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# This Philadelphia art gallery looks at the state of American democracy through printmaking

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One art gallery in Philadelphia is starting a conversation about the state of American democracy by using printmaking.

A new exhibition on display at The Print Center on Latimer Street through July 25, called "America Today – Voices in Contemporary Print," aims to show how many issues raised by artists going back up to 20 years ago are still relevant today.

Dindga McCannon is one of the artists whose work is featured.

It celebrates the lives of four women who fought against the system for equal rights, and that means a lot to her. It's named "Sojourner, Harriet, Shirley, and Maya," — after Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Shirley Chisholm, and Dr. Maya Angelou.

"They were women who fought against the system, who fought for equal rights, for people of color, for voting rights or political rights," McCannon said.

McCannon is one of more than 35 artists whose work is included in the exhibit.

Lauren Rosenblum, who curated the exhibition, says the works come from six different printmaking workshops around the country.

Philadelphia's Brandywine Workshop and Archives is among the workshops, along with Coronado Print Studio in Austin, Texas, Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts in Oregon, and print workshops in New York City, Kingston, New York and Los Angeles.

Most of the prints were made within the past two decades — going back to as early as 2005.

"They respond to events like Hurricane Katrina, the homelessness crisis, or immigration and migration rights," Rosenblum said.

They also explore topics like gender, colonialism and political oppression, according to a media release.

Rosenblum said the works are also supposed to make people realize how some of our society's most pressing issues keep coming up, reflect on the progress we've made as a country, and where the nation still needs to go from this point as it approaches its 250th anniversary.

"Art, unlike politics, invite personal reflection and personal agency in coming to grapple with some of the most pressing issues of our time, Rosenblum said.

McCannon said she really believes in the power of the exhibit, adding that it provides first-hand perspectives on the issues highlighted that can be really powerful.

"Maybe you'll stop and think a minute. You know, maybe it doesn't affect me, but it's affecting everybody else," McCannon said.

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