



## PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:** Eva Buttacavoli, Executive Director  
& Chief Curator  
(w) 937/224.3822  
(c) 937/694.9374  
ebuttacavoli@thecontemporarydayton.org

***The Contemporary Dayton presents  
Matter & Pattern  
Featuring Three Female Artists,  
&  
the Second in the Still SHE Creates Series,  
a Two-Year Series Designed to Commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment***

DAYTON (February 17, 2020) – The Contemporary Dayton is proud to present *Matter and Pattern*, February 27th-March 28, 2020, next of a series of exhibits that highlight women artists pushing boundaries in contemporary art. The three featured artists are Sonya Berg Menges of Austin, Texas; Michele BonDurant of Dayton; and Britny Wainwright of Columbus.

*Matter and Pattern* presents the broad range of materials explored by the artists and the prominent use of repetition and motif. Each in their own way, the three artists create colorful and rhythmic assemblages using such materials as found photographs, paint, ceramic, and vinyl to explore the possibilities of pattern and surface.

**Dayton artist Michele BonDurant** works from observation; drawing the content of her images from her immediate surroundings and working en plein air. In her 'layered paintings,' she assembles strips and shapes of painted paper into scenes on the verge of desolation. In one example, *Orange Fishing Huts Night*, three small orange structures constructed from paper project from the painting's surface, pushing outward from a wide horizon darkened by indigo.

A number of pieces are small in scale, worked in an immediate and intimate manner by the artists. These delicate assemblages sometimes grow into larger forms, like **Sonya Berg-Menges'** photographic collage *Baby Blanket: Cabin*. In this series, dozens of photographs are sliced and laid into quilted designs. They encompass the comfort and patterns of everyday life, yet warmth is betrayed by the glossy surface of the photos.

**Britny Wainwright** pushes form between two and three-dimensional, while using motifs such as bold flower shapes to assert visual and symbolically feminine power. In the piece *With Love*, ceramic floral shapes sewn to canvas cascade from the wall onto the floor. Other works include freestanding sculpture that directly reference domestic furniture or decoration. In all her work, surface and pattern are strong driving forces.

Visitors to the exhibition will see multi-angled approaches to drawing, painting and sculpture, and in a variety of scale. Work that both stretches through and circles inwardly explorations of environment, pattern, and surface.

### **About the Artists**

Michele BonDurant is a painter based in Dayton, Ohio. She received a BFA from Wright State University and has studied with Lois Dodd, Elizabeth O'Reilly, and Jean Koeller. She held residencies at Zygote Press in Cleveland, Vermont Studio Center, Vermont, and was invited to the Heliker La Hoten Foundation, Cranberry Island, Maine. BonDurant's works have been exhibited nationally including the Prince Street Gallery and First Street Gallery in NYC, The Maryland Federation of Art Circle Gallery, The Riffe Gallery, Columbus, Ohio, the Robert and Elaine Stein Galleries, Wright State University, and Dutoit Gallery, Dayton, Ohio.

Sonya Berg Menges received an MFA from the University of Texas at Austin, Texas, and BA in Studio from Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania. She regularly exhibits in group and solo shows around the country, including Women & Their Work Gallery and Big Medium's West Austin Studio Tour (WEST), in Austin, Texas.

Britny earned an MFA in ceramics from Ohio State University, and a BFA from Alfred University in New York. She was born and raised in upstate New York, and now teaches and maintains a studio practice in Columbus, Ohio. Her work was recently exhibited at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Arkansas, and is currently traveling the country with the exhibition, "The Beyond: Georgia O'Keefe and Contemporary Art." Britny has shown work at the New Britain Museum of American Art in New Britain, CT, The North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, NC, and The "X Space" Gallery in Columbus, OH among others. She held residencies at Main Street Arts in Clifton Springs, NY, and The Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, VA.

### **Artists' websites:**

Sonya Berg Menges: <https://sonyaberg.com/>

Michele BonDurant: <https://www.michelebondurant.net/>

Britny Wainwright: <https://britnywainwright.com/>

### **About the Curator**

Tess Cortés is a visual artist, curator, and educator living in Dayton, Ohio. Her work has been screened nationally and abroad including at the Riffe Gallery in Ohio, Bedford Gallery in California, and Festival Fotogenia in México. She received an MFA from the University of Cincinnati and a BFA from Wright State University. Tess is currently an instructor of motion design at The Modern College of Design in Dayton, Ohio.

The exhibition's opening reception is Thursday, February 27, 6:00-8:00 p.m. A Gallery Talk with the curator and artists is Friday, March 6, 6:00-6:30, with a reception following until 8:00 p.m. Both events are free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Thursday, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Closed Sunday and Monday.

### **About the Series**

The *Still SHE Creates* Series is organized by The Co's Executive Director and Chief Curator Eva Buttacavoli and is designed to spotlight the work of female artists living and working with contemporary art themes outside the country's art centers; specifically the Midwest, amidst economic decline and displacement—but also with the advantages of an affordable quality of life, with little distraction, in which to create.

The Series will include 5 exhibitions and ancillary programs in 2020 and 2021 that will culminate in a published anthology of the 5 shows and include guest essays and full-color images of the works and will launch The Co's commitment to hosting an original exhibition by a female artist each year.

**Presenting Sponsor: The SHE Society**

**Exhibition Sponsor: Brian Albrecht & Amelia Hounshell**

**Education & Public Program Sponsor: Dr. Robert L. Brandt, Jr.**

### **About The Contemporary Dayton**

The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) helps sustain the arts community by providing a place to show, market, and sell work and also helps satisfy the needs and wants of art-lovers who have a place to see artists' work and, often, meet the artists. At its core, The Contemporary Dayton advances art for the community and a community for artists.

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

Follow The Contemporary Dayton on social media:



#thecodayton #thecomatter&pattern #thecoshesociety #thecostillshecreates

**Image info:**



Michele BonDurant, "Three Orange Fishing Huts Night," 2019, gouache, flashe, glitter, paper, Yupo, 22" x 30"



Britny Wainwright, "With Love," 2017, earthenware, glaze, canvas, thread, 70" x 28" x 36"



Sonya Berg Menges, "Baby Blanket: Cabin," 2016,  
collected and found photographs, archival tape, 41" x 31"