

# SOHN FINE ART

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## DENNIS LEE MITCHELL

Dennis Lee Mitchell is a Virginia based Fine Artist who creates mandalas with smoke on paper inspired by flowers. Raised in a small farm town in Kansas, Mitchell would spend hours looking closely into flowers and when asked what he was doing by his parents he would respond that he was “looking into the universe.”

Mitchell created the process of drawing with smoke by chance nearly a decade ago and shifted his focus from ceramics to creating in this medium. By employing smoke as a drawing tool, delicately applying carbon soot to the surface of paper, the resulting works evoke natural forms where his imagery remains abstract, striking a balance between the representational and the ephemeral.

He is the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, a Pollock/Krasner Foundation Grant and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council. Mitchell participated in the Art in Embassy program, selected by the U.S. State Department to be a guest artist in Turkey. His work is held in numerous museums, private and public collections and he holds a Master of Fine Arts from Arizona State University.

### DENNIS LEE MITCHELL

b. 1946, Great Bend, Kansas  
Lives and works in Alexandria, Virginia

### Recent Solo Exhibitions

- 2021 “Recorded Traces” Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
  - “Dennis Lee Mitchell” William Havu Gallery, Denver, Colorado
  - “Infinite Musings” Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson Hole, Wyoming
- 2019 “Smoke Remains”, Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2018 “Smoke” Jerald Melberg Gallery, Charlotte, North Carolina
- 2017 “Smoke Theory” Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
  - “Smoke Drawings” William Havu Gallery, Denver, Colorado
- 2015 “Smoke on Paper” Todd Weiner Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri

- 2014 "Smoke Drawings" William Havu Gallery, Denver, Colorado
- 2013 "Dennis Lee Mitchell Smoke Drawings," C. Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland
- 2012 "Earth and Fire," Patraidas Contemporary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 2011 "Distillation," Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2009 "Origin," Alcoma Gallery, Athens, Greece
- 2008 "Human Nature," Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2007 "Material Transformation," Kemper Art Gallery, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois 2006
- "Sense of Origin," Clarke House Museum, Chicago, Illinois
- "Source," Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2005 "Manifest," Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2004 "Sculptures," Dubuque Museum of Art, Dubuque, Iowa
- "New Works," Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, Illinois Recent

### **Group Exhibitions**

- 2022 William Havu Gallery, Denver, Colorado Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2019 Neptune/Brown Gallery, Washington D.C.
- 2018 Heather Gaudio Gallery, New Canaan, Connecticut
- 2016 U.S. State Department, Art in Embassy Exhibition, U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey, (February)
- 2015 "Two Person Show", Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, Illinois U.S. State Department, Art in Embassy Exhibition, Curated by Sara Tanguy, U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey
- 2014 "New Media Exploration," University of St. Francis, University Art Gallery, Fort Wayne, Indiana
- 2013
- "Mighty Small," Patraidas Contemporary, Ogden, Utah
- 2012 "Dennis Lee Mitchell/Olivia Petraides/Lisa Sambor," Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, Illinois

- "We Find Our Way," Parlor Gallery, Asbury Park, New Jersey
- 2011 "Sculpture Today: New Forces, New Forms," Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- 2010 CAA Seoul 2010, Kepco Art Center, Seoul, South Korea The Chicago Art Loop Open, Chicago, IL NCECA
- 2010 Invitational, Moore Galleries, Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, PA
- "Trompe L'Oeil," John Natsoulas Gallery, Davis, California
- 2009 "Considering Spring," Pacini Lubel Gallery, Seattle, Washington
- "Perspective," Function Art, Chicago, IL The 5th World Contemporary Ceramic Biennale, Icheon-city South Korea
- 2008 "The Leaf and the Page," Illinois State Museum, Chicago, IL
- "Revisions," Zolla/Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, IL
- Trompe L'Oeil, John Natsoulas Gallery, Davis, California
- 2007 Cheongju International Craft Biennale, Cheongju City, Chungbuk, South Korea,
- Honorable Mention
- "Botanical," Santa Fe Clay, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- "Sculpture Invasion," Koehline Museum of Art, Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, IL
- "Contemporary," Aldo Castillo Gallery, Chicago, IL Art XIII, Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles, California
- 21st International Juried Exhibition, Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Summit, NJ
- "Match," Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2006 "Ingrained Passion," Function + Art, Chicago, Illinois
- Krasl Biennial Sculpture Invitational, Krasl Art Center, St. Joseph, Michigan Rockford
- Midwestern Biennial, Rockford Museum of Art, Rockford, IL
- "30 Ceramic Sculptors," John Natsoulas Gallery, Davis, CA
- "Nature/Culture," Santa Fe Clay, Santa Fe, New Mexico Chicago

Sculptors Biennale, Flatfile Galleries, Chicago, IL

Biennale, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Fort Wayne, IN

"People of the Mud: A Look at Chicago Ceramics," Chicago Tourism Center, Chicago, Illinois

### Selected Bibliography

- 2021 Denver Art Review, Smoke Drawings by Dennis Lee Mitchell at William Havu Gallery, Denver, Colorado
- Washington Post, Biennial Survey Celebrates Mid-Atlantic Artists Working in Variety of Mediums, Sunday, 10/31/2021
- 2019 Washington Post, "Review of Smoke Drawings by Dennis Lee Mitchell at Gallery Neptune & Brown, Washington, D.C.
- 2018 Donald Kuspit, Dennis Lee Mitchell's Smoke Drawings
- 2016 "Cinder There Is: Surrealism and the Smoke Drawings of Dennis Lee Mitchell," H. Peter Steeves, Philosophy Department, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois
- Baltimore Sun, "Review of Smoke Drawings by Dennis Lee Mitchell at C. Grimaldis Gallery," Baltimore, Maryland
- Baltimore City Paper, "Review of Smoke Drawings by Dennis Lee Mitchell at C. Grimaldis Gallery", Baltimore, Maryland
- 2012 Donald Kuspit Essay, "Dennis Lee Mitchell's Smoke Drawings and Related Works"
- Victor M. Cassidy, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art Catalog Essay, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, Illinois
- Northwest Passage, Review of Exhibition, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, Illinois
- 2011 Paul Klein, "Dennis Lee Mitchell," Paul Klein Art Letter Victor M. Cassidy, "Dennis Lee Mitchell," Chicago Art Magazine
- 2009 "Adventures of the Fire," World Ceramic Biennale, Icheon-city, South Korea
- 2008 Margaret Hawkins, "Dennis Lee Mitchell Natural Fragments," Ceramic Art and Perception
- Alan Artner, Dennis Lee Mitchell, Review, Solo Exhibition at Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago Tribune, March 21, 2008

- 2006 John Natsoulis, "30 Ceramic Sculptors 2006," John Natsoulis Press
- 2005 Bridgette R. McCullough, Review, Solo Exhibition at Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Time-Out Chicago
- Elaine Levin, "I Have Always Been Driven with Desire for the Straightforward Truth of the Natural World," Ceramic Art and Perception Glen R. Brown, Review of Solo Exhibition at Dubuque Museum of Art, American Ceramics, 14/4
- 2003 Glen R. Brown, "Dennis Lee Mitchell's Microcosm of Transformation," Solo Exhibition Catalogue, Dubuque Museum of Art, Dubuque, Iowa
- Tarkassis, Kostas, "Dennis Lee Mitchell," Kerameiki Techni

### **Public Collections**

Thrivent Financial Collection, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Racine Art Museum, Racine, Wisconsin Illinois State Art Museum, Chicago, Illinois

Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, Illinois

Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Grand Valley State University Collection, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City, Utah

Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Sedalia, Missouri

Arizona State University Art Museum, Ceramics Research Center, Tempe, Arizona

Deloitte & Touche Collection, Chicago, Illinois Museum

Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

University of Evansville, Evansville, Indiana

Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois Illinois

Collection for the State of Illinois Center, Chicago, Illinois

### **Private Collections**

Anne Finkelman, Chicago, Illinois

Frank Paluch, Oak Park, Illinois Lindsay McDonald, Chicago, Illinois

Christopher & Beverly With, Washington D.C.

Svend Ollei, Ambassador, Denmark

Sarah Sivright, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Larry Bakin, Arlington, Virginia

Hyang-Lim Han, Director, Hanhyanglim Gallery, South Korea

Paul Klein, Chicago, Illinois

William Lieberman, Chicago, Illinois

Kostas Tarkassis, Greece Hector Mavridis, Greece

### **Grants and Awards**

2018/9 Art Bank Grant, D.C., Commission on the Arts, Washington, D.C.

2016/7 Pollock/Krasner Foundation Grant

2016 On site Lectures, U.S. Art in Embassy Program, Ankara, Turkey

Art Bank, D.C. Commission on the Arts 2015 Art Bank, D.C. Commission on the Arts

2014 Art Bank, D.C. Commission on the Arts

2004 Illinois Arts Council, Special Assistance Grant

1977 National Endowment for the Arts, Crafts Critic Fellowship Grant

1975/6 National Endowment for the Arts, Craftsmen's Fellowship Grant

### **Education**

1971 Master of Fine Arts in Ceramics, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

1969 Master of Arts in Ceramics, Fort Hays Kansas State University, Hays, Kansas

1968 Bachelor of Arts, Fort Hays Kansas State University, Hays, Kansas

**Current Position**

Professor of Art, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois (Emeritus)

