



*Workshop of the World*  
*Works by Tabitha Arnold*

January 18—February 25, 2024

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 25

Artist's talk: 4:30–5:30 PM

Lang Performing Arts Center Cinema

List Gallery Reception follows: 5:30–7:00 PM

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 12:00–5:00 PM

At left: *Picket*, 2021, tufted rug, 34 x 56 inches.  
Private collection.

The List Gallery is pleased to present *Workshop of the World*, the first major solo exhibition of works by Chattanooga-based artist Tabitha Arnold. Curated by Exhibitions Manager Tess Wei, the exhibition, accompanying catalog, and related events are funded by the Phillip Bruno Fine Art Fund. Arnold will lecture about her work on Thursday, January 25 at 4:30 PM in the Lang Performing Arts Center Cinema. The List Gallery reception will follow, 5:30–7:00 PM. List Gallery hours are Tuesdays through Sundays, Noon–5:00 PM. Admission to the gallery and all events are free and open to the public.

Arnold's tapestries and works on paper are inspired by contemporary labor movements, as well as her own experiences as a worker, socialist organizer, and artist coming of age during a wave of unionization efforts in the United States. She utilizes a self-taught method of punch-needle embroidery to create medium and large-scale tapestries that draw inspiration from a range of art historical traditions, including Eastern Orthodox icons, Mexican mural paintings, Gee's Bend quilts, and Afghan war rugs.

Arnold's deep interest in workers' rights and social and racial justice efforts informs her imagery: assembly lines in factories; people protesting and striking in the streets; police cars flipped and prisons evaded. Arnold lived for nine years in Philadelphia, and cites the city's political environment—from the Black Lives Matter protests to the unionization efforts occurring across multiple institutions—as a key catalyst for her own radicalization and source of content. In pieces such as *This Woman's Work* (2021) and *Whose Streets* (2020), Arnold weaves in recognizable landmarks, such as Philadelphia's City Hall, reinforcing the specificity of place in her narratives. Arnold's use of *Workshop of the World*, as both the exhibition title and the title of a large-scale diptych displayed in the front gallery, provides another acknowledgement of the city's importance to her work and research: Philadelphia was called the *Workshop of the World* during the industrial age due to the region's impressive industrial infrastructure.

The importance of signs, symbols, and printed text is reiterated in her small-scale works on paper, which include black-and-white ink drawings and colorful gouache paintings. Although Arnold's drawings reiterate the type of images she uses in her textiles, they also include contemporary protest chants, such as "Whose streets? Our streets!" or "The people united will never be defeated." Her series of gouache paintings are the original artwork for multiple issues of *Dissent Magazine*, a non-profit, leftist publication that covers a range of political and cultural topics. While Arnold engages with grave issues, her vibrant visual narratives and dedication to activism offer hope for social justice and a future that is built by and for the people.

Tabitha Arnold was born in 1995 and graduated with a BFA in painting from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 2017. Her textiles have been featured in *Hyperallergic*, *Jacobin Magazine*, and *Forbes*. Her works on paper have also been reproduced on multiple issue covers of *Dissent Magazine*. She has been awarded residences at MacDowell (Peterborough, NH), The Church (Sag Harbor, NY), Cortex Frontal (Arraiolos, Portugal), and Glen Foerd (Philadelphia, PA). She is also part of the American Craft Council's 2022 Emerging Artist Cohort. In fall 2023, Arnold will be a resident artist and mount a solo exhibition at the Worker's Art and Heritage Centre (Hamilton, ON). Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Cortex Frontal in Portugal. Currently, she lives and works in her hometown of Chattanooga, Tennessee. To learn more about her work, visit <https://tabithaarnold.com>



At right: *Whose Streets*, 2020, tufted rug, 34 x 56 inches. Private collection.