



1

“I’d really rather be here than anywhere else.”

Alice Shaddleson, 1978

As a resident, mother, homemaker, and placemaker, Shaddleson was creatively engaged in her life in Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1892 George Blossom House, where she lived for over five decades. She interacted with Wright’s early Prairie School idiom, responding to its design through specific furnishings, engaging its architectural features and elements in her work. She meticulously conserved and championed this seminal structure. She occupied it and it occupied her.

“You see the form of the architecture, then you come upon the artwork and the furnishings. I try to tie everything into the existing structure.”

Alice Shaddleson, 1978

Shaddleson exhibited widely, especially in Chicago and the vicinity. Her work is in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Illinois State Museum, and in many private collections.

It’s fitting that her first solo exhibition in many years is at Hyde Park Art Center—a beating cultural heart in Shaddleson’s world.

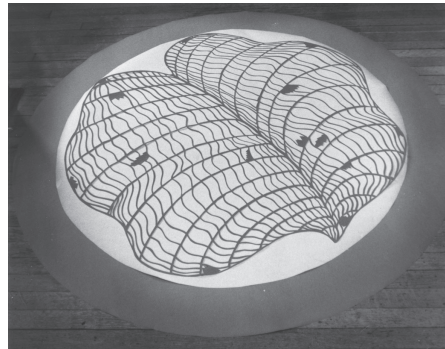
Alice Shaddleson (1928–2017) was a remarkably gifted and highly original artist who lived and worked in Chicago. She was robustly engaged in the art culture of the city, where she concentrated life and work in Hyde Park. Shaddleson was a devoted educator who taught art classes at Hyde Park Art Center for over 50 years, informing, encouraging, and delighting countless young artists. She received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 1954 (the year she married artist Don Baum; the couple separated in 1970) and her MFA from SAIC in 1972. She was a founding member of Artemisia Gallery in 1973 and exhibited there until 2002.

Shaddleson worked in many media, focusing on particular modes and materials, meticulously and intensively, resulting in highly resolved bodies of work. She was fearless in her experimentation with media, creating daring paper sculptures, elaborate floor installations, paintings, prints, drawings, reliefs, boxed objects, and all manner of collages. She had a disciplined practice of creating and mailing many hundreds of collage/gifts for her family and close friends. She wrote poetry, and was deeply inspired by nature—particularly plant life—and her garden was a haven.

“metaphors of the transitory”

Until 2021 we had only vaguely heard of Alice Shaddleson. A brief viewing of stacks of her works in her family’s collection drew us into the endless magic she spun with uncountable pieces of paper and many other media. As we explored her range of strikingly original techniques and frequently bewildering modes of construction, we were increasingly baffled that—like many once well-known artists—she had slipped from public view. Over the past two years, we contemplated the formidable task of distilling part of her immense oeuvre into this exhibition and catalog.

The exhibition is not a retrospective or even a survey. Rather, it is a selection of works from distinct periods of Shaddleson’s work. Individual works interrelate thematically across the gallery and through the catalog. These include (in the order of her working phases): a daring, early papier maché bas-relief collage sculpture; documentation and remnants from Shaddleson’s elaborate, immersive paper and vellum floor installations (*Moon Shadows* installation view) and related large scale colored pencil drawings (Title unknown (*Smoke* series); shadow boxes with haunting visages (Title unknown (Box with skull)); a group of meticulously constructed cut paper collage compositions (detail, *The Broken Harpy*, front cover); and a selection of collaged correspondences.



2

These expressionistic three dimensional forms move through metaphors of the transitory by the automatic and immediate use of medium and imagery.

Alice Shaddleson, 1974

Working closely with Shaddleson’s son Charles Baum and grandson Cain Baum, the project naturally retains strong connections to family. We have appreciated their support and unceasing enthusiasm at every stage, introducing ideas into our work, the exhibition, and the catalog—which itself was conceived and constructed as a collage-of-sorts, layering the perspectives of family, artists, and others involved in the project with archival materials reflective of Shaddleson’s life and our process.

It is our honor and pleasure, through *Alice Shaddleson: Fuller Circles*, to reintroduce Shaddleson to new audiences in Chicago. The opportunity of being hosted by Hyde Park Art Center, where Shaddleson taught and exhibited, and in the neighborhood where Shaddleson’s practice was centered for over 50 years, provides rich context and underscores her connection to this place. Circles are a leitmotif throughout Shaddleson’s work and in this exhibition. We hope the exhibition, catalog, and online archive will reflect Shaddleson’s creative spirit and be ripples bringing her life and work into fuller circles.

Nicholas C. Lowe and Lisa Stone  
Curators of *Alice Shaddleson: Fuller Circles*



3



4

*Moon Shadows* was the last in a series of elaborate floor installation Shaddleson created, from 1978 to 1984, in which she included her large drawings. She began making drawings related to the ultimately ephemeral elements of the floor installations c. 1981. About this, she commented, “I want to have something more permanent.”

*I have been making studies of the face as it changes with age, with emotion and with the forming of words. Sound travels through leaves, and the leaves and time of year become a whispering surrounding theme. I have used watercolor on paper which is then cut and folded to make the relief forms that are put into covered boxes.*

– Alice Shaddleson, 1971



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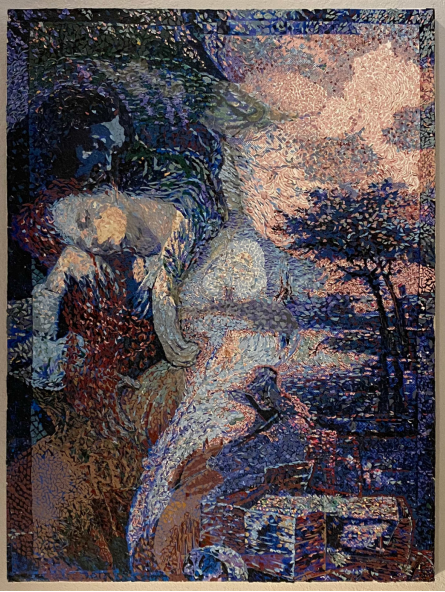




6

Large collages, or forms reminiscent of crypts, are cut into foliage shapes, as with topiaries. These are laden with a myriad of pieces of paper and are used as the painter might use a brushwork of paint. Animals investigate the spaces waiting for time to pass.

– Alice Shaddell, 1977

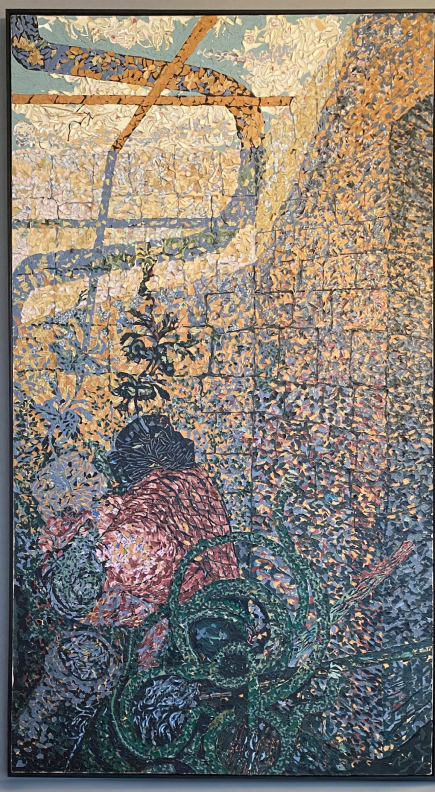


7

Shaddell borrowed the figure in Artemisia Gentileschi's painting *Penitent Mary Magdalene* (1625-26) for this cut paper collage.

Images combining humor and mortality are wrapped in a myriad of pieces of paper. Dark lantern slides showing Roman ruins, Dutch landscapes and figures from Italian paintings of the 17th century make apparent the influences of these ensembles. The lives and images of Thomas Hardy's heroines relate in theses similar to Artemisia's life, forming a new identity with each other in an adventure to which these collages give concrete form.

– Alice Shaddell, 1999



8

Flaky, highly textured collages, use masonry as a theme, repeating stone after stone in images of reconstructed spaces.

– Alice Shaddell, 1998

## Public Programs

### Exhibition Reception Saturday, April 6, 1-4PM

Celebrate the exhibition during our quarterly Center Day, and participate in an art making activity inspired by Alice Shaddell's practice with teaching artist, Jasper Goodrich.

### Exhibition Tour Tuesday, April 9, 6-8PM

Join curators, Nicholas Lowe and Lisa Stone, in the gallery for a tour of the exhibition.

### Contemporary Collage Conversations Thursday, June 6, 6-8PM

Fragmenting, juxtaposing, and assembling media, collage touches a variety of artistic mediums and genres. Contemporary collage artists, Victoria Martinez, Aimée Beaubien, Mary Lou Zelazny, and Cydney Lewis, and moderator Dana Boutin discuss the meanings and contemporary relevance of collage as an art medium. Panelists will also be invited to respond to collagist extraordinaire, Alice Shaddell's work, and share insights into their own process of collecting materials and techniques.

1. Alice Shaddell in the George Blossom House dining room, c. 1960s. Her sculpture *Cake Stand* (1967) appears in the background.
2. Detail, *Moon Shadows* vellum floor installation, 1984, cut paper, mesh, construction paper circles, approximately 42 in. diameter. Collection of Cain Baum.
3. Title unknown (*Smoke* series), c. 1984-85, colored pencil on board, 40 1/2 x 61 1/2 in. Collection of Lauren Moltz and John Clement.
4. *Moon Shadows*, 1984, installation at Artemisia Gallery, paper and tulle cutouts on paper circles, colored pencil drawings. Photo: Charles Baum, 1984.
5. Title unknown (Box with skull), 1972, paper and mixed media in wood box, 18 x 12 x 5 1/8 in. Collection of Charles and Camille Baum.
6. *The Broken Harpy*, 1996, cut paper collage on stretched canvas, wood frame, chemical latex, 60 x 42 x 1 in. Collection of Lauren Moltz and John Clement.
7. *Sunrise at Middlemarsh*, 1999, cut paper collage/painting, 49 x 37 x 1 3/4 in. Collection of Ariana and Matt Lowman.
8. *Cistern (Down Under)*, 1994, cut paper collage on stretched canvas, wood frame, 61 x 33 in. framed, 62 x 34 x 1 in. Collection of Charles and Camille Baum.

The richly illustrated exhibition catalog, with installation images and contributions by artists and scholars, will be available at Hyde Park Art Center in spring 2024.

For extensive information on Alice Shaddell's life, works, and exhibitions, see the online archive, [www.shaddellbaumarchive.com](http://www.shaddellbaumarchive.com), which will launch in spring 2024.

### LEAD SPONSORS



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Hyde Park Art Center is a hub for contemporary arts in Chicago, serving as a gathering and production space for artists and the broader community to cultivate ideas, impact social change, and connect through expanded networks. The Art Center functions as an amplifier for today and tomorrow's creative voices, providing the space to make, see, learn about, and engage art with freedom. The Art Center is funded in part by: Abakanowicz Arts and Culture Charitable Foundation; Acclivus, Inc.; Allstate Insurance Company; Bank of America; Caerus Foundation; The Chicago Community Trust; City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events; Crown Family Philanthropies; DEW Foundation, Dan J. Epstein Family Foundation; Good Chaos Foundation; Illinois Arts Council Agency; John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; The Joyce Foundation; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; Polk Bros. Foundation; PPM America & Jackson National Life Insurance Company; Reva & David Logan Foundation; Smart Family Foundation, Inc.; Terra Foundation for American Art; and the generosity of its members and people like you.

**Cover Image:** Alice Shaddell, detail, *The Broken Harpy*, 1996, cut paper collage on stretched canvas, wood frame, chemical latex, 60 x 42 in. Collection of Lauren Moltz and John Clement. Photo: Scott Dietrich.

All quotes and artworks are by Alice Shaddell.  
Design by Sofia Merino  
Curatorial team: Cain Baum, Charles Baum, Dana Boutin, Nicholas C. Lowe and Lisa Stone

## Hyde ParkARTCENTER

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[www.hydeparkart.org](http://www.hydeparkart.org)

# Alice Shaddell: Fuller Circles

March 23 – June 16, 2024

Kanter Family Foundation Gallery