

The background features a vibrant blue field with several large, irregular, organic shapes in a golden-yellow color. These shapes are scattered across the frame, creating a dynamic and textured visual effect. The overall composition is abstract and modern.

HER SPACE

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Curated by Teresa Silva & Holly Holmes

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Heaven Gallery is pleased to present Her Space, a group exhibition that focuses on three lines of visual inquiry: the tensions between abstraction and figuration, colors and their spectrum of moods, and responses to architecture in the picture plane and beyond. The exhibition brings together a cadre of Chicago-based artists who work in different disciplines but share commonalities in these converging aesthetic interests: Jean Alexander Frater, Leslie Baum, Julietta Cheung, Julia Fish, Maria Gaspar, Holly Holmes, Anna Kunz, Mayumi Lake, Melissa Leandro, Cydney M. Lewis, Tish Noel, Monica Rezman, Nina Rizzo, Edra Soto, Michelle Wasson, and Gwendolyn Zabicki. Her Space spans painting, drawing, sculpture, and other media that push the limits of the pictorial surface, highlighting approaches to expressive depictions that are referential or literal, a variety of color interactions, and the poetics of space. Through their own abstracted vocabularies, the artists re-present another reality or context to create a fluid spatial experience through color or scale that reminds the viewer of the power that artistic thinking holds. We live in environments of our own construction and, by extension, art is a constructed environment that collapses the psychic power of the picture plane and the interiority of the artist. Each work represents a galaxy of its own, while the exhibition as a whole suffuses emotions and the metaphysics conveyed through a universe of internal and external worlds.

Her Space is co-curated by Holly Holmes and Teresa Silva.

Anna Kunz



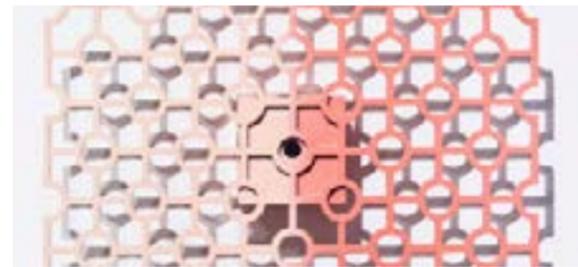
1-2

Cydney M. Lewis



3-4

Edra Soto



5-6

Gwendolyn Zabicki



7-8

Holly Holmes



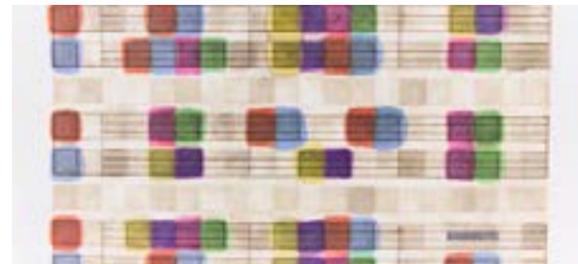
9-10

Jean Alexander Frater



11-12

Julia Fish



13-14

Julietta Cheung



15-16

Leslie Baum



17-18

Maria Gaspar



19-20

Mayumi Lake



21-22

Melissa Leandro



23-24

Michelle Wasson



25-26

Monica Rezman



27-28

Nina Rizzo



29-30

Tish Noel



31-32



HOMAGE TO THE TUBERS, Anna Kunz, Acrylic, dye, ink on poly chiffon and non woven fiber , 99.5 x 108 inches, 2025



Anna Kunz makes luminous, vibrant paintings and installations with an emphasis on color, material, and process. Her practice considers the viewer's experience, taking into account—with deep awareness and intentionality—how each work, each gesture, affects the exhibition space and, by extension, the viewer. Kunz's tessellating shapes seep into and lean on one another; she calls this "compassionate geometry."



"Homage to the Tubers because I'm in favor and in awe of humble, fleeting and vibrantly defiant blooms"

– Anna Kunz



New Growth On New Soil, Cydney M. Lewis, Hand cut paper, sequins, fabric, rhinestones, wood on plexiglas (PET), 99.5 x 108 inches, 2022

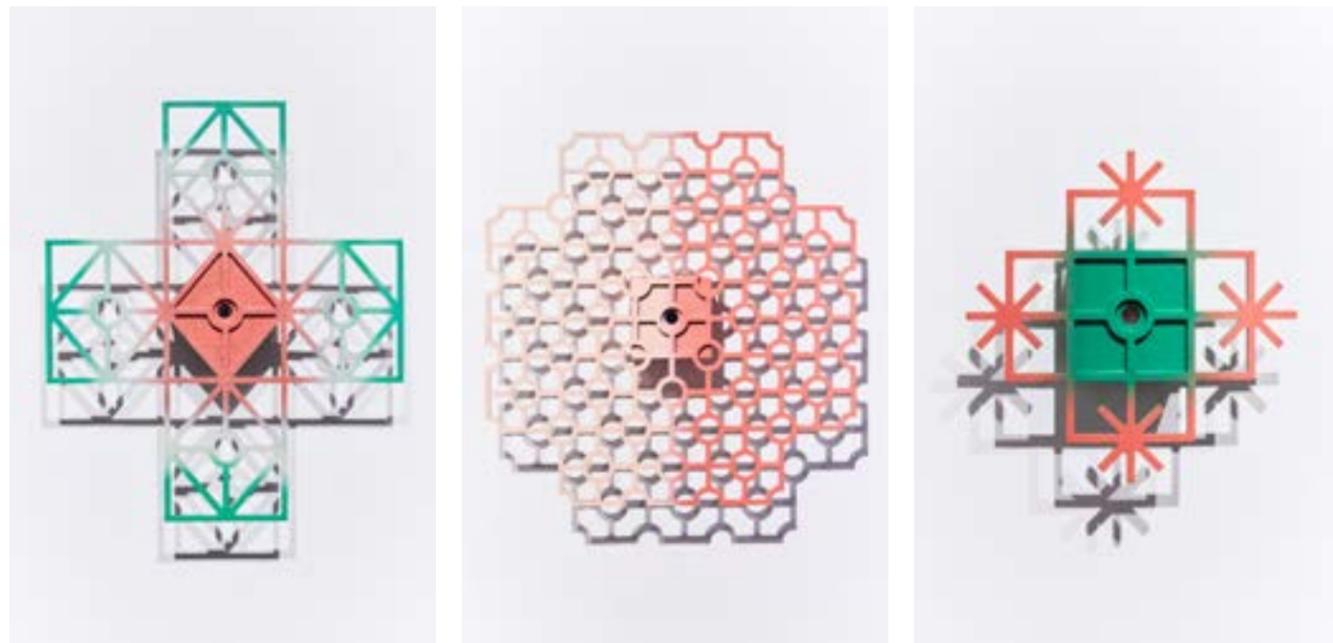


Cydney M. Lewis is a Chicago based multimedia artist who works primarily in collage and assemblage. Lewis's works feature an amalgamation of materials found in a variety of places; she explores the relationship between the spiritual and the natural and celebrates the depth of beauty that exists within the lived environment, pondering how humans can collectively move towards a more harmonious future despite being entrenched in a consumerist society. She studied at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago as well as L'École d'architecture in Versailles, France, receiving her BS in Architectural Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.

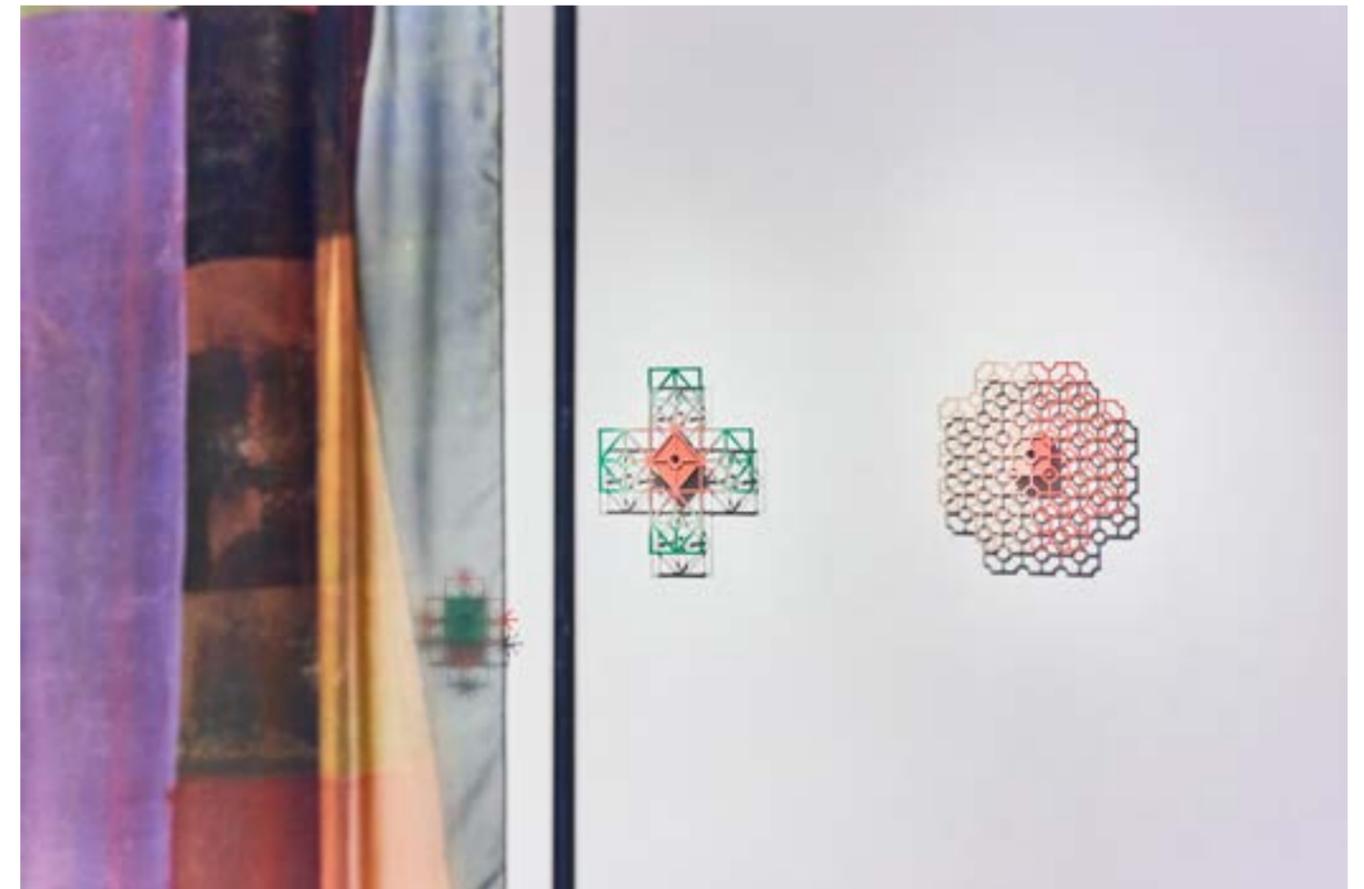


"With New Growth on New Soil, I was thinking about how resilience takes shape from fragments—how what's discarded or overlooked can become the ground for new life. The piece is both fragile and defiant, growing in directions we might not expect, reminding me that beauty often emerges from collision and repair."

– Cydney M. Lewis



por la señal (#25 - 3), por la señal (#25 - 6), por la señal (#25 - 8), Edra Soto, Sintra, wood, plastic viewer lens, inkjet print, 17 x 15 x 3 inches, 20 x 20 x 3 inches, 10 x 10 x 3 inches, 2025



Edra Soto is a Puerto Rican-born artist, educator, and co-director of outdoor project space The Franklin. Soto instigates meaningful, relevant, and often difficult conversations surrounding socioeconomic and cultural oppression, erasure of history, and loss of cultural knowledge. Among her distinguished accolades are the Joyce Award, 3Arts Next Level Award, Illinois Arts Council Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Foundation's Grant, Ree Kaneko Award, and US LatinX Art Forum Fellowship. Her work is in the collection of institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Pérez Art Museum Miami; Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago, and the Art Institute of Chicago.

“Material and intention become complementary. While anything has the potential of becoming “material,” an indispensable building block to each artwork, it would not be enough without the intention that it intends to embody.”

– Edra Soto





Puddle, Gwendolyn Zabicki, Oil on canvas, 40 x 28 inches, 2025



Hand Mirror, Gwendolyn Zabicki, Oil on canvas, 22 x 31 inches, 2017



Gwendolyn Zabicki is a painter from Chicago. She earned her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2005 and her MFA from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2012. Previously, her work has shown at White Columns, Anastasia Tinari Projects, Goldfinch Gallery, Heaven Gallery, Slow Gallery, Roman Susan, Comfort Station, the Hyde Park Art Center, Gallery 400, and the Bauhaus Universität in Weimar, Germany. She was selected for the 2022 Midwest edition of *New American Paintings*, issue 161. In 2020, she was named a Breakout Artist by *New-City Magazine*. Her work has been reviewed in the *Chicago Reader*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and she has appeared on the *Bad At Sports* podcast. She has curated exhibitions at Heaven Gallery, the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, the Riverside Arts Center, the College of DuPage and the Illinois State Museum. She has taught painting and drawing at the Hyde Park Art Center, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, and the University of Illinois at Chicago.



“Learning to paint is about learning to see—to notice the hue, saturation, and value of the objects around us. But I would add that painting is also about learning to acknowledge the things that are right in front of us and to care about them.”

– Gwendolyn Zabicki



Travel Together, Holly Holmes, Wool, cotton, bamboo, acrylic,
36 x 30 inches, 2024



Over the past couple of years, I have been working with tension between abstraction and representation. The matter of facts, readings or translations of these situations and elements of life resonates within me for many different reasons. In my work it is this resonance that I want to pass along to the viewers. With my visual work and with the text of the titles I give rise to the friction of translation that the depiction of abstraction carries.

For me to create this current work it helps to travel outside my home. Home is wonderful and should be explored but there is an excitement and a bit of wonder that comes from leaving your known. I am always noticing details and visually studying the world around me, translating spaces, and experiences that

were in and are in public view. I make work from sketches in the studio and at times using memory and feelings to recreate the space.

The current work is a set of large acrylic paintings on watercolor paper, panel and or canvas. I also produce tufted wall hangings, and sometimes artworks for the floor. The works in this series offer the viewer flat color and texture with a mix of emotion. In most aspects of the pieces are depicting real-life places I have traveled to. Many of the art pieces have emotional resonates tied to them that I share with the audience by, my titles and color palettes, laying warm purples with cool teals for an unsettling effect or the play with contrasts to be eye popping and hopefully jaw dropping.

“Whether the quotidian commute to work or an exciting landscape overseas I take in my surroundings and translate them into my work . I simplify the surroundings and it gives the work a tension between abstraction and representation.”

– Holly Holmes





Wave Drop, Jean Alexander Frater, Acrylic and latex on canvas ,
44 x 44 inches, 2025



Jean Alexander Frater subverts and destroys the painterly gesture with torn-up, reassembled and scaled down reinterpretations of her color-blocked canvases. She carefully reassembles new images and forms that deliberately shift as you move around the intricate Paintings. The raw canvas becomes part of the surface, and the layering dually hides and reveals the entirety of the painting. Alexander Frater thinks of abstraction as an inbetween state, where there is both something very knowable and unknowable in the image. Jean limits her materials to Paint, Canvas and Rectangular stretcher and calls her work "Paintings," but she pushes the boundaries of this language by mixing in techniques associated with fiber arts, ceramics, and sculptural techniques. Jean is represented by Engage Projects in Chicago and runs the artist-run space Material Exhibitions.

"I enjoy doing, undoing, and redoing. I want to build on the vocabulary of forms that define my work, but I also want the freedom to abandon that when necessary."
– Jean Alexander Frater





Study for Cadenza #2, after Thresholds: spectrum transcripyion/s [orange with blue], [yellow with violet], [red with green], Julia Fish, Japanese printed tablet paper with archival pen, ink / hand-stamped unique, 7 x 9 3/4 inches each, 2023



Inclusively and theoretically, Julia Fish's work can be characterized as both site-generated and context-specific: in temporary projects / installations, and in the on-going sequence of paintings and works on paper developed in response to a close examination of the experience of living and working within her home and studio, a 1922 two-storey brick storefront in Chicago. Fish has described this process as one which "opens onto questions and critical approaches to the practice of painting, to drawing, and to the nuances and implications of representation / re-presentation." Concurrent and influential research interests include the related disciplines of architecture, architectural history and theory.



" My work engages an inverse-norm to architectural process : working from house to plan, varied structures have generated color-encoded visual spatial systems. There's something about proportion and measurements—physical surfaces—and the way light moves through rooms, WW-season after season. I live inside the subject of my work."

– Julia Fish



Consonance, Julietta Cheung, Archival inkjet print on Hajnemühle Photo Rag, 17.5 x 25.5 inches, 2021

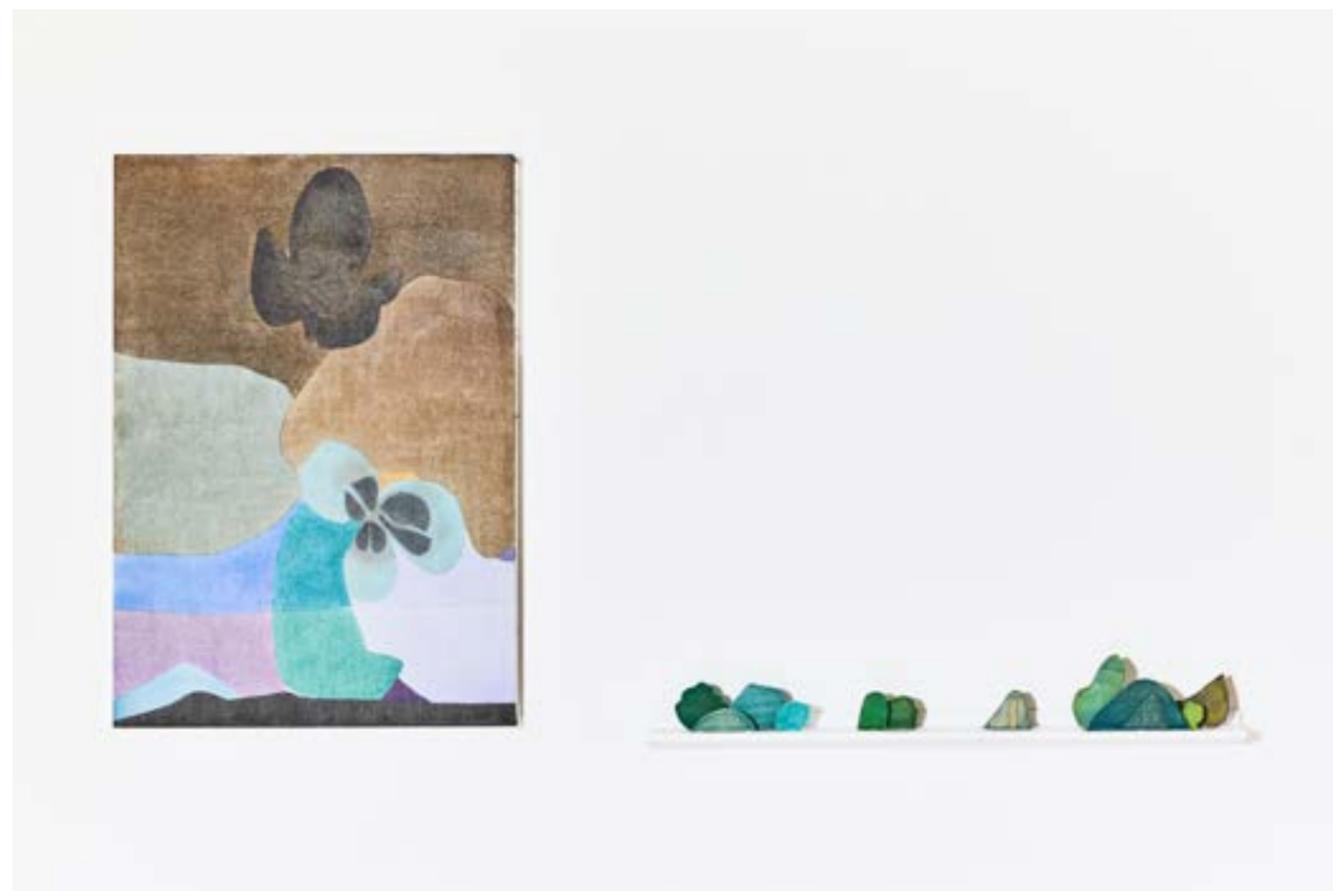


Julietta Cheung is an interdisciplinary artist based in Chicago, IL. Her body of work blends visual art and writing, putting sculpture, installations, photography, typography, and reading performances in conversation to explore how common terms and objects are produced, articulated, and reiterated in the public sphere. Her art and writing have been presented in publications and at venues including the Poetry Foundation; Lit & Luz Festival at the Logan Center for the Arts, University of Chicago and Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, MX; Chicago Architecture Biennial via Roman Susan; Chicago Cultural Center; Kenning Editions, Chicago, IL; tripwire: a journal of poetics, Oakland, CA; the Banff Centre, Alberta, CA; Chicago Architecture Biennial, Chicago, IL; White-Out Studio, Knokke-Heist, BE; Scheltema, Amsterdam, NL; Henry Street Settlement, New York, NY. Cheung is an associate professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

“This work from 2021 is part of a series of street posters that explores the nature of public speech.”

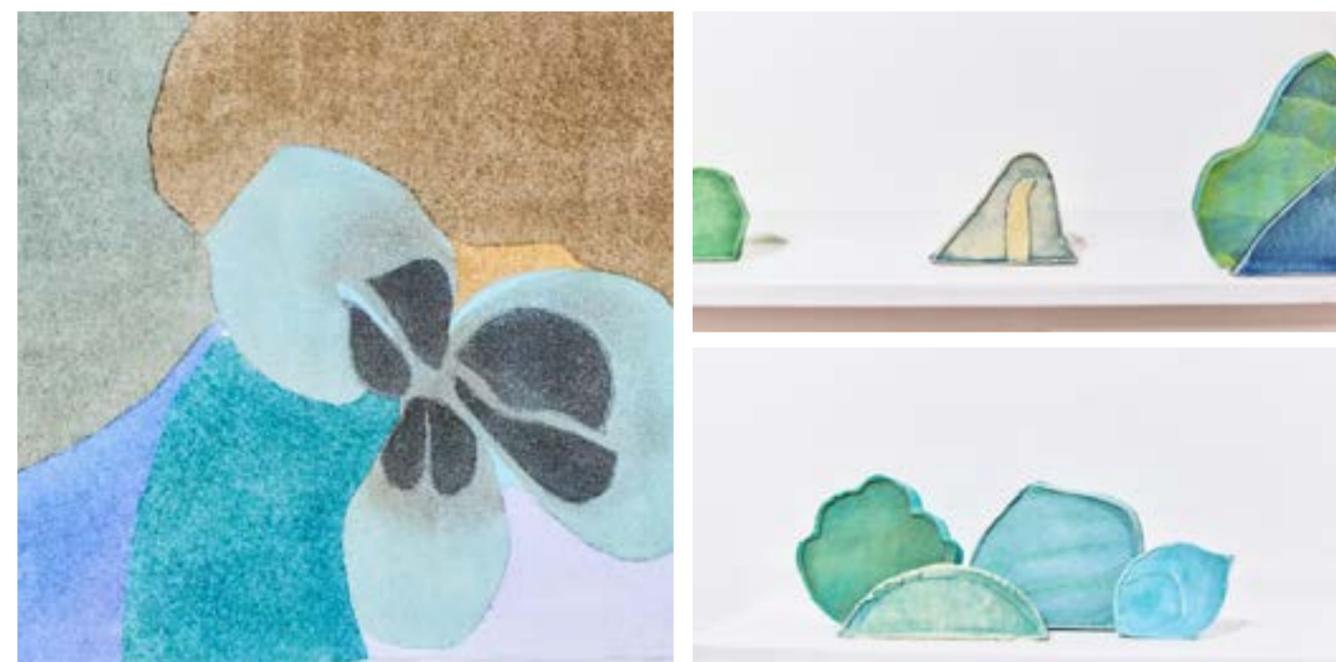
– Julietta Cheung





a garden in vase, Leslie Baum, Acrylic on canvas,
31 1/2 x 22 inches, 2024

echoes, Leslie Baum, Watercolor on bisqued stoneware and glaze on stoneware,
sizes variable, 2023 - 2024



Leslie Baum has shown her work nationally and internationally, including exhibitions in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Portland, Mexico City, Rome, and South Korea. Recent exhibitions include Here Comes the Rainbow, the Cleve Carney Gallery at the College of DuPage, IL, Excuse Me If I get Too Deep, Geary Contemporary, NYC, Ohne Titel, 65grand, Chicago IL, MOUNTAIN and sea at 4th Ward Project Space and Legends for Loose Grids, Waiting Room, Minneapolis MN. Her animation short, the Megillat Breakdown, made in collaboration with Frederick Wells, was included in the Wisconsin Union Film Committee at the University of Wisconsin 2015 experimental film series and in the 2014 Eyeworks Festival. Her drawings and paintings are in the permanent collections of the Chicago Art Institute, the Elmhurst Art Museum, and the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital. Her work has been reviewed extensively including in Artforum, Art in America, Hyperallergic, and the Chicago Tribune. She is included in New American Paintings vol. 119 and 100 Painters of Tomorrow. She has received residencies from Yaddo and the Vermont Studio Center. Leslie Baum lives and works in Chicago, Illinois.

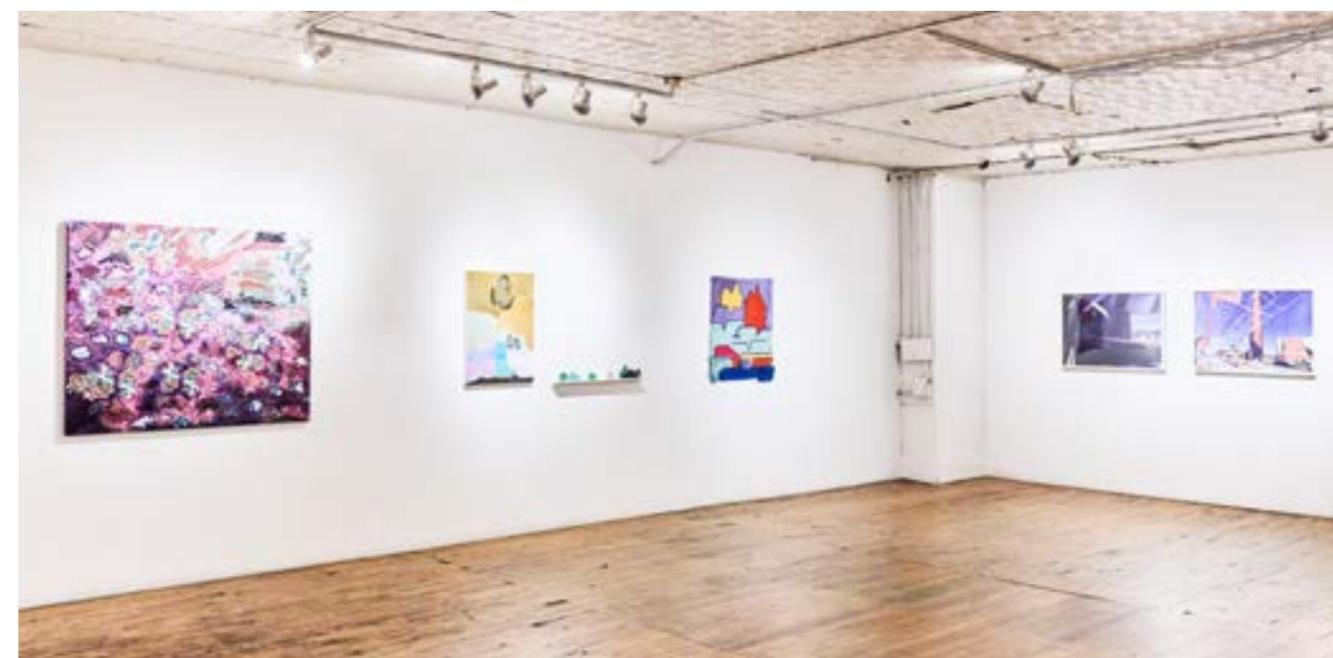


“Like a migratory bird and its nesting ground, I repeatedly return to the same paintings - my own, art historical, and now within my ongoing plein air project, watercolors painted by friends, peers, and colleagues. This process pushes me to a deeper understanding of what might otherwise become familiar, stale, and even invisible.”

– Leslie Baum



Wretched and Paramount I & II, Maria Gasper, Inkjet print on Hajnemühle Photo Rag, 27 1/2 x 39 1/4 inches, 2014 - 16



Maria Gasper is a Chicago-born, first-generation, interdisciplinary artist negotiating the politics of location through installation, sculpture, sound, and performance. Gaspar's body of work addresses issues of spatial justice in order to amplify, mobilize, or divert structures of power through individual and collective gestures. For the past decade, Gaspar has been recognized nationally for her multi-year projects that attempt to dismantle borders, transcend penal matter, and turn places of precarity into places of possibility. Formative works like "Radioactive: Stories from Beyond the Wall" and the "96 Acres Project" include site interventions at the largest single-site jail in the country, the Cook County Department of Corrections, in her childhood neighborhood.

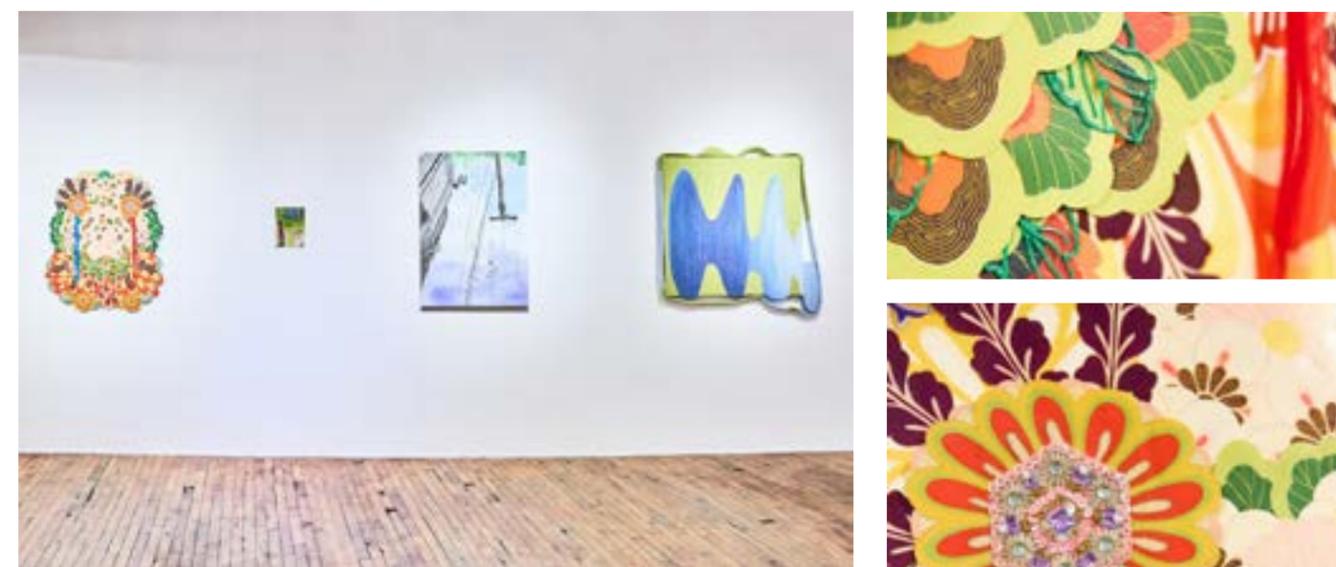


"For over a decade, I have produced a body of work focused on dismantling borders, transcending penal matter, and transforming places of precarity into sites of possibility. This includes large-scale drawings, sculptures, installations, works on paper, artist's books, sound art, video, and performance art."

– Maria Gasper



Unison (Decora Kei #2), Mayumi Lake, Pigment print, gold leaf, resin, synthetic hair, sequin, ABS, tulle, 32 x 37 x 2 inches, 2020



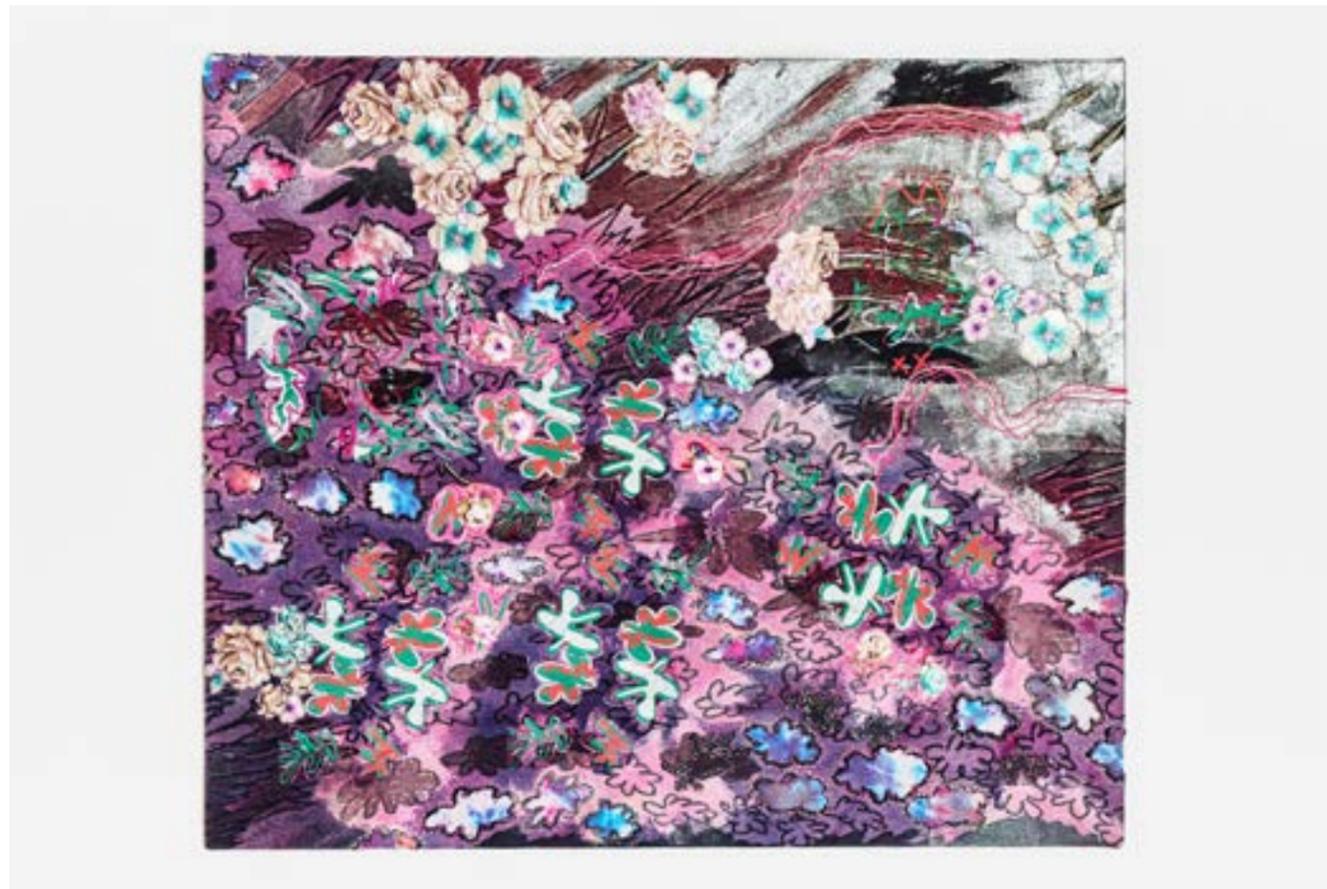
Mayumi Lake (b.Osaka) is an interdisciplinary artist and educator, whose work explores the ideas of time, memory, and floating between the real and imaginary. She integrates photography, sculpture, sound, moving images, and installation to expand her narrative into more complex layers.

Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at venues including Miyako Yoshinaga Gallery, Asia Society, Art in General, and Artists Space in New York; Chicago Artists Coalition and Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago; Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst; Lubeznik Center for the Arts in Michigan City; Fotografie Forum International in Frankfurt; Cornelius Pleser Galerie in Munich; Galleria PaciArte in Brescia; FOTOAMERICA in Santiago; Witzenhausen Gallery in Amsterdam; and the Setouchi Triennale in Takamatsu.



Dekora-kei, a Japanese street fashion style from Harajuku, features a cute-overload decorated look, characterized by bright, neon, and pastel colors accessories. For my Decora-kei II (my second work featuring this fashion style), I incorporated this fun fashion style, pushing the “more is more” idea in my Photographic-sculpture work, “Unison”.

– Mayumi Lake



MELISSA LEANDRO (American, b. 1989) is a Chicago-based artist whose practice is deeply rooted in personal experience, her relationship to family and cultural heritage, and a strong connection to the natural world. She integrates imagery of landscapes, flora, and fauna into richly layered textile works that explore the ongoing cycles of growth, change, and decay—both in her everyday life and in the world around her. Leandro draws from a combination of hand-drawn and imprinted imagery, using traditional and experimental textile techniques such as needlework, quilting, weaving, dyeing, and embroidery. Through these processes, she creates textured surfaces that accumulate like residues - dyed, printed, patched, and layered - to reflect the emotional and physical landscapes she inhabits.

“My work is rooted in personal experience, family heritage, and a deep connection to the natural world. Through layering textiles with techniques like quilting, weaving, and dyeing, I create lush landscapes that reflect the ongoing cycles of growth and decay in everyday life, offering insight into how these shifts shape my identity and provide moments of refuge.”

– Mellisa Leandro



Chrome Fields, Melissa Leandro, Jacquard woven cloth, stitching, embroidery, beading, foil, plastic, 47 x 55 inches, 2021



Oh Feronia, Through Glass, Michelle Wasson, Acrylic on canvas,
24 x 18 inches, 54 x 38 in, 2021



Michelle Wasson's paintings foretell a serene future. Created intuitively from memory and imagination, layers of color and light portray peaceful planes. Flowing between landscape, still life and the figurative, Wasson's canvases reflect our shared humanity in the natural world. In glowing scenes, divine vessels spring forth life evoking Mother Nature's power to create and destroy—and create yet again.



"Flowing between landscape, still life and the figurative, these canvases reflect our shared humanity in the natural world. In moody scenes, divine vessels spring forth life evoking Mother Nature's power to create and destroy—and create yet again."

– Michelle Wasson



Monica Rezman is a multi-media artist who explores intimacy within abstraction through the use of traditional media and everyday found materials. She studied painting and textile design at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. While at SAIC, she spent a study-abroad year at the Instituto Allende in Mexico. In 1993, she studied classical drawing and painting at the Florence Academy of Art in Florence, Italy. In 1999 and 2002 consecutively, Rezman was awarded an Art-in-Residence in Gujarat, India, One of the world's most revered craft communities in textiles. For the last forty years, she has exhibited nationally and internationally including exhibitions at the Riverside Art Center, 2019, Governors State University Gallery, 2019, Merida English Library, Mexico 2015, The Chicago Cultural Center, 2017; The Contemporary Art Gallery, India 1999, and the South Bend Regional Museum of Art 1998. From 2017-18 she was the Artist-in-Residence at the Chicago Artist Coalition's Field/Program. She is a 2020 recipient of an Individual Illinois Arts Council Grant. Her work has been reviewed by Hyperallergic, Alan Artner (Chicago Tribune), and New City. She has recently had a one-person exhibition at 65 Grand in Chicago and a group show at Kavi Gupta Gallery. She is currently exhibiting at the Patricia Sweetow Gallery in Los Angeles.



"I have struggled to get maximum meaning in the simplest form".

– Monica Rezman

Fair Play, Two Ways of Running, Monica Rezman, Canvas, Acrylic, Cardboard, Thread, 24 x 30 inches, 34 x 17 x 19 inches, 2023



Toadstool Path, Nina Rizzo, Oil on canvas, 78 x 72 inches, 2023 - 2025



Nina Rizzo's paintings are equal part fact and fiction. Imagined objects and unseen, hybrid spaces create a practice that is full of wonder and play. Direct experience with a place, event or object as catalyst is abstracted, invented and explored in order to conjure new possibilities. Paint exists, in these images, so that its physicality becomes part of the image: flat areas and surface build-up battle hints of illusion as these combinations attempt to maintain simultaneous existence. References to structures and natural elements create tension where surface competes with depth, and image competes with abstraction. Exaggerated color, fluid brush strokes, and spatial ambiguities reveal sensual environments where interiors and exteriors collide with figurative forms and our notion of reality is questioned.



"This set of large canvases uses scale to take on quintessential landscape views, presenting them as color fields, giving the viewer a place in which to move and relive a past journey."

– Nina Rizzo



Dark Light, Afterlife, Tightrope, Tish Noel, Acrylic, mixed media, 10 3/4 x 8 1/2 inches, 10 1/2 x 7 3/4 inches, 10 1/2 x 7 3/4 inches, 2025

As my practice evolved, since 2020 I have focused on painting with what would be discarded and today I unexpectedly continue in the same vein. My studio is strewn with many catalog and magazine pages routinely. The not too precious and nearly lost always seem to pull me forward, not by grasping but seeking, asking, needing a response. In this most recent group I've begun to add spray paint. My penchant for using what would be trash has led me to wreckage. Now broken furniture, shards of glass and other stencil material help cover this territory of dark secrets and incoming light. Not grasping but seeking, asking, needing a response.

"Art holds us!"
– Tish Noel





A Letter from Alma Wieser - Director of Heaven Gallery

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Left: *HOMAGE TO THE TUBERS*, Anna Kunz

Right: *Hand Mirror*, Gwendolyn Zabicki

Designed by Cathy Jiang

Documentation Photo by Sarah Joyce

Back Cover Image: *HOMAGE TO THE TUBERS*, Anna Kunz, Page 1 - 2

