



Untitled (Cross-Section of Head)

Date

1995

Primary Maker

Kiki Smith

Medium

Ink on handmade Japanese paper

Description

The sculptor Kiki Smith introduced printmaking into her artistic practice in the late 1970s and has become an innovator in the field, using as tools such atypical materials as rubber stamps, photocopies, and potatoes and creating postcards, wallpaper, and temporary tattoos; her sculpture also ranges widely across materials, from glass to ceramic. Explaining her interest in making print editions, Smith has said, "Prints mimic what we are as humans: we are all the same and yet everyone is different." In fact, she often depicts elements of the human body in her work and addresses not only themes of mortality, birth, and regeneration—likely inspired by her Catholic upbringing—but also contemporary political controversies such as genetic engineering, organ transplantation, and governmental control over bodies. In 1979, a friend who worked at the Strand Bookstore in New York

gave the artist a copy of the seminal medical text Gray's Anatomy, which "is what influenced me to make pictures of bodies and gave me a language with which to express and discover myself." In this work, she used a large rubber stamp to print a cross-section of the human skull (seen from above) twice, once in red and once in blue, slightly off register. In the same year Smith made this print, she also created *Untitled (Kidneys)*, a potato print executed in red and blue—the colors traditionally ascribed to human blood. The present work is one of a number of prints given to the College over the years by Rosina Lee Yue and her late husband, Bert A. Lies, Jr., Class of 1960, consistent supporters of both the Emerson and the Wellin. *Untitled (Cross-Section of Head)* was printed by the artist in 1995 in an edition of two hundred as a fundraiser for the arts organization SITE Santa Fe and was presented to Hamilton in 1998. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS, 2017)

Dimensions

Sheet: 17 1/8 × 12 3/4 in. (43.5 × 32.4 cm) Frame: 21 7/8 × 17 3/8 × 2 in. (55.6 × 44.1 × 5.1 cm)