

Miami Herald



Courtesy of Women Artist Archives Miami

Kabuya Pamela Bowers-Saffo works in her studio. Museum of Art and Design Executive Director Amy Galpin says: 'I think Kabuya is really worthy of broader recognition in our community. Her mixed-media works certainly deserve more documentation.'

For this artist from Richmond Heights, first solo exhibit in Miami is a homecoming

BY RAISA HABERSHAM
rahbersham@miamiherald.com

Kabuya Pamela Bowers-Saffo still remembers the name of her first-grade art teacher.

Hank Bell. She will never forget his name because that teacher at the Frank C.

become an artist.

"I can see him so clearly, even right now," she told the Miami Herald. "The experience he shared with us as students about art and what art is — for me, I never forgot it. Just the idea of something so magical, and with the visual expression, that everyone could connect to and be excited about. It was just something right away I wanted to be



Courtesy of Kabuya Pamela Bowers-Saffo. Image: Inga Finch

A piece by Kabuya Pamela Bowers-Saffo, who was inspired by her art teacher in first grade.

after being mesmerized by Mr. Bell's art class, the Miami native will present her first solo art show during Art Week at Miami Dade College's Padrón Campus

In pardoning his son, Biden echoes some of Trump's complaints

BY PETER BAKER
NYT News Service

President Joe Biden and President-elect Donald Trump now agree on one thing: The Biden Justice Department has been politicized.

In pardoning his son Hunter Biden on Sunday night, the incumbent president sounded a lot like his successor by complaining about selective prosecution and political pressure, questioning the fairness of a system that Joe Biden had until now long defended.

"No reasonable person who looks at the facts of Hunter's cases can reach any other conclusion than Hunter was singled out only because he is my son — and that is wrong," Biden said in a statement announcing the pardon. "Here's the truth," he added. "I believe in the justice system, but as I have wrestled with this, I also believe raw politics has infected this process and it led to a miscarriage of justice."

Biden's decision to use the extraordinary power of executive clemency to wipe out his son's convictions on gun and tax charges came despite repeated statements by him and his aides that he would not do so. Just this past summer, after his son was convicted at trial, the president rejected the idea of a pardon and said, "I will accept the outcome of this case and will continue to respect the judicial process." The statement he issued Sunday night made clear he did not accept the outcome or respect the process.

The pardon and Biden's stated rationale for granting it will inevitably muddy the political waters as Trump prepares to take office with plans to use the Justice Department and FBI to pursue "retribution" against his political adversaries. Trump has long argued that the justice system has been "weaponized" against him and that he is the victim of selective prosecution, much the way Biden has

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ARTIST

Women Artists Archive Miami and the Miami Dade College's Museum of Art and Design.

Bowens-Saffo has a lengthy résumé: She studied at Howard University and Tyler School of Art at Temple University. She also studied at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, while working as a master printer with Robert Blackburn at the Printmaking Workshop and has also done a residency at Salem2Salem in Germany.

Bowens-Saffo has also taught at universities, including Florida Memorial University, Florida State University and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. She also taught at the New World School of Arts.

She received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in the late 1980s and the New York Foundation for the Arts in the 1990s. Locally, she has been involved with the Miami Black Arts Workshop and was an educator at the Barnyard Community Center in Coconut Grove.

The exhibit, titled "Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights," will showcase Bowens-Saffo's work from the late 1970s and her art legacy in the South Florida community. The work focuses on Bowens-Saffo's artistic contributions to Richmond Heights, where she grew up, and Coconut Grove, where she spent her time as an educator at the Barnyard Community Center in West Coconut Grove.

Museum of Art and Design Executive Director Amy Galpin said she first learned of Bowens-Saffo's work through a project researching the Miami Black Arts Workshop, where Bowens-Saffo was a member.

"I was really interested in how, for her, she creates art in service of the community," Galpin said, noting her Barnyard work includes creating a mural and teaching. "I think Kabuya is really worthy of



A work by Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo. An exhibit titled 'Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights' will showcase her work from the late 1970s.

INGA FINCH Photos courtesy of Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo



Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo's 'Heart & Soul'

'Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights'

● **When:** Now through March 15

● **Where:** Miami Dade College's Padrón Campus Art Gallery, Building 3, Room 3113, 627 SW 27th Ave., Miami

● **Cost:** Free

broader recognition in our community," she said. "Her mixed-media works certainly deserve more documentation and consideration."

LEAVING HOME

Bowens-Saffo's foray through the art world has taken her to many places. Her travels are represented in "The Migration," which depicts an image of a woman with a home in the background. The piece is one of WAAM founder Anita Sharma's favorites from the exhibit and she said it is reminiscent of Bowens-Saffo's journey from South Florida to Howard. Sharma said as an immigrant, the piece resonated with her.

"Migration is about her leaving home. It's about the security of a home," Sharma said of the artwork. "We talked about that work a lot, and she's very excited to show it because she really felt like

because of her upbringing and her childhood in Miami, she was ready to kind of leave home in search of other homes."

Another featured work is a poster that Bowens-Saffo designed for the 1986 Goombay Festival, which celebrates Bahamian heritage in Coconut Grove. Bowens-Saffo described being the "select artist" for the festival as a "wonderful experience."

"It was just all over the city," she said, adding she did the T-shirt design as well. The exhibit will also include her most recent work, a series called "Heart and Soul", which is an ode to Bowens-Saffo's late mom.

Bowens-Saffo's medium is printmaking using a technique called intaglio, a process that involves cutting a design into a surface often using metal, copper or zinc.

"When you're drawing and scribing into that ma-

terial, you usually need a laboratory of acid mass and water, or a ferric chloride to bite the image into that metal," she said. "And then, once the image is bitten into the metal surface, the metal surface is filled with ink, and then that ink surface is transferred to a paper, or to a fabric, where you can see the actual image transferred."

A WELL-MADE COMMUNITY

Bowens-Saffo's story starts in Richmond Heights.

"It was a community that was a walking community of proud Black folks," she said of the neighborhood, which is near Southwest 152nd Street and 107th Avenue and which she recalled was once being named one of the best communities for Black people by Life Magazine.

"You could walk to church, you could walk to

school. You could walk to the park. We had a community park that had a pool. We had physicians, we had ice-cream parlors, restaurants, bookstores. We had our own post office. It was really amazing."

Bowens-Saffo described the neighborhood she grew up in as a thriving Black community. Founded in the early 1950s by white World War II pilot Frank C. Martin, the community was established for the purpose of providing affordable housing to Black veterans during a time of racial segregation.

"It was just a well-made community of proud Black folks that worked hard," she said. "You had families realizing the American dream."

Bowens-Saffo feels like some of her work offers a look back into a Miami that exists only in her memories. "In these works, you're seeing things histor-

ically that are not even in the community anymore."

Ask her about the Goombay posters and she steers the conversation from her art to a brief history lesson about Coconut Grove, which was built by Black Bahamians, and the changes that it has been through. "A lot of those places don't even exist anymore," she said before rattling off a time capsule of what was once there, including Gil's Spot and The Tikki Club.

Bowens-Saffo lives in Tallahassee, but her family still owns their home in Richmond Heights. For her, the exhibit is a homecoming of sorts.

"You see what home is like, how home has changed, how people have changed — and that's good and sometimes not so good — but it's always self-evaluation."

Raisa Habersham: @newsworthy17

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VISUAL ARTS

For this artist from Richmond Heights, first solo exhibit in Miami is a homecoming

BY RAISA HABERSHAM

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Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo still remembers the name of her first grade art teacher.

Hank Bell.

In fact, she will never forget his name because that teacher at Frank C. Martin school in the Richmond Heights neighborhood in southwest Miami-Dade County is the reason she decided to become an artist.

"I can see him so clearly, even right now," she told the Miami Herald. "The experience he shared with us as students about art and what art is – for me, I never forgot it. Just the idea of something so magical, and with the visual expression, that everyone could connect to and be excited about. It was just something right away I wanted to be a part of. I never forgot that experience."

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A Miami-Dade man, 83, believes his father was among the last Americans born into slavery



'I'm on a cloud': Second grade teacher wins Miami-Dade's Teacher of the Year

Now, in her late 60s and decades after being mesmerized by Mr. Bell's art class, the Miami native will present her first solo show during Art Week at Miami-Dade College's Padrón Campus Art Gallery in conjunction with the Women Artists Archive of Miami and the Miami Dade College's Museum of Art and Design.

Bowens-Saffo has a lengthy resume: She studied at Howard University and Tyler School of Art at Temple University. She also studied at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, while working as a master printer with Robert Blackburn at the Printmaking Workshop and has also done a residency at Salem2Salem in Germany.

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Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo, Untitled. Bowens-Saffo is having her first solo exhibit in Miami during Art Basel. Courtesy of Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo. Image credit: Inga Finch

She received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in the late '80s and the New York Foundation for the Arts in the 1990s. Locally, she's been involved with the Miami Black Arts Workshop and was an educator at the Barnyard Community Center in Coconut Grove.

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Museum of Art and Design Executive Director Amy Galpin said she first learned of Bowens-Saffo's work through a project researching the Miami Black Arts Workshop, where Bowens-Saffo was a member.

"I was really interested in how, for her, she creates art in service of the community," Galpin said, noting her work at the Barnyard which includes creating a mural and teaching. "I think Kabuya is really worthy of broader recognition in our community," she said. "Her mixed media works are certainly deserve more documentation and consideration."

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Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo, TBD. Bowens-Saffo will have her first solo art exhibit in Miami during Art Week. *Courtesy of Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo. Image credit: Inga Finch.*

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IF YOU GO:

WHAT: Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo: From the Heights

WHEN: Dec. 2 - March 15

WHERE: Miami Dade College’s Padrón Campus Art Gallery, Building 3, Room 3113, 627 SW 27th Ave., Miami

PRICE: Free

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RAISA HABERSHAM
MIAMI HERALD



Raisa Habersham is the race and culture reporter for the Miami Herald. She previously covered Hollywood and Fort Lauderdale for the Herald with a focus on housing and affordability. Habersham is a graduate of the University of Georgia. She joined the Herald in 2022.

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Beatriz · 1 HR AGO

Congratulations, Ms. Kabuya Pamela Bowens-Saffo! Well done.

REPLY

<https://www.miamiherald.com/entertainment/visual-arts/article296144419.html>

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