

Collection of Ted and Maryanne Simmons strengthens the Saint Louis Art Museum's postwar holdings with 833 works

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ST. LOUIS, March 8, 2021—The Saint Louis Art Museum has acquired a collection of 833 works of contemporary art assembled by Ted L. and Maryanne Ellison Simmons. The collection represents a transformative addition to the museum's collection, particularly in the area of postwar works on paper.

Comprised predominately of prints—but also including drawings, collages, photographs, and editioned sculptures—the collection significantly expands existing holdings of American art in terms of artists represented and subject matter addressed. The Simmons collection focuses on art made between 1961 and 2020 by a diverse group of more than 40 artists, mainly active in the United States.

(To download images of art from the Simmons collection, click on the images at the bottom of this press release.)

Ted Simmons was named to Major League Baseball's Hall of Fame last year and is scheduled to be inducted at a ceremony this summer in Cooperstown, NY. The switch-hitting catcher played for most of his career for the St. Louis Cardinals and, later, the Milwaukee Brewers and the Atlanta Braves. Maryanne Ellison Simmons is an artist, as well as a master printer and publisher. In 1996, she established [Wildwood Press](#), which publishes ambitious fine-art print projects with a wide variety of artists. Both Michigan natives, the couple has lived in the St. Louis area since the late 1960s.

Ted Simmons began collecting art during his playing career, focusing at the time on early American furniture. The collection acquired by the museum was formed in the last two decades. The acquisition is a partial gift and partial purchase: the



Maryanne Ellison Simmons and Ted Simmons



Simmonses donated 50 percent of the value of the entire collection and the museum purchased the remaining stake.

Individual highlights of the collection include Bruce Conner's "Bombhead," Helen Frankenthaler's "Savage Breeze," Jasper Johns' "Dutch Wives," Kiki Smith's "Pool of Tears II (after Lewis Carroll)," Kara Walker's "Keys to the Coop" and H.C. Westermann's "Connecticut Ballroom."

The collection is distinguished by the high quality of the works, an indication of the keen eyes and knowledge of the collectors; the objects are in excellent condition overall, many of them having gone straight to the collectors from the artists or publishers.

"Ted and Maryanne Simmons are passionate and thoughtful collectors, and their generosity has transformed the museum's holdings of contemporary American prints," said [Brent R. Benjamin](#), the Barbara B. Taylor Director of the Saint Louis Art Museum. "The Saint Louis Art Museum's collection is a testament to the generations of local collectors who—for more than 140 years—have enriched the museum experiences of countless St. Louisans. I am deeply grateful to Ted and Maryanne for continuing this tradition."

The Simmonses were significant lenders to the museum's 2018 exhibition "Graphic Revolution: American Prints 1960 to Now." [Elizabeth Wyckoff](#), the co-curator of that exhibition, said there was good reason for the museum to borrow several works of art for the show.

"Their collection contains not only very little duplication with the museum's collection, but also with other collections in the community," said Wyckoff, the museum's curator of prints, drawings and photographs. "The Simmons loans allowed 'Graphic Revolution' to tell a much broader, closer-to-complete story of printmaking in the United States over the past six decades. The addition of the Simmonses' works—many of which are socially engaged and politically charged—will increase the depth and breadth of the museum's encyclopedic holdings."

Among the artists whose work is represented in depth is the St. Louis-based Tom Huck. The collection includes virtually all of his print projects, as well as wood blocks, working drawings and sketchbooks. The Saint Louis Art Museum is an ideal location for this archive of Huck's work to date, as the artist's fascination with prints was fueled by childhood visits to the museum's Print Study Room.

A number of the artists were not previously represented in the museum's collection at all, most notably Enrique Chagoya, Robert Gober, Peter Hujar, Liliana Porter, Paul Thek, Westermann and David Wojnarowicz. The Simmons collection

deepens existing holdings by Conner, Damon Davis, Frankenthaler, Huck, Donald Judd, Bruce Nauman, Ed Ruscha, Roger Shimomura, Jaume Quick-to-See Smith, Smith, Walker and others.

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Press images for Simmons collection

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