

PRESS RELEASE

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Natural Explorations of Four Contemporary Artists

- *The Living Print* art exhibit opens to the public Saturday, October 25
- At Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History in the Courtyard Gallery
- Features artists Latifat Apatira, Dwight Hwang, Sara Woodburn, and Mineo Yamamoto
- Interactive area at the heart of the exhibit to experiment with botanical rubbing

SANTA BARBARA, CA — The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History’s new art exhibit invites guests to enjoy the artistic explorations of four contemporary printmakers using traditional techniques to capture the beauty and wonder of the natural world. *The Living Print* opens October 25, featuring the intricate botanical portraits of Latifat Apatira, the bold woodblock prints of Sara Woodburn, and masterful fish prints by Dwight Hwang and Mineo Ryuka Yamamoto. Visitors to the exhibit can try botanical rubbing methods in the workshop at the center of the gallery, and get a closer look at the artists’ methods in process videos.

Raised in San Mateo County, California, Latifat Apatira explored the natural world from oak woodlands to redwood forests from an early age, forming a personal connection with plants and their diversity. “My art involves hand-pressing inked fresh plants onto paper to create unique botanical portraits,” she explains. “It allows for the examination of botanical complexity as the inked plants share their oft overlooked fingerprinted secrets of beauty, diversity, detail, texture, and form.” Apatira’s delicate and intricate work is a form of “botanical advocacy,” and she hopes it “inspires others to look at the plants around them a little more deeply and wonder.”

Santa Barbara artist Sara Woodburn studied textile, graphic, and costume design in Japan; and the Japanese woodblock printing method of mokuhanga at the Anderson Ranch Art Center in Colorado. “The print is made from a carved wood block using watercolor, handmade paper, and brushes and pressure by hand. The process is meditative, flexible, and non-toxic.” Locals will appreciate Woodburn’s unique perspective on familiar landscapes like Elings Park and San Marcos Foothills Preserve. “These works convey my experience of nature, in particular favorite landscapes that I’ve visited and sketched,” says Woodburn. “Perhaps you will find a connection in these images and be inspired to create from nature.”

Dwight Hwang is a Southern California-based artist known for his unique approach to Japanese gyotaku, a medium “much like Japanese woodblock printing, but it is the fish itself that is the slate,” he explains. “Gyotaku is a centuries old Japanese folk art where one would brush calligraphy ink onto a fish, rub paper onto it to create

a print.” The results capture fleeting moments of life and convey a mindful philosophy of “perfect imperfection” by taking a naturally imperfect subject and emphasizing the imperfections to the point of beauty. Among other venues, his work has been featured at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles.

Presiding majestically over the dozens of works by Apatira, Hwang, and Woodburn, is Mineo Ryuka Yamamoto’s masterful print of a 17-foot-long squid. A renowned nature and gyotaku artist, Yamamoto has worked with printmakers from Japan, Europe, Canada, China, and the United States since 1973 and has taught his techniques to thousands worldwide. His work has been featured at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Living Print is made possible by generous philanthropic support from Joyce and Greg Fuss and Janet Sands. If you wish to support the Museum in its mission of inspiring a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world, please reach out to development@sbnature2.org.

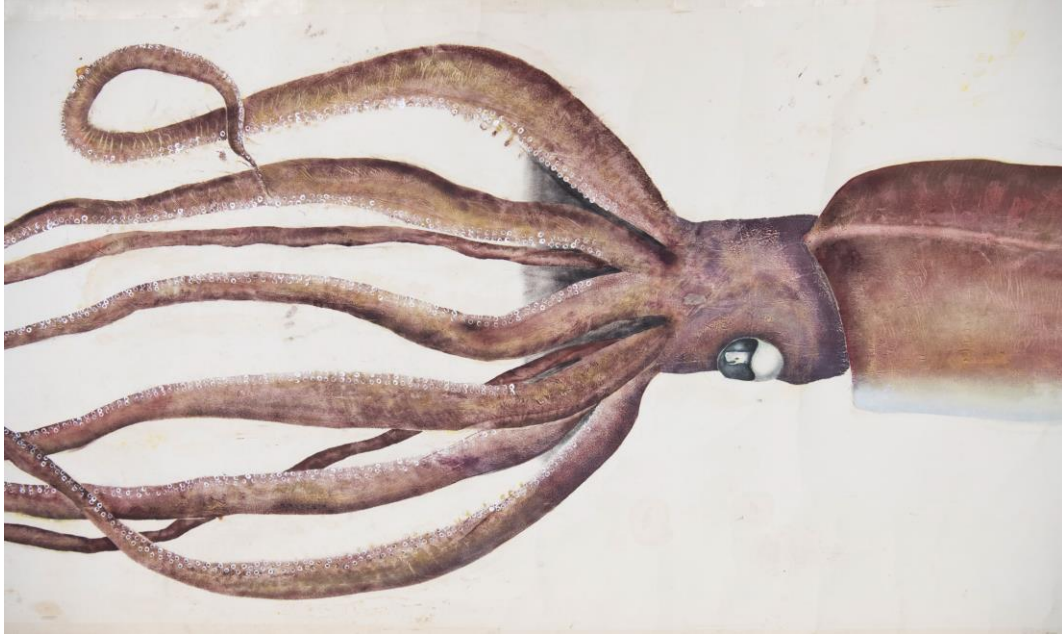
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About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Powered by Science. Inspired by Nature. The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History connects people to nature for the betterment of both, drawing on collections that preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Central Coast and beyond. Founded in 1916, the Museum is a private nonprofit supported in part by philanthropy, membership, and visitors. Members visit free. For more information, visit sbnature.org.



Process photo by Latifat Apatira.



Detail of giant squid gyotaku by Mineo Yamamoto.