

The background is a complex, abstract painting. In the upper left, there is a profile of a head rendered in dark, textured brushstrokes. To the right, a box-like structure is visible, containing a hand or a similar form. Below these, there are various abstract shapes and colors, including a prominent red structure on the left and a dark, textured face in the lower right. The overall style is expressive and layered, with a mix of dark and light tones.

**Luxemburg
&
Wallenberg**

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Robert and Sydney Printworks Gallery

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Artwork by Hugh Merrill

Designed and Edited by Kathryn Day

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Hugh Merrill Bio 2022

Hugh Merrill is an artist, educator, writer and community activist. In 1985 he had a one-person exhibition at the Nelson Atkins Museum, and his work is collected in over 50 museums including the New York Museum of Modern Art, Kansas City Kemper Museum, Cranbrook Art Museum, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art and the Poland National Museum of Poznan. He is a long-time professor at the Kansas City Art Institute. In 1996, he collaborated with French artist Christian Boltanski on the city-wide community arts project Our City/Ourselves: Portrait of Community at the Kemper Museum. Hugh was the president of the Southern Graphics Council International from 1992 to 1994. He developed Chameleon Arts and Youth Development as a resource for disenfranchised youth communities which provided over 1 million dollars for community arts and youth development programming during its 25 years. Merrill was selected as one of 42 international artists for Richard Noyce's book Printmaking at the Edge published in 2006. Hugh has been awarded multiple grants including 2 NEA grants, Melon Foundation, Yaddo Fellowship, and the 2007 Distinguished Education Award from the Southern Graphics Council International. The Nelson Atkins Museum invited Hugh to curate Print Lovers at 30: Celebrating Three Decades of Giving in 2008. In September of 2010, his retrospective Divergent Consistencies was exhibited by the Leedy Voulkos Art Center.

Hugh Merrill is the author of:

Divergent Consistencies: 40 years of studio and community artwork
Shared Visions: Thoughts and Experiences in Social Arts Practice
Preaching to the Choir: thoughts on contemporary printmaking
Learning Journal: Teaching in Foundation
Nomadic, published by 39 West Press in 2016
Dog, published by Stubborn Mule press in 2018
Whiteout: Journey of Privilege, published by Spartan press in 2019
Making and Collaboration, published by Chameleon Press

Luxemburg & Wallenberg



Rosa Luxemburg and Raoul Wallenberg Print Series

In the 1990's I was exhibiting at the Print Works Gallery in Chicago. I had become friends with the actor and playwright Donna Blue Lockman. Donna wrote and produced a one-woman play on the life of Rosa Luxemburg. Together we discussed my making a set of prints to be exhibited for the opening of Rosa at Blue Rider Theater. I produced a series of sequential etchings and collages for the play's opening. They were then exhibited at the Print Works gallery. Printworks was a wonderful gallery and force in the art world of Chicago, directed by Bob Hiebert and Sydney Block. They established deep friendships with their artists, and these relationships were always the driving force behind the gallery. Audrey Niffenegger, Ed Paschke, Karl Wirsum, and many other notable artists made up the family at Printworks.

I felt deeply honored to have exhibited there for over ten years. The Rosa work was made much the same way that the Lucky Dragon sequential series of prints was produced for my exhibition at the Nelson Atkins Museum in 1986. I used sequential etchings, changing the zinc etching plate to create a related series of images and there were only three images of each state. It felt profoundly correct to read the play, see it in rehearsals, learn about Rosa Luxemburg's life, then start a "dialogue with the plate and the etching process to produce the images. Rather than controlling the content of the images the prints seemed to come from inside the plate in an almost mystical creative experience.

After the Rosa Exhibition I wanted to continue this process and became aware of the story of the Swedish Architect who tried to save Hungarian Jews from deportation to the death camps at the closing of WWII. I applied the same process to the Raoul Wallenberg suite of etchings. These prints were also printed in sets of three images from each state of the etching plate then the plate was changed and again the images seemed to appear mystically from the depths of the metal printing surface.

Rosa Luxemburg

Rosa Luxemburg: Born and raised in an assimilated Jewish family in Poland, she became a German citizen in 1897. She was a revolutionary and socialist in post-world war I Germany.

As a leading member of the Proletariat party, she and Karl Liebknecht were the co-founders of the Spartacus League. The Spartacus League was an anti-war pro-socialist's society that led a revolution against the German Government attempting to stop German's participation in WWI.

After an uprising in 1919 Rosa Luxemburg and her partner Karl Liebknecht were captured and summarily executed by the Freikorps, a group of extreme rightist (Nazi's) composed of WWI veterans.

Raoul Gustaf Wallenberg

Raoul Gustaf Wallenberg (4 August 1912 – disappeared 17 January 1945)[note 1] [1] was a Swedish architect, businessman, diplomat, and humanitarian. He saved thousands of Jews in German-occupied Hungary during the Holocaust from German Nazis and Hungarian fascists during the later stages of World War II. While serving as Sweden's special envoy in Budapest between July and December 1944, Wallenberg issued protective passports and sheltered Jews in buildings designated as Swedish territory.[2]

On 17 January 1945, during the Siege of Budapest by the Red Army, Wallenberg was detained by SMERSH on suspicion of espionage and subsequently disappeared.[3] He was later reported to have died on 17 July 1947 while imprisoned in the Lubyanka, the prison at the headquarters of the KGB secret police in Moscow. The motives behind Wallenberg's arrest and imprisonment by the Soviet government, along with questions surrounding the circumstances of his death and his ties to US intelligence, remain mysterious and are the subject of continued speculation.[4]

As a result of his successful efforts to rescue Hungarian Jews, Wallenberg has been the subject of numerous humanitarian honor's in the decades following his presumed death. In 1981, US Congressman Tom Lantos, one of those saved by Wallenberg, sponsored a bill making Wallenberg an honorary citizen of the United States, the second person ever to receive this honor. Wallenberg is also an honorary citizen of Canada, Hungary, Australia, United Kingdom and Israel. [5] Israel has designated Wallenberg one of the Righteous Among the Nations. Numerous monuments have been dedicated to him, and streets have been named after him throughout the world. The Raoul Wallenberg Committee of the United States was created in 1981 to "perpetuate the humanitarian ideals and the nonviolent courage of Raoul Wallenberg." [6] It gives the Raoul Wallenberg Award annually to recognize persons who carry out those goals. He was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal by the United States Congress "in recognition of his achievements and heroic actions during the Holocaust." [7]

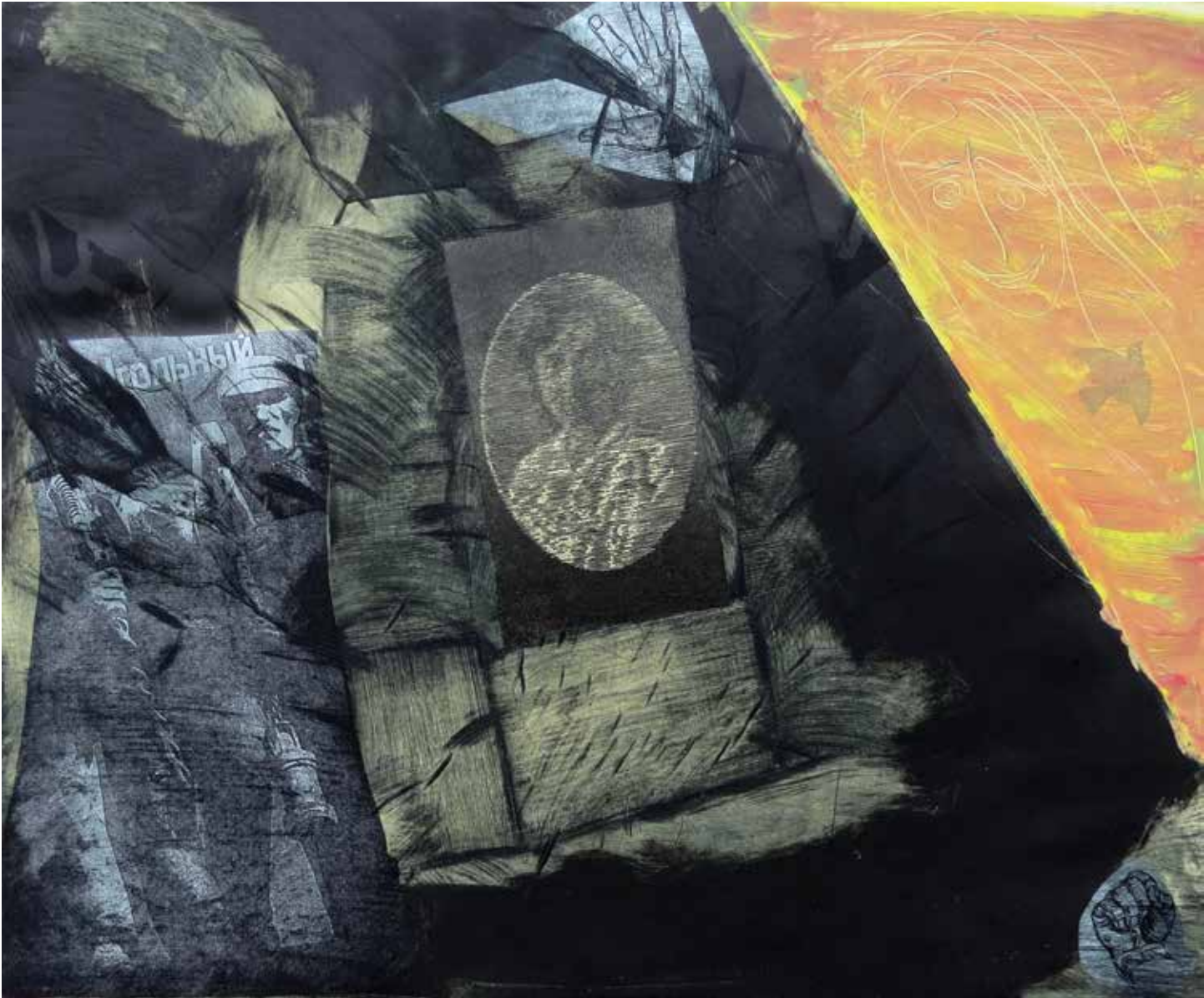
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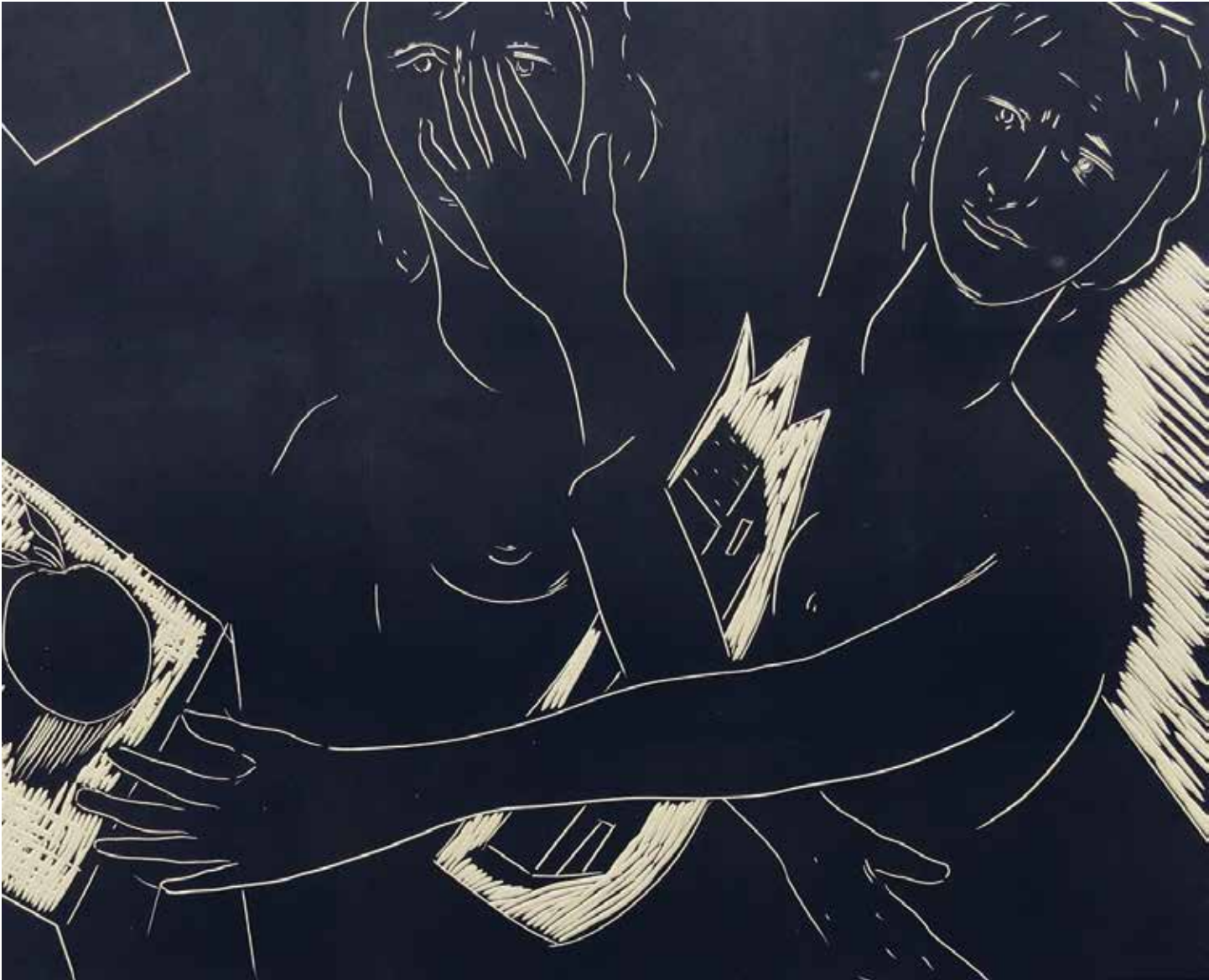
Rosa Luxemburg







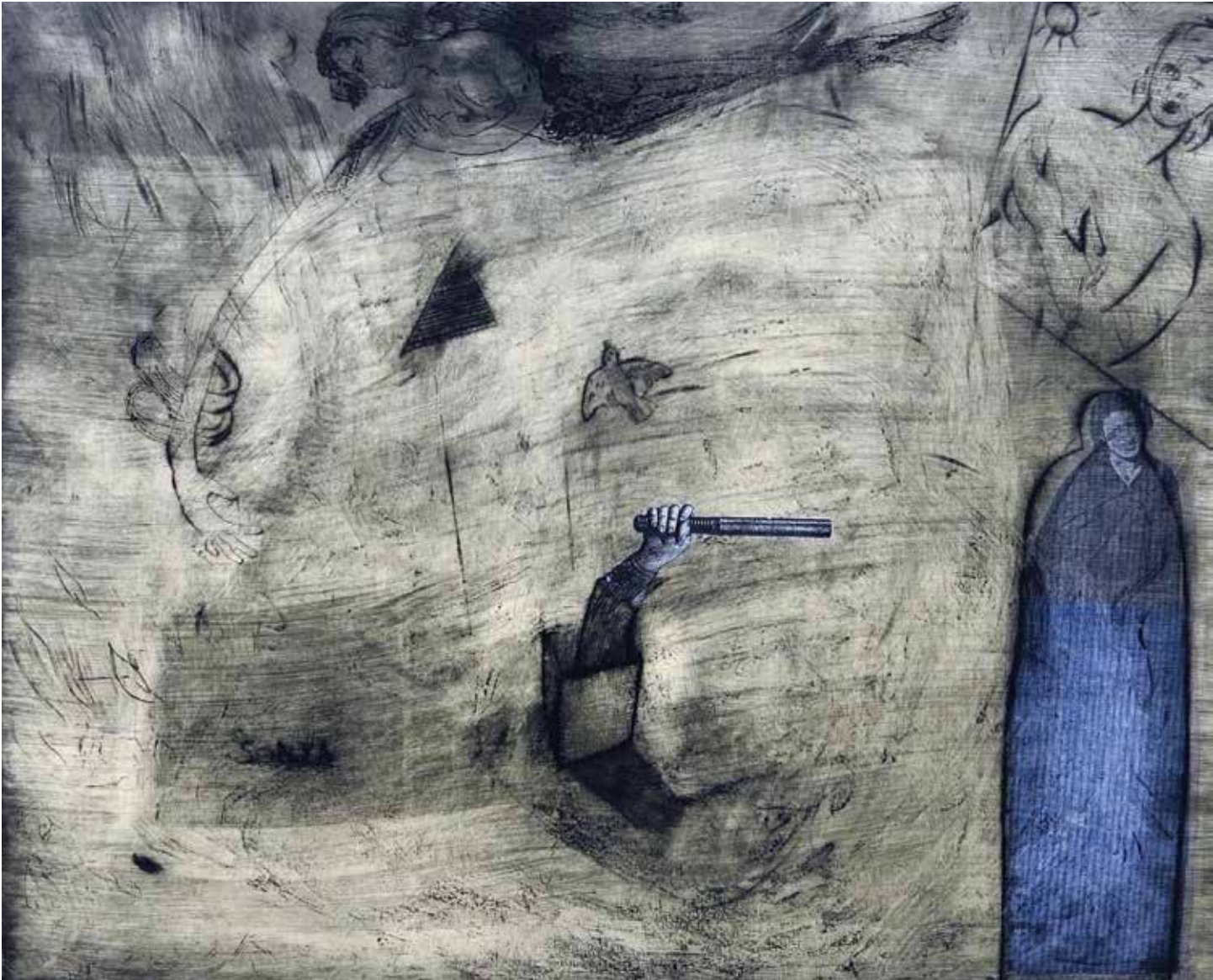


















Raoul Gustaf Wallenberg

