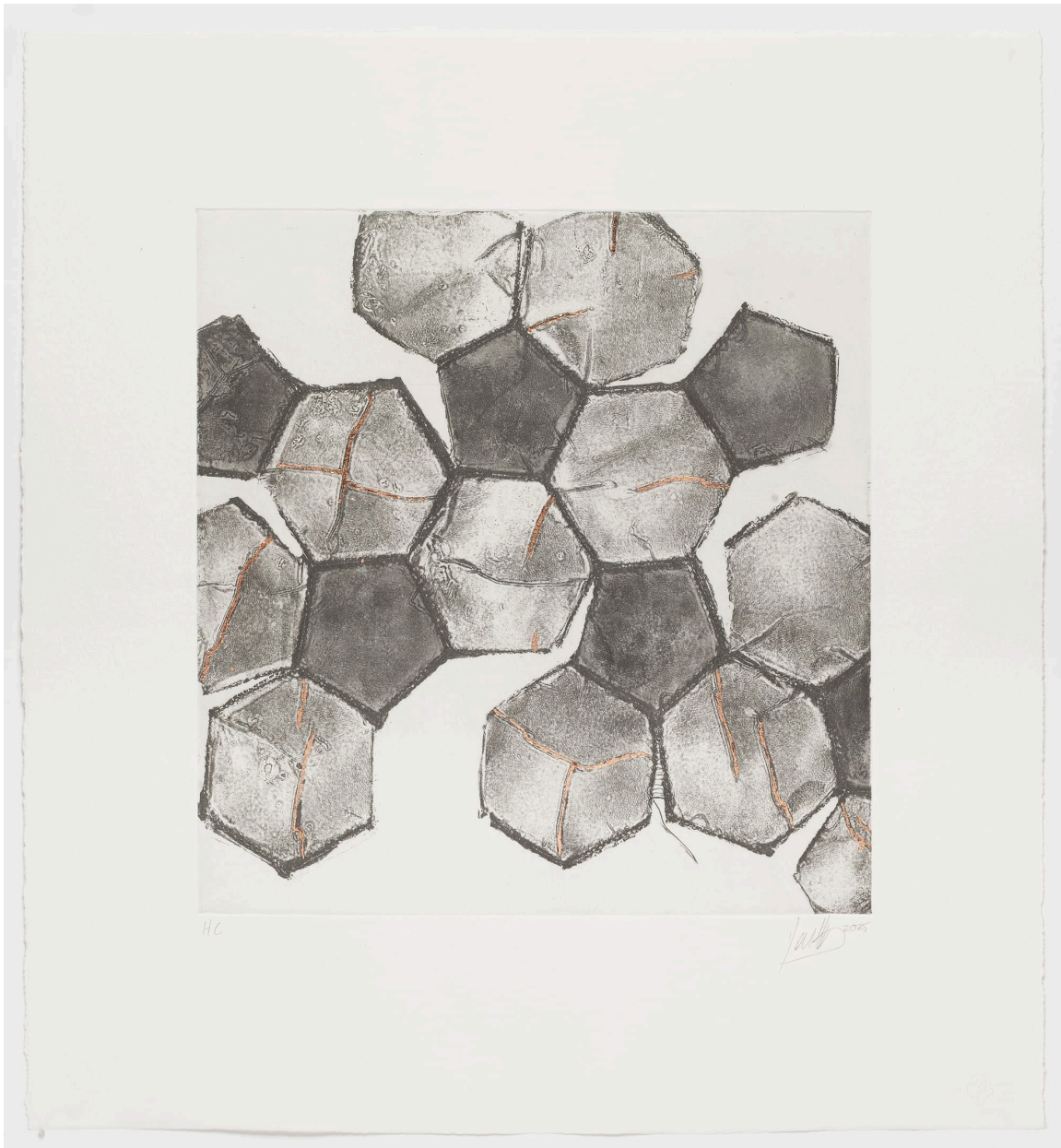
American Artist, "Octavia E. Butler Papers: mssOEB 1-9062 II (Shape God)" (2022)

In an email to *Hyperallergic*, Ha explained that the Student Lending Collection generally favors smaller, lightweight, and well-protected pieces as students typically transport and install their artwork independently. A range of media is represented, from photography and collage to print editions, paintings, and works on paper.

SLAP offers a rare opportunity to self-curate and live with work by exceptionally relevant artists including Alexander Calder, Ed Ruscha, Katherine Bradford, Romare Bearden, Louise Bourgeois, Joan Miró, Yoshitomo Nara, Sarah Sze, and Kiki Smith, to name a few.

"We prioritize the quality and rigor of an artist's creative practice over any particular genre or medium," Ha told *Hyperallergic*.

“We value works that are accessible to a broad range of viewers, while also making room for pieces that are more challenging or conceptual — works that can complement students’ research, intellectual interests, and lived experiences as much as their living spaces,” Ha added.



Daniela Rivera, “She Never Kicked the Ball” (2025)

In recent years, the collection has expanded to include conceptual works that require more hands-on involvement from students — Raymond Boisjoly’s

“Clinamen” (2019) and Sol LeWitt’s “Wall Drawing #869B” consist of instructions to stencil or draw directly onto the wall.

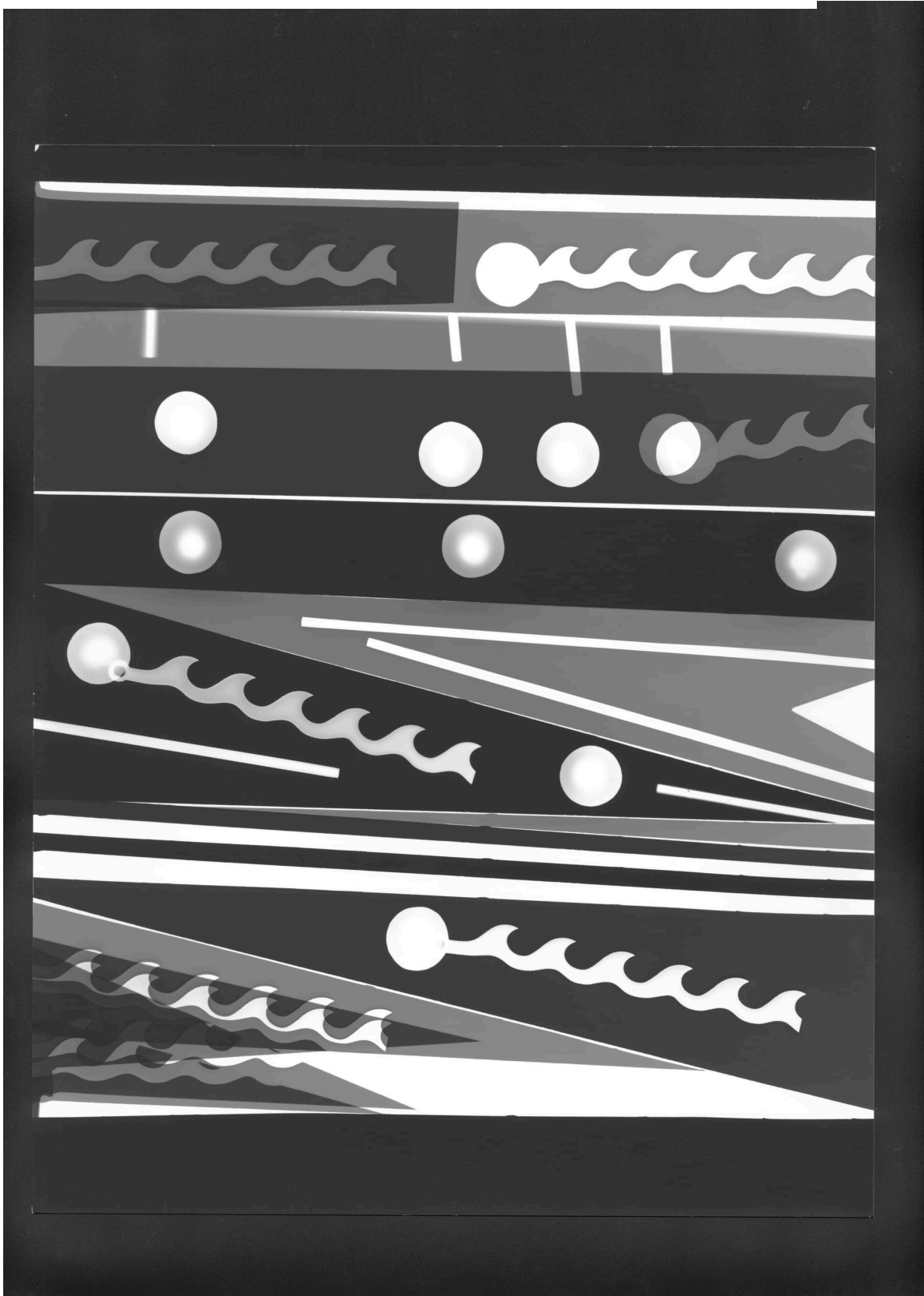
“In this way, the works invite students to participate in the making of the artwork and consider how its meaning unfolds in relation to their own surroundings,” Ha explained.

Alongside the new acquisitions by Blake, Jones, and American Artist are prints by Daniela Rivera and Jorge Otero-Pailos, a unique photogram by Every Ocean Hughes, photos by Charlotte Moth and Sergio Purtell, and a mixed-media piece by Swedish art duo Goldin+Senneby.

MIT is among a handful of institutions nationwide that boast student art lending programs. The University of Minnesota has the oldest program dating back to 1934, but MIT possesses one of the largest lending collections, rivaled by that of the University of California, Berkeley.



Nayland Blake, "Untitled" (2000)



Every Ocean Hughes, "Untitled (discompose #12)" (2014)



Sergio Purtell, "Bushwick, NY" (2020)