



GEMINI G.E.L. <sup>AI</sup> JONI MOISANT WEYL

*ann hamilton at gemini g.e.l.: a survey of works 2000 - 2012*

In the twelve years since discovering the collaborative possibilities to be found in the Los Angeles-based artists' workshop Gemini G.E.L., Ann Hamilton has created an impressively diverse body of prints and objects, and remains perhaps just as inquisitive about process as the day she arrived. On view at **Gemini G.E.L. at Joni Moisant Weyl** from December 14, 2012 through January 26, 2013 is a survey of Hamilton's collaborations with Gemini to date.

Ann Hamilton first visited Gemini in 2000 to contribute to a portfolio celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. In approaching the task of translating her practice of sophisticated large-scale sensory installations to printmaking, she drew upon her training in textiles as well as her self-taught investigations of film, photography, video and audio. Never one to be predictable, the first image Hamilton resolved was an embossing titled *written*, containing no ink. While in the workshop, drawing on paper as well as stone, Hamilton observed the opportunities that working with the Master Printers offered her, and was more-than intrigued. With numerous ideas percolating, Hamilton resolved one additional embossing, and hoped to find use for that same plate, or others that were started, in future explorations.

Those early plates sat for a full decade until the components of *ciliary* came together in 2010. Expanding beyond the materials available in the Gemini workshop, Hamilton went fabric hunting with Gemini co-owner Sidney B. Felsen, and with lithography samples from those early plates in hand, she found the perfect spectrum of colors – from vibrant hot pink and sunburst yellow to richly subtle brown, blue and silver – to compliment her work on paper. Each *ciliary* spans 58" in diameter and is designed to mount directly to the wall with bamboo and hardwood dowel constructions that conjoin eight sections of accordion-folded lithography with collaged fabric. The rippling, swirling effect is a testament to Hamilton's mastery of alternative means of expression through the editioning process. The "making" was itself an act of "finding," and Gemini allowed Hamilton to realize her vision, as she described it, of "a process that would link my first hand – which is a cloth hand – with the many possibilities of paper and ink and form."



During the ten years between her first Gemini project and *ciliary*, Hamilton delved into several material examinations of communication. The 2003 *face to face....* series began as an extension not of the hand but of the mouth, as Hamilton transformed the orifice of language into the orifice of sight by inserting a small cartridge of film into her mouth. Using her lips as an aperture, Hamilton created a pinhole camera to capture a portrait of whoever was standing before her. The act of opening her mouth to execute the photograph calls to mind speaking, while the shape formed in each photo-gravure suggests an eye, referencing the visual nature of photography. The following year, Hamilton crafted models of spoons and experimented with casting them in silver, bronze and aluminum. Her objects were ultimately cast in steel and allowed to rust in ferric chloride, leaving seven orange forms seemingly eroded to the point of antiquity. Hamilton modeled the spoon handles to exaggerate the slender grip, intending each to fit the length of her arm, and properly accompany "a spoon for more than peas – a spoon to scoop up language." Each spoon was also given a hole in the bottom of its bowl resembling the shape of the mouth. As the title *reach* suggests, whatever content the object is intended to deliver back to the mouth will remain just beyond the grasp and never be consumed.



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By the time of her return to Gemini in 2006, Hamilton had extensively studied the shapes of antique ear trumpets, and after considerable experimentation with Gemini, cast her own interpretation of the hearing device in plastic resin. Devoid of any functional use, Hamilton needed a place to properly house her objects and designed a wooden box, formally reminiscent of a school-desk or a music stand. A drawer in the base of the box holds a unique grouping of six monoprints, marking Hamilton's first return to laying down imagery on paper since her initial visit to Gemini. Aptly named *score*, this work reflects Hamilton's ideas on receiving and producing sound, as well as the abounding

possibilities of blankness. Continuing to "draw" by stressing silk organza with a wire brush, Hamilton applied Gemini's photo-sensitized litho plates to create texture on the two-dimensional surface. The next six prints to be resolved built up the imagery of *legend*, a collage uniquely pieced together by Hamilton's mounting of square prints onto cotton-fabric and presented on a wall like a hand-made quilt.

Hamilton's use of fabric in the Gemini workshop was just gaining momentum in 2007 and her next endeavor leapt off the workshop wall into full three-dimensional form. *shell* is Hamilton's oversized coat, fabricated from industrial-grade white felt, referencing a hard conical object found on the beach. Here her relations of cloth, sound, touch and human motion give way to dense materiality.



Hamilton's next body of six works, titled *visite*, and her most recent series of unique works made from inkjet chine-collé with collaged fabric represent a process that seems to have been advancing with each collaboration at Gemini. With each *visite*, photographic images were screenprinted onto tall, almost scroll-like sheets of Japanese handmade paper, and additional elements – a lithographically printed chine colléd "o" and colored fabric – were collaged onto the surface. The source for the photographs are cartes de visite, 19th century albumen prints the size of a visiting (or calling) card, which first captured Hamilton's attention during her collaborative project with Mass MoCA and the Historic New England archive. Expanding on her use of the miniature camera first seen in *face to face...*, *visites* combine a haunting black and white portrait with vibrant textiles. Then pulling back from her intimate examination of the face, Hamilton's inkjet chine-collé imagery draws from anatomy, both human and animal, and distant views of a crowd and a ship on the horizon. Each photograph selected – from her own experiences or collected from others - is a moment Hamilton has fixed in time through her unique process of printmaking and in her selection of memories, she creates both a reality and allusion.

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Ann Hamilton was born in Lima, Ohio in 1956. Hamilton received a BFA in textile design from the University of Kansas in 1979 and an MFA in sculpture from Yale University School of Art in 1985. She has received a MacArthur Fellowship, Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, NEA Visual Arts Fellowship, United States Artists Fellowship, the Heinz Award, and was chosen to represent the United States at the 1991 Sao Paulo Bienal and the 1999 Venice Biennale. In 1992, she established her home and practice in Columbus, Ohio. Presently, she is a Distinguished University Professor of Art at The Ohio State University.