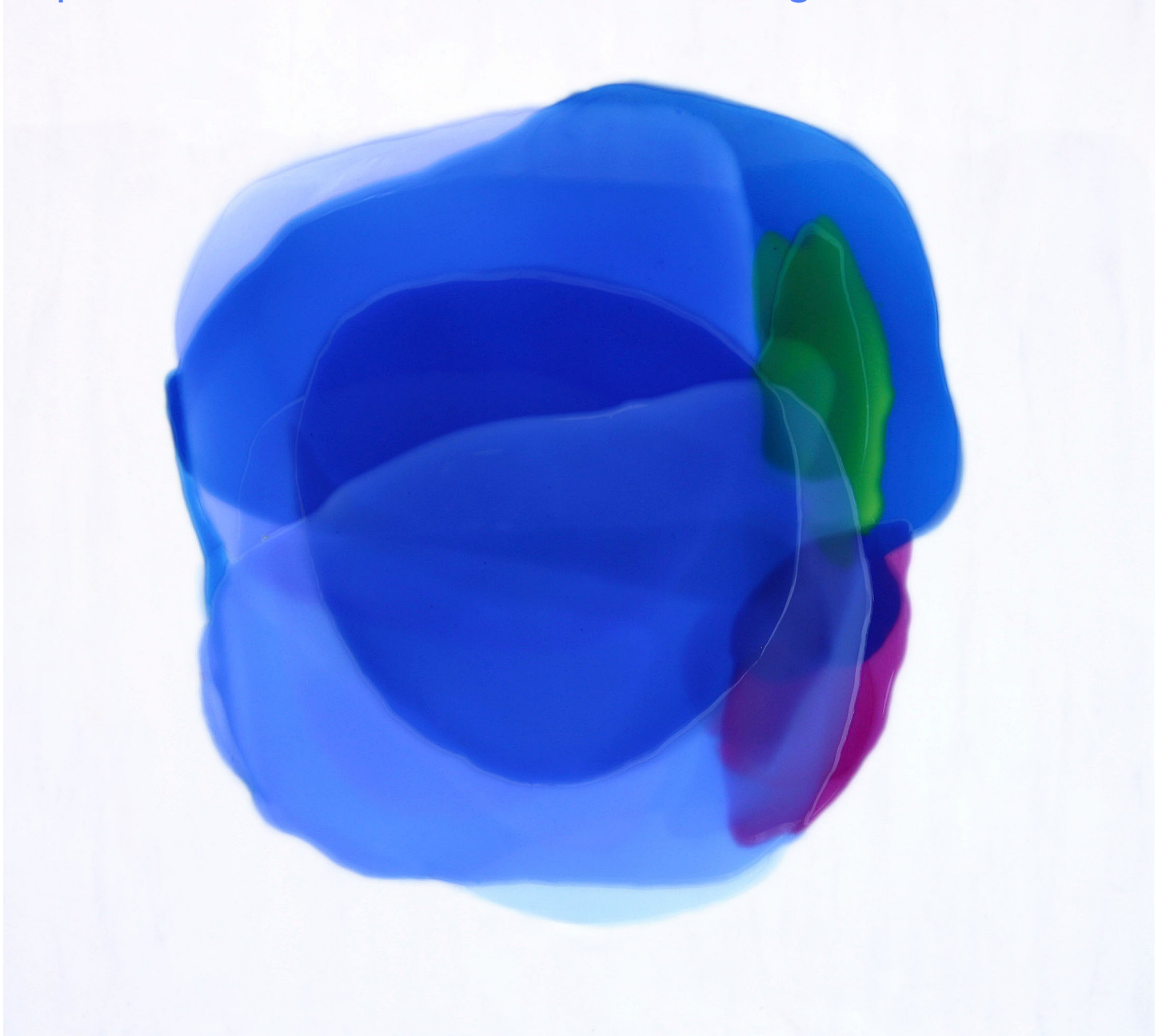




Farida Hughes: A Line Doesn't End With Me

Explanation of the Blends and the Vigil Series



Blend 37, 2021; Oil, charcoal, and epoxy resin on wood, 20 x 20 inches

Farida Hughes: A Line Doesn't End With Me

Introduction to Farida Hughes:

Farida Hughes is an American abstract visual artist working primarily in oil paint and mixed media with resin on wood or aluminum panels. Born in New York and spending most of her life on the East Coast, she recently returned to Maryland after ten years in Minnesota. She exhibits her paintings nationally in solo and group exhibitions in commercial gallery, museum, university and non-profit spaces. Her work is included in many private and corporate collections and has been commissioned for projects for Target, Marriot Hotels, and Hilton Hotels, among others.

Artwork by Farida Hughes is recognizable for its bold use of color, overlapping translucent forms, and strong compositions. The use of resin in her paintings allows for a beautiful luminosity and glossy finish. She developed her mixed media style after years of painting with oil colors and experimenting with oil painting mediums and solvents. Human relationships and interactions, especially as influenced by circumstance and location, have been the content of her art for more than a decade. She strives for a message of community, optimism, and an embrace of human storytelling in her abstract paintings.

Hughes has an undergraduate degree in Studio Art and English from Fordham University in New York, and a MFA from the University of Chicago. She was granted an Artist Initiative Grant in 2013 by the Minnesota State Arts Board and was a 2017 McKnight Visual Artist Fellowship semi-finalist. She is represented by Walker Fine Art in Denver, Colorado, and also works with Bozzuto Greene Art in Lutherville, Maryland as well as regional and national art consultants. She maintains a studio in the Station North Arts District in Baltimore, Maryland.

Introduction to the Blends Paintings:

With vivid color and abstract form, each of the Blends paintings by artist Farida Hughes displays a composite portrait of the layers of an individuals' cultural and ethnic backgrounds, based on stories that she solicits and collects. She responds to the anecdotes collected as she creates each of the abstract paintings. This series began as a way to unwrap the artist's own multi-cultural background, and subsequently grew to celebrate the unique blendedness of each person contributing a story, and the effects of historical moments that the narratives inevitably present. Begun in 2017, Hughes continues to collect stories from friends and acquaintances, and grow this community of Blends. Using her abstract visual language in this way the artist aims to celebrate and value human difference.

The stories assembled here with their paintings have been edited for consistency and space restrictions. Gaps in the sequence result from works sold or otherwise currently not available for exhibition.

The Blends series is ongoing! If you would like to participate with a story on your own family, you may contact the artist via email at: farida@faridahughes.com.

The Vigil Series is explained on the last page of this binder.

www.faridahughes.com

Instagram: [@faridahughes_artist](https://www.instagram.com/faridahughes_artist)

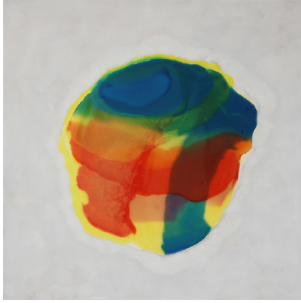
8



Blend 8, 2018

Go with the kids, who add their dad's mostly non-overlapping shades of white:
From mom: British; French; Norwegian, some American Indian.
From their dad: ...Scottish, Dutch and German (along with British), but...he will only claim a mixed heritage based on the western and eastern sides of NJ.

11



Blend 11, 2018

So I have quite a mix of heritage as I am 37% Native American, 47% European (Iberian Peninsula) and 10% West African/South African. This is according to a 23andMe report that my wife gifted me. My mother's grandfather and his brother migrate[d] from Gipuzcoa to Pisco, Peru in the mid 1800's. Pisco and the surrounding area have a strong and vibrant Afro-Peruvian legacy. I do not know the histories of other ancestors, this one is the one we can trace. My mother's heritage is Basque, not Spanish. ...the Basque nation is straddled and splits between Spain and France.

...[my wife], is mostly German, with Scottish and Irish people as part of her lineage as well. So my kids have a great diversity in their genes.

12



Blend 12, 2017

My kids are half Middle-Eastern (Jordanian) and half European (Italian, German, and Polish). Most people are shocked when they find out my children's ethnicity. Unfortunately those same people usually have made racial and stereotypical comments. I've taught my children to embrace their diversity - My son...is taking Middle Eastern studies [in college].

13



Blend 13, 2017

I am pleased that you contacted me, though I think my background is less than interesting. I just did the 23andMe genetic testing. Actually, to my surprise, the report is that I am 97% Ashkenazi Jew. I didn't expect the percentage to be so high. The other 3% is African or Asian Mid-Eastern. Not sure what that means but I thought perhaps there had been some raping and pillaging through the Romanian villages and that perhaps I was more Roma. My kids are 50% Ashkenazi... Their Dad, however, is almost surely 50% German Jew (his dad was born in Vienna) and 50% Czechoslovakian, his mother was raised in New Prague.

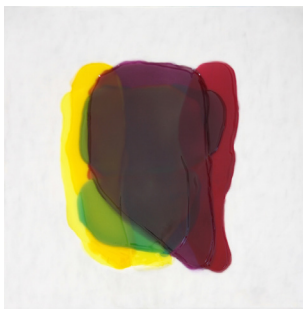
15



Blend 15, 2018

I am Italian, French, Portuguese and Brazilian. My children are that plus Russian, Romanian, Hungarian and Jewish.

17



Blend 17, 2018

I'll keep my story brief: I'm from Goa, India, which was a Portuguese province until 1961; my kids are half Indian and half Eastern European Jewish American. They are 100% American, yet are citizens of the world.

18



Blend 18, 2018

This has been a good opportunity for me to find out about [my husband's] family history which was a bit blurry for me until now. His Irish great-grandparents came to the States to escape poverty and famine. Both were farmers, and their children had the upward trajectory that all immigrants hope for when they dream of a better life for their children: [his] grandmother became a nurse, his grandfather was a mechanical engineer. As for [our children's] paternal great-grandparents, they came to the US fleeing the Armenian genocide, arriving with nothing but their lives saved. My husband's grandpa had no formal education to speak of and worked in a factory all of his life. His kids and grandchildren also had the upward mobility that is part of the American story: [our daughter's] grandfather became an ophthalmologist, her dad a university professor. ...[M]e – I came here from a very full and happy life in Germany, not to escape genocide, poverty, and starvation, but because I fell in love with someone from Minnesota. However, as an immigrant I do feel a bond to [my husband's] family history: in the end, everyone who moves to a different continent has to start over completely, build a new life, assimilate to a new culture, learn new skills, redefine one's future, and build a new home away from home. It's one giant leap out of one's comfort zone, even under the best of circumstances!

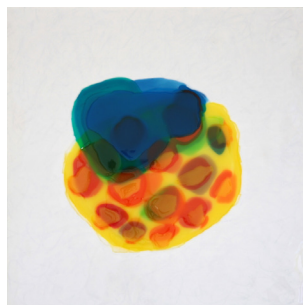
19



Blend 19, 2019

What I know is that I'm half Jewish, at least a quarter of that is definitely Eastern European, probably from what is now Lithuania. The other quarter is probably also Eastern European though. My other half, as far as I can tell is WASP. My birth father's surname...seems to be English. I know he wasn't Jewish. ...I was adopted and raised in a NY-Jewish family so that's my cultural identity—both the NY part and the Jewish part. I'm not really religious, but definitely a cultural Jew. Finding my birth mother was amazing and although she's not terribly interested in her family history, I've learned a bit from my half-sister and hope to learn more. I'm interested in how a Jewish family got to Minneapolis AFTER living in the US for a while at a time when my adopted ancestors were still in Europe.

21



Blend 21, 2019

[My husband] was born in Korea (also grand-parents from North Korea) and moved to Australia at age 6. He also lived in Texas, NJ, Georgia, NC and England. He has been teaching in South Bronx for 15 years where people think he is a Chinese deliver[y] man.

22



Blend 22, 2019

I'm all European. Mom's family is from Poland, Ukraine and Czechoslovakia. My Dad's family is from Austria and Lithuania. But my Mom and Dad were both born in Chicago IL.. My great grandparents on my mothers side decided to bring their family to the United States because of war and instability in their homeland. This was around 1900-1909. Basically instability in Russia was causing problems in Poland and the Ukraine. They went to New York for their entry point and then relatively soon moved to Chicago. Their oldest children went first and worked in New York and sent back money to bring the rest of their siblings (9) and their parents. Chicago had a large Jewish population and there were jobs there in textiles.

My father's side came to the United States in the 1800's to homestead and farm in Ohio; I have relatives still in Ohio. My grandparents moved to Chicago because it was a large city and there were jobs. My Dad's uncle was an engineer and worked for the Army Core of Engineers in Chicago and told his brother (my grandfather) to come to Chicago too, it was a good place to find work. My Dad was born in Chicago in 1923.

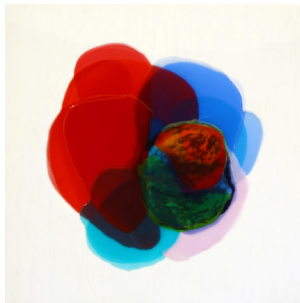
25



Blend 25, 2019

I'm mostly of African descent with some Native American and Irish(!) mixed in. I haven't had a DNA test or anything but have reliable info from relatives.

26



Blend 26, 2021

I recently did my 23andMe ancestry and a few things were a surprise – like there is zero Irish (I'd been told about my supposed Irish-ness forever) and there is 8% Sub-Saharan (east) African (which both of my parents deny...). So, from what I know in order of the biggest percentages, not that one needs to blood quantum oneself: Indian 40% (dad); German 20% (mom); Middle Eastern 8% ("Persia" - so Iran) (dad); all else is 8% or less: Scottish (mom); Lebanese (mom); East African (has to be mom); Swedish (mom); British (mom); Spanish (mom).

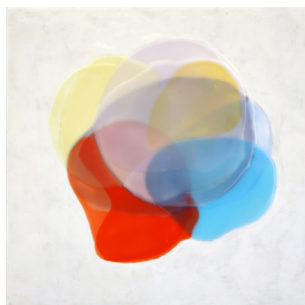
29



Blend 29, 2021

The ethnicity: German on my maternal grandmother's side, German, French, Swiss, Luxembourg and Italian on my maternal grandfather's side. ...Italian on both sides of my dad's. There were, however, some blond/blue-eyed men among my father's distant cousins...[including my] brother. My siblings and I were all born in Chicago, as were my parents and their parents. Immigration happened in roughly the mid 1800s. I had found a town in northern Italy, [whose name was] spelled the way we pronounce my last name. I visited and found nothing...in the cemetery. ...When I got home, I put a notice on some genealogy board and got this response: "The town was named after the river and has nothing to do with you." I agreed and dropped my genealogy search. I have fun thinking of the contrast between my parents' childhood experiences. My paternal grandfather was a successful bookie during prohibition. My mother's German-Catholic family was full of priests and nuns. A poor pun would be to say it was chemistry that drew them to each other, since they were both chemists.

30



Blend 30, 2019

My kids are about one third early colonial American from both sides (with claims to the Mayflower & the DAR, and one now-controversial ancestor who was lauded a hero in her day, having led a bloody revolt against & escape from her Native American captors).

The rest of our heritage is a good mix of early 20th century European immigrants, including at least one foreign navy deserter who found his way from New Orleans to Chicago, and a great grandmother from Belarus who seemed to have come to America to flee a mysterious past/possible first marriage she never divulged to anyone before dying. Some of us on my side of the family (English/Norwegian/German/Dutch) have olive skin and nobody seems to know why—I have always wondered if Viking raids played a role. Who knows?!

31



Blend 31, 2019

Both of my parents are children of Germans from Russia. Meaning they lived in German colonies in what is now Ukraine. I did the DNA test and tested that way too. Grand-parents immigrated to the US when they were teens. Both families came with about 100 others.

32



Blend 32, 2021

So my blend is on my dad's side, Syrian/Lebanese, my mom Scottish, Irish and English... Me I am half of each! I was born in Beirut, Lebanon, lived in Iraq, then evacuated from the 6 day war from Lebanon, took a huge ship that brought us to America. Then back to live in Kuwait. Then moved back to Paris. Then here to NY to study art. Then here to DC...

33



Blend 33, 2021

I was born in Iowa and raised in Minnesota, tho I wandered the United States, Canada, India and Mexico from hippie days to the present. I am of Norwegian descent on my mother's side...and Scotch/Irish/English/Welsh on my father's mother's side...and Mexican on my father's father's side. ...the Norwegian side were farmers, then clothiers, then insurance salesmen. [some] were cowboys and sheriffs, then a tailor. My grandpa was a classical musician, then a wandering musician, then a tailor. in addition, according to my dna sampling (Ancestry.com), beyond the Scandinavian and British Isles, I have Native American, French, Spanish, and Eastern European Jewish blood (the diaspora of Jews fleeing Spain to Mexico?)

34



Blend 34, 2020

I was born in Haifa, Israel, to an Argentinean father and an Israeli mother. We moved to Mexico City when I was 5, where I went to school until the age of 15. We then returned to Israel for one year, and then moved to San José, Costa Rica, where I spent the last two years of high school. I then came to the US for college, then moved to NYC to be an artist, met my husband while I was in graduate school in NYC. Together we lived in NY, then Memphis, TN, and then Minneapolis. My parents both have a bit of a story, my dad left Argentina during the "Dirty War" military dictatorship, after being a political prisoner. My mother is a second generation Holocaust survivor. I grew up speaking Hebrew and Spanish at home, and learned English at school.

35



Blend 35, 2020

Both [my parents] might be considered children of the Second World War. My father was born and grew up in Minamata...in s. Japan. (That town is...known internationally for a serious mercury poisoning...that critically affected the local fishing community.) My mother grew up ...in s. Denmark, on an island in the Baltic near the German border. Living 50 miles across the bay from Nagasaki, my father witnessed the mushroom cloud left by the atomic bomb dropped there. My mother's father was German. Living in Denmark, he managed to stay out of the military, but in 1944 German citizens, regardless of country of residence, were called up for service. My mother was 4 when she witnessed her mother receive the news that her father would not be coming home. My father and mother, both probably possessing strong interests in reconciling for themselves what was a youth defined by a fractured world, traveled to and studied in the U.S. ...My Japanese grandfather permitted my father to [attend college] in the U.S. under two conditions: that he return after graduating and ...to not bring home a blue-eyed, blond girl. He broke both conditions. In 1962, my mother—knowing that there was a 50/50 (sic) that the marriage would work out—bought a one-way ticket to Japan. They were married shortly thereafter, at a church, during a typhoon.

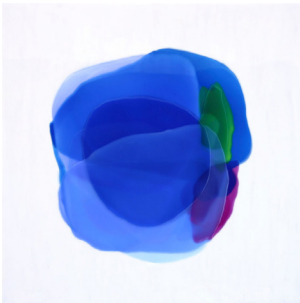
36



Blend 36, 2020

Both [my wife] and I are Chinese. She was born in Shanghai and moved to the US when she was nine. I was born in Michigan. Although fully Chinese, I'm considered an "ABC" (American Born Chinese) by the Chinese community and, to them, pretty much an American. We live in an area where there are a decent number of Asians, but we're still different from the majority. Teaching ethnicity to the kids has been a bit of a balancing act. You want them to be "color blind" to race, but also celebrate and embrace peoples' heritage and cultural history...to fit in and also be different at the same time. Even though we try to speak Chinese at home and both kids go to Chinese school on Saturdays, "being Chinese" is a hard concept to grasp for a kid. ...[W]e took the family to Shanghai on vacation in 2016. After seeing all the people in the streets, [my daughter] remarked, "Wow, everyone here looks like me!" Going to China really drove home the concept of what it means to be Chinese. We live in the US and are Americans, but, at the same time, we have the history and culture of China within us as well.

37



Blend 37, 2021

[With] a dramatic [French sounding] maiden name, I have always identified with my French side although I have still never been to France and only speak menu French. Then there's the Spanish of my French great grandfather's wife who was, in fact, from Mexico but that wasn't unearthed until I was in my mid 20's. The rest of me is decidedly American, if I had to say I was anything, I'd say "Los Angeleno," since I'm fourth generation and moving away from the city felt like a betrayal of my family. My Mom has always said that she was a mix from Northern Europe but again, "just American." I recently did genetic testing that revealed that I am 99.1 % European, only 5.7% French, but an astonishing .9% Native American. I think that must be the legacy of my Mexican great grandmother.

38

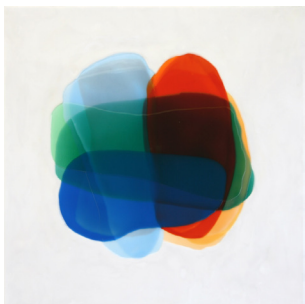


Blend 38, 2021

100% Irish (Republic of Ireland - Born in Dublin, grew up in Cavan by the border with Northern Ireland. Frequently went to the north - the Troubles were ever present). Raised Catholic, still recovering. Moved to America (Maryland) with my family at 16. Met my upstate NY wife at Grad School. She's a direct descendent of Peregrine White – the first baby born on the Mayflower (documented...) We have 1 child... a perfect mix of both of us (though he identifies as Irish ;-)

I'm 1 of 4. My wondrous younger brother... hung himself in the bathroom of his Hilton Prague guestroom...at the age of 33. I traveled there to take care of cremation and bring him home. It was an odyssey to say the least. The image that [comes] to mind... [is] this curious moment that happened when I was finally back in the States after 5 days in Prague. I was walking through BWI toward customs and caught a glass reflection in a distant window of myself carrying a medium sized white plastic bag containing [his] urn ... It was an odd moment – I thought, my god, I'm with [him]..I'm bringing my brother home in a freakin' plastic bag... I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

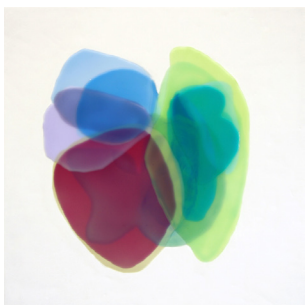
39



Blend 39, 2021

I am half Italian, and a mix of German, Irish, Polish and Pennsylvania Dutch. This reminds me of stories of my mom (she was the mixed side) learning to cook from by grandmother on my dad's side, growing a large tomato garden, learning how to make pasta, etc. after growing up eating burnt meat and not knowing what a salad was. My wife is half Jewish and half French Canadian. So that would make my son a quarter Jewish, quarter French Canadian, quarter Italian and a mix of German, Irish, Polish and Pennsylvania Dutch. ...We've been trying a mix of things to expose him to, like he loves making fresh pasta, we celebrate Jewish holidays the way [my wife's] (mostly secular) family would celebrate, and teaching him a little French.

40



Blend 40, 2021

My mother is a New Englander through and through. She's partially Italian, and always just said her other half was "yankee" since they didn't know where her mother's family was from ([recent] DNA tests indicate that she's actually very British...). My father is primarily Scottish and French, but was raised in the Bahamas, adding a tropical twist to my otherwise European identity. Our extended family still lives there. My children share my genes, as well as very deep and proud Swedish roots from my husband's side. I spent my early years in Connecticut, and have been a Minnesotan for so long now I've lost all trace of my accent.

41

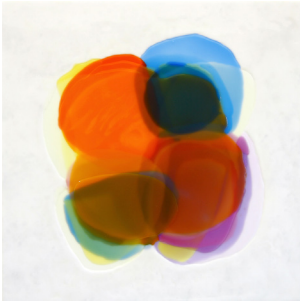


Blend 41, 2021

I moved from St. Paul to Seattle to pursue a professional Hockey career. In 1970 I met and married a beautiful Japanese woman. I was struck by her uniqueness in that there were very few Asians in the Seattle area at the time while I was playing Professional Hockey. She was the first Japanese person in my circle of friends. I felt very lucky.

I am of French, English and German descent and my wife is 100% Japanese. Our 2 children are a blend of myself and my spouse. Our daughter has 2 children (our grandchildren) that are a blend of Japanese, English, French, German, and Scandinavian. Our son...and his two children (our grandchildren) are a blend of Greek, Italian, Japanese, French, English and German.

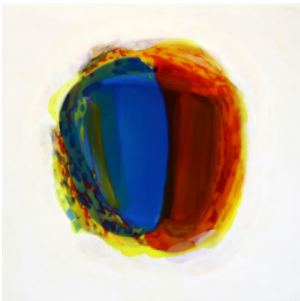
42



Blend 42, 2021

My parents and grandparents were all born in the Transylvania region of Romania. Most of the grandparents' relatives and their parents were killed in the Holocaust. All of my grandparents survived the Holocaust with 3 of them in concentration camps and one on the cleaning crew (for lack of a better description) of the German army. My grandparents knew each other before the war and after their relationships formed and they got married. My parents knew each other as young children. My father then immigrated to the US with his parents in 1961. They lived in Vienna, Austria for two years while waiting for their papers. After college my father travelled back to Europe to look at medical school; my grandfather wanted him to be a doctor. In going back he visited his home town and saw my mother. Their love story goes like this: my mother asked what my dad was doing back and my dad's response was – I came back to marry you. He proposed after 1 week and my mom said “not right now”. So they corresponded for two years before getting married and by that point my dad was doing his medical schooling in Brussels, Belgium where I was born. We moved back to the US in 1976 and my brother was born in Baltimore. It's a good ending to a very difficult period of time for my grandparents.

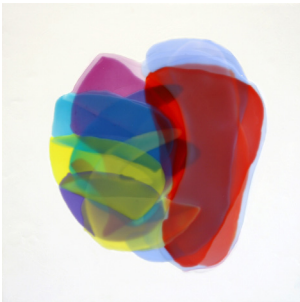
43



Blend 43, 2021

I think for Black Americans this question can often be a bit difficult to answer unless they've done DNA tests, as so much of our ancestral history has been systematically erased. I can offer that I have deep ancestral histories in Los Angeles and Baltimore.

44

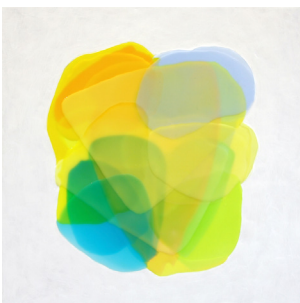


Blend 44, 2021

Growing-up I knew that my family has “100%” Finnish heritage, meaning that both of my parents were born to Finnish-Americans who were born to Finnish immigrants. My maternal Grandmother was a teenager when she left Michigan/the US with her parents and sister in the middle of the Great Depression to go to Karelia, Russia to help build a utopian Finnish-speaking society (Karelia used to be part of Finland) only to have to escape to get back when Stalin started arresting and executing people in the years of The Purges. [M]y maternal grandfather's bloodline...reveals that we are Sami in addition to Finnish. (The Sami are the indigenous people of Europe, living in the northern regions of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia).

[My husband's story]: Born in Vientiane, Laos in 1970 to Laos parents. His father was from the mountains in the north and his mom was what they call “Thai Isan” = ethnic Lao in Thailand. So, when the communists began to infiltrate Laos at the end of what we call the Vietnam War, his mother took the kids to her family's farm in Thailand. His dad escaped across the Mekong River in the dark of night while being shot at by the new communist government, and was picked-up by Thai police on the other side and put into a refugee camp. Ultimately, the family reunited in the refugee camp and were sponsored to come to Minneapolis.

45



Blend 45, 2021

I am Sičangu Lakota through my mother and German and Welsh American through my father. There may be some mystery blood in there as well that remains unknown because of my mom's adoption. My mother was born on the reservation but adopted out to white missionaries at the age of 18 months. This is how she ended up being raised in Wisconsin and how [she] met my dad whose family also had settled in Wisconsin. I went to Haskell Indian Nations University, a tribal college in Lawrence, KS. This is where I met my husband. He is Navajo, San Carlos Apache and Quechan. Our children are Lakota, Navajo, San Carlos Apache, Quechan, German and Welsh. (And potentially some unknown elements as well!)

The Vigil Series (rear gallery)

Over the past decade and a half my abstraction has primarily examined real stories, places, and people, focusing on depth and connectivity of relationships through myriad types of human associations. The rounded, tile-like form in my painterly vocabulary is a compositional tool used to expand on notions of group identity and collective movement.

Healing is a necessary human experience. I am observing our collective conscience trying to find healing in two extremes: one, with the coronavirus emphasizing death in isolation, we are robbed of healing, of processing forward with the dead, moving as a group with a body from one realm (life) into the other (death); and, two, as we come together in protest to voice concern over injustices in our communities we are, among other notions, moving en masse together to heal. Throughout history and today the candlelight vigil is used as a dignified way of uniting a community through honoring, celebrating, memorializing, showing support for a cause, and for collective healing.

Last summer candlelight vigils were held around the world. Using accessible media images of these vigils that I layered together and re-designed in photo editing software, I developed digital sketches that I then used as reference material to create the paintings Summer Painting and Night Lights. In my abstraction I maintained shapes formed by a candle-lit glow on people's faces and hands as they were assembled in vigil to suggest that imagery, and worked up the vibrancy and contrast in layers to create paintings that mimic the shared light and beauty of the vigil. The same intention exists in the Vigil paintings as they together create the illusion of little flickering lights as a way to acknowledge a collective emotional healing process through the act of holding vigil.

This project of Vigil paintings, both in the installation of oval pieces and in more traditionally formatted paintings, is intended to offer a moment of reverence and remembrance for lives lived and lost over the past tumultuous year and a half. With this work I invite the viewer to experience color and light and hold in memory and reverence our collective human losses and collective gratitude.

Farida Hughes