

june edmonds

public  
& private



June Edmonds was born in Los Angeles, the city in which she now resides. Currently an Art Instructor, Public Artist, Artist and Student, she received her art education at San Diego State University and Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia to earn her M.F.A.

*We Know Who We Are*

*Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky*

*Know What I'm Sayin'?*

*Butterfly Dreams*

*Self Portrait in Red, Yellow and Green*

*Untitled*

*Drawings in Black: Beloved*

*Drawings in Black: Kapila Discovers*

*Drawings in Black: Day One*

# public works

## *We Know Who We Are*

Comissioned by MTA in 1995, Ms. Edmonds completed Venetian glass mosaics for Metro Blueline stations in Long Beach, California. The piece, entitled, “We Know Who We Are” was simultaneously multicultural (in the popular sense of the word) *and* inspired by her African heritage. June Edmonds: “With a close look at this entire piece, some will perceive visual references to the African influence on all cultures in the colossal heads that are depicted. I do not show these to boast superiority but to show a respect the peoples of the world must have had for Africans, before the institution of African slavery and colonialism; before the need to dehumanize the African diaspora.”

*We Know Who We Are*

*Venetian Glass Mosaics*



*We Know Who We Are*

*Venetian Glass Mosaics*



*We Know Who We Are*

*Venetian Glass Mosaics*



### *Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky*

This public art project was installed in November of 1999 at the Algin Sutton Recreation Center in Los Angeles on Hoover and Manchester Boulevard. June Edmonds: “It is the first Venetian Glass Mosaic that I fabricated all on my own, the Metro Blueline Piece, was fabricated by the phenomenal Monika Scharff of Scharff & Scharff. Actually, I fabricated one of those mosaic panels, while Monika did the remaining eleven. Doing the mosaic myself this time was one of the most difficult things I have done in my life. I had no idea how involved the project would really be.”

# *Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky*

*Venetian Glass Mosaics*





## *Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky*

*Venetian Glass Mosaics*

“I wanted to create a work of art with a water theme since the mosaic was going outside a poolhouse. I also wanted to have an African theme that would be universal in a different way than the first public art project I did. I knew that this piece would be a part



of children’s lives more so than the lives of the local adults, so I called a storyteller friend (Michael McCarty) and asked him to find an African story that centers around water. He then called Leslie Perry and this is what they came up with. The ancient West African story of why exactly that sun and moon are in the sky. The tale lets us know that these two personalities began living on the earth... together... before the catastrophe Mr. Sun brought on. You have to hear Leslie tell it!”

“The Sun is married to Ms. Moon and they live together in a very nice home. Sun likes to go around exploring during the day and one day he met Ms. Sea (as

## *Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky*

*Venetian Glass Mosaics*

in the sea). He really wanted to impress her so he invited her to his and Ms. Moon's home. Ms. Moon wasn't all that happy with the news but Ms. Sea was already at the doorstep insisting to bring in all her children... her starfish, her dolphins and her whales

too! Well the home ended up being capsized and there was nowhere for Sun and Moon to go but to the sky. Ms. Moon was so angry she told Mr. Sun she never wanted to see him again and they agreed to live in separate areas of the sky so their paths never have to cross again!"

"A long running fence is being fabricated to go in front of the daycare center right next door that illustrates this whole story where the mosaics on the poolhouse illustrates only the end."



# private works

## *Know What I'm Sayin'?*

“I was fortunate enough to participate in a workshop and exhibition at Self-Help Graphics partnership a few years ago and fell in love doing Silkscreen Monoprints. The title of that series is ‘Know What I’m Sayin’?’ These monoprints were done in response to the paranoia felt by some when conscious People of Color get together for a simple conversation. Perhaps they heard Tracy Chapman disclose years ago that whispers are plans for revolution.”

*Know What I'm Sayin'?*

*Silkscreen Monoprint*



*Know What I'm Sayin'?*

*Silkscreen Monoprint*



## *Butterfly Dreams*

*Silkscreen Monoprint*

“Since then, I have occasionally done small versions of my own Silkscreens. This body of work is inspired by a single dream, a delightful dream I wish for everybody. (The title of this series is ‘Butterfly Dreams.’) I have always loved drawing and painting the face and always come back to it, though presently, my main visual concerns are in abstraction.”





*Self Portrait in Red, Yellow  
and Green*

*Oil on Paper*

June Edmonds spent her formative years as an artist, in her late teens and twenties, “burning the midnight oil” as an oil painter. The fruits of this labor underscore her remarkable attention to detail—rendering perspective, color and lighting. In “Self Portrait in Red, Yellow and Green” one is immediately struck by her mastery over the brush. Here she is literally sketching with paint.



*Untitled*

*Oil on Canvas*





## *Drawings in Black: Beloved*

*Mixed Media on Paper*

“The drawings and paintings represented in this body of work are more intuitive than I have been used to executing. I did not plan to do these pieces; I allowed them to happen, which is a first for me. I was at residencies in 1997 when I did these pieces therefore had an opportunity to be very in touch with them. I drew by day and read my favorite literature and poets by night. The titles to the large drawings reflect that.”



*Drawings in Black: Kapila Discovers*

*Mixed Media on Paper*



# *Drawings in Black: Day One*

*Mixed Media on Paper*



“I liked the idea of doing something very different and that is why there is no color in the pieces, which is unlike what I usually do. The pieces ended up black and then I wanted them to be as black as possible. The process was so special to me, discovering the richness of the black that the medium allowed me to create. (The paintings that followed the drawings have copper incorporated in them. I find the copper has a depth and richness that I could get with charcoal but not with paint.)”

“The process of these works continues as I try to watch viewer’s reaction to the blackness of these works. The responses are either wonderfully positive or unsurprisingly negative. I was at a residency in New Mexico when a fellow artist, a writer came in while the large drawings were lining my walls and she was exhilarated by them, responding to the ‘passion, energy and depth’ (her words). The other writer commented negatively about the work. She spoke of her inability to be around this blackness, she turned her back to them, she was not willing to engage and see them for what they were.”

*June Edmonds*

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