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MILDRED THOMPSON: AGAINST THE GRAIN
Shining Light on Thompson's Legacy at NOMA

NEW ORLEANS, LA – The New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) presents *Mildred Thompson: Against the Grain*, on view starting October 19, 2018, marking the first solo museum presentation of the experimental wood works of the American artist Mildred Thompson (1936-2003) in more than thirty years. The exhibition features three rare early *Wood Pictures* recently acquired by NOMA for its permanent collection alongside a selection of *Wood Pictures* and related prints from the Mildred Thompson Estate and Galerie Lelong & Co, New York that reflect Thompson's deep commitment to the language of abstraction.

“Made during her self-imposed exile in Europe, Thompson's *Wood Pictures* are only recently being rediscovered and presented in the United States,” said Susan Taylor, NOMA's Montine McDaniel Freeman Director. “NOMA is delighted to feature works by Thompson acquired in 2016, reflecting the museum's commitment to highlighting on under-recognized artistic voices from the American South.”

An accomplished painter, sculptor, writer and musician, Thompson began creating her wood assemblages, which she called *Wood Pictures*, while living in Germany in the early 1960s. Thompson's abstract work in wood went against the grain of the more representational and overtly political art of her time to offer more subtle reflections on history, memory and place. These sculptural assemblages—which represent a unique contribution to the art of this period—combine found and manipulated wood segments into sophisticated, expressive compositions that blend the traditional categories of painting, sculpture and collage. Often created from wood sourced in the forests of rural Germany, Thompson explored the material's natural variations to create sensitive juxtapositions of texture, color and form.

The exhibition is organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art through the generous support of Galerie Lelong & Co, New York and is co-curated by Katie Pfohl, NOMA's Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, and Melissa Messina, Curator of the Mildred Thompson Estate.

Mildred Thompson: Against the Grain is accompanied by an illustrated brochure with a new essay on Thompson's work by the exhibition co-curators Pfohl and Messina.

Additional Information

[Press-approved images are available here.](#)

Facebook and Instagram: @noma1910

Hashtag: #nomaagainstthegrain

Website: www.noma.org

NOMA

About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 40,000 art objects encompassing 5,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 AM to 6 PM; Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM every Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20th century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 9 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission every day through the end of the year, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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