

Art World (<https://news.artnet.com/art-world>)

In the Kitchen: Artist Delano Dunn Dishes Out His Family's Secret Gumbo Recipe, Which Inspired His Latest Work

The famous New Orleans soup is the basis for new works on view at the artist's solo show at Vermont's Brattleboro Museum.

Sarah Cascone (<https://news.artnet.com/about/sarah-cascone-25>), July 15, 2021



Delano Dunn with works from his series "Roux," inspired by the ingredients in his family recipe for gumbo. Photo courtesy of Arts and Public Life, Chicago.

Making gumbo takes about six hours. [Delano Dunn](http://www.artnet.com/artists/delano-dunn/) (<http://www.artnet.com/artists/delano-dunn/>), knows, because that's about how long the video is for the Zoom cooking demonstration he did last May during his [residency](https://artsandpubliclife.org/airs2020dd) (<https://artsandpubliclife.org/airs2020dd>), at [Arts and Public Life](https://artsandpubliclife.org/) (<https://artsandpubliclife.org/>), in Chicago, preparing gumbo and sharing the family recipe for the first time.

"I had other artists who worked with food call in, and my mom called in, trouble shooting the gumbo as I was making it," [Dunn \(http://www.delanodunn.com/\)](http://www.delanodunn.com/) told Artnet News. "It was exhausting but it was a lot of fun."

Dunn documented his gumbo recipe—named for his mother, Diane Mangle—from beginning to end as a way to complement "Roux," a new series of mixed-media works inspired by the ingredients for the soup, a classic New Orleans dish featuring meat, seafood, and the Creole "holy trinity" of celery, bell pepper, and onion.

"Gumbo's a huge part of my family," Dunn said. "My experiences with it were sitting around in the kitchen, watching my mother clean shrimp, prepare the chicken, cut up the sausage, make the roux, stirring it forever to make sure it didn't burn."



Live Gumbo Social With Delano Dunn
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"When I started the residency, I had just had some gumbo and was thinking about how important it was to me. I thought, 'I'll make a couple of works about gumbo—it will take me out of my comfort zone, because I don't normally make work about food,'" Dunn said. "Then COVID hit and I couldn't work on my other projects."

In the end, "Roux" became a set of five collages and one half of the artist's first solo museum show, "[Delano Dunn: Novelties \(https://www.brattleboromuseum.org/2021/01/06/delano-dunn-novelties/\)](https://www.brattleboromuseum.org/2021/01/06/delano-dunn-novelties/)," currently on view at the [Brattleboro Museum and Art Center \(https://www.brattleboromuseum.org\)](https://www.brattleboromuseum.org) in Vermont.

The works combine mylar, tape, wallpaper, vinyl, cellophane, and historical imagery borrowed from library archives that the artist scans and prints in high resolution. Dunn also incorporated a new material, aluminum roofing tar, in place of his typical shoe polish, which serves as a reference both to African American shoe shine boys and its use in blackface makeup.



Delano Dunn, *Untitled (Sassafras)*, 2020. Courtesy of Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, Vermont.

"I wanted to bring in material that had a history as a form of protection that I could still manipulate like I do with the shoe polish," Dunn said. "Silver roofing tar deflects heat. It protects the inside environment so it doesn't get too hot and the bills don't go up."

The final piece in the series is *Untitled (The Bear)*. "I just wanted to think about my aggressive nature when it comes to the gumbo," Dunn said. "I think I'm some kind of protector, preventing cultural appropriation."



Delano Dunn, *Untitled (Flour)*, 2020. Courtesy of Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, Vermont.

But the series isn't meant as a grand statement about the legacy of African American cuisine in Southern cooking traditions.

"I try not to think of the Black experience as a monolithic experience," Dunn said. "I usually focus specifically on my experience as an aspect of the Black experience."

Diane's Gumbo

serves eight

Shrimp Stock

2 white onions
 2 celery stalks
 2 jars oysters
 shells from 2 lbs shrimp
 2 packs of dried shrimp
 2 packs of ground shrimp

Gumbo

1 red bell pepper, diced
 1 bunch of green onions, diced
 7 garlic pieces
 3-4 white onions
 4 celery stalks
 parsley
 2 bay leaves
 black pepper
 red pepper
 salt

oregano
Creole seasoning
filé powder
2 cups of vegetable oil
2 cups flour
2 packs of chicken breast and/or wings
12 blue crabs (alive)
King, Dungeness and/or other crab
10 lbs shrimp (2 lbs with heads on)
4 types of sausage (andouille, kielbasa, ect.)

Making the shrimp stock

The night before, combine packets of dried and powdered shrimp, onions cut in quarters, celery cut in quarters, garlic, cleaned shrimp heads, and the oysters (and their juice) with cold water in a large pot.

Boil and then let simmer as long as possible for a richer taste. You may add water during the summering process as needed.

Strain and cool stock and then refrigerate.

Making the gumbo

Cook chicken and sausage in separate skillets. This can be done a day in advance and refrigerated.

Heat up the stock in a large pot.

Heat oil in a large cast-iron skillet and add flour, stirring constantly, careful not to let it burn.

After roux reaches the color of milk chocolate (45 minutes to an hour), add the bell pepper, onions, and celery. Lower heat and cook until vegetables are soft. Continue to stir constantly.

Add sausage and chicken to hot stock. Cook for 20 minutes.

Add roux mixture to the stock and season with the bay leaves and powdered ingredients (parsley, black pepper, red pepper, salt, oregano, and Creole seasoning). Cook for another 20 minutes.

Add filé powder and let the gumbo thicken. You can always add more roux if your gumbo is not thick enough, or a little chicken broth or bottled oyster juice if it's too thick.

Add green onions. Add shrimp and crab. Cover and cook for a few minutes.

Taste and see if you need more salt, pepper, etc. Serve over rice.

"Delano Dunn: Novelties" is on view at the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, 10 Vernon Street, Brattleboro, Vermont June 19–October 11, 2021.

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Two Segments of an Ancient Mummy Wrapping Have Been Digitally Reunited to Reveal a Hieroglyphic Guide to the Afterlife

It remains unclear why the pieces were dispersed to different parts of the world.

Artnet News (<https://news.artnet.com/about/artnet-news-39>), July 15, 2021



A detail from the Book of the Dead. Photo: Art Images via Getty Images.

Two pieces of a mummy wrapping, once contiguous and later dispersed to opposite sides of the world, have been reconnected digitally. Together, they reveal scenes and spells from an ancient Egyptian text meant to guide the dead.

After the University of Canterbury in New Zealand catalogued a newly digitized image of one of the fragments, which has been in the collection of the school's Teece Museum of Antiquities for nearly five decades, researchers at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles pieced it next to a shroud from their own holdings. The fragments, it turns out, fit together like a long-lost puzzle.

The news was announced last month by the University of Canterbury. "There is a small gap between the two fragments; however, the scene makes sense, the incantation makes sense, and the text makes it spot on," said Alison Griffith, an associate professor in the school's Classics department, in a [statement](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/news/2021/300bce-mummy-shroud-fragment-in-nz-finds-match-in-us.html) (<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/news/2021/300bce-mummy-shroud-fragment-in-nz-finds-match-in-us.html>). "It is just amazing to piece fragments together remotely."

Both pieces of linen are covered with hieroglyphics from the Book of the Dead, an Egyptian funerary manuscript meant to assist a deceased person as they make their way through the underworld to the afterlife. On these particular segments are pictures of butchers cutting up an ox; a funerary boat with the goddesses Isis and Nephthys; and a figure dragging a sledge decorated with a picture of Anubis, the Egyptian God of the Dead.

A similar configuration of scenes is located in the Book of the Dead on the Turin Papyrus.



[R] The University of Canterbury's fragment held at the Teece Museum of Antiquities and [L] the adjoining fragment from the Getty Research Institute. Courtesy of the University of Canterbury.

"Egyptian belief was that the deceased needed worldly things on their journey to and in the afterlife, so the art in pyramids and tombs is not art as such, it's really about scenes of offerings, supplies, servants and other things you need on the other side," Griffith said.

The segments came from a set of bandages that once enveloped a man named Petosiris, according to Foy Scalf of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute. "Fragments of these pieces are now spread around the world, in both institutional and private collections," Scalf said. "It is an unfortunate fate for Petosiris, who took such care and expense for his burial."

How and why the two pieces of cloth were separated remains unknown. But there may be another clue on the way: another possible match has already been identified in a fragment from the University of Queensland, Australia.

The University of Canterbury's segment entered its collection in 1972 when a professor purchased it on behalf of the school at a Sotheby's sale in London. Prior to that, it lived in the hands of Thomas Phillips, a well-known antiquary collector, who acquired it from Charles Augustus Murray, the British consul general in Egypt from 1846-63.

The Getty Research Institute did not immediately respond to an inquiry about the history of its own fragment.

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