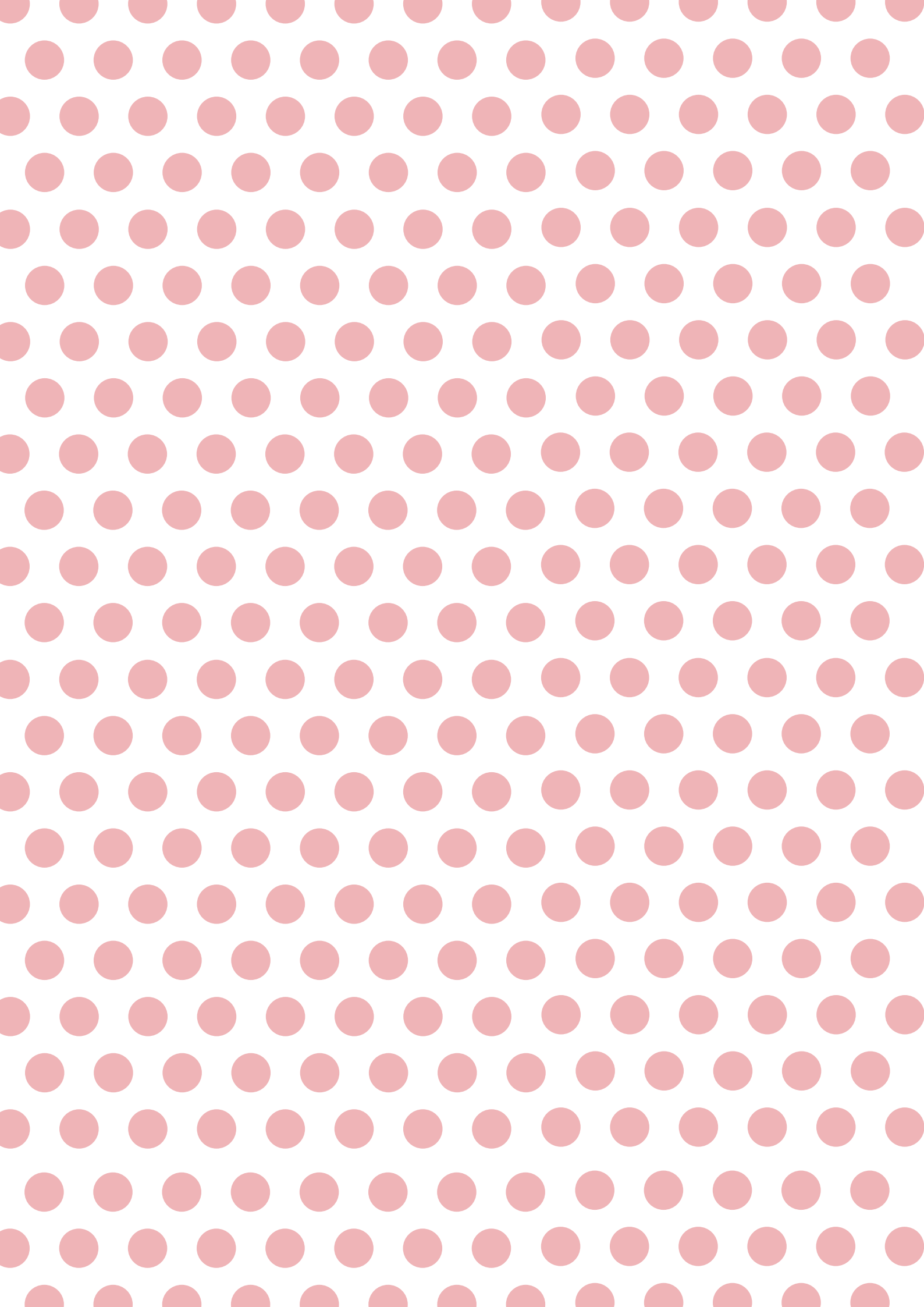


POISON YOUR ABUSER



Suboart Magazine

September 2025, #46



For me, art, the
making and the
appreciation of it,
is a means for
encounters with
ourselves and
others.

– Médéric Corbin

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the sentimental, the
everyday and the
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I like to think of the
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everyday archeologies.

– Sarah Poots



Rumination, 2024, Oil on canvas, 62 x 80 cm
(Photo by Jules Lister)

I often think painting
is like that for me,
a place where I can
curate and collect
my own narratives.

– Sarah Poots



Leftovers, 2024, oil on canvas, 80 x 70 cm
(Photo by Jules Lister)



Sarah Poots

On Finding Value in the Minutiae of Life

Left page: Sarah Poots photographed by Jules Lister

Hello Sarah, thank you for taking your time to answer our questions. For people who are not familiar with you and your work, could you please shortly introduce yourself?

Hi, I am Sarah Poots and I work as an artist in Nottingham. I graduated from Glasgow School of Art and The Royal Academy Schools and spent time working as an artist in London before moving to Nottingham. My practise is based in painting and I work mainly in oil and gouache.

Can you tell us a bit about your path towards becoming a professional artist?

I started working in oils when I first arrived at Glasgow School of Art in the painting department. It was an extremely special place to study art at the time as it was based in the purpose built Mackintosh painting studios. Besides from having some wonderful tutors and being surrounded by students who also loved painting I think it was the building itself that allowed me to take myself seriously. It was the first time I felt I could work as a professional artist. From there, it has taken further studies at The Royal Academy Schools and dedication to a daily practise of making.

Let's speak about your work now, where you mix everyday objects with abstract, ambiguous backgrounds—is this play on different levels of reality something you actively pursue, or does it happen naturally?

I am very drawn to the everyday object but I often think of these in a fragmentary way. I love the short story by Virginia Woolf, 'Solid Objects' in which a young professional is diverted off track by his obsession with collecting broken fragments, odds and ends and overlooked objects.

I often think painting is like that for me, a place where I can curate and collect my own narratives, in a way that is very self involved and removed from life's realities. It's an endeavour which becomes compelling once you get involved with it. So I think this idea of merging that which is recognisable with that which remains unknown is a very deliberate device.

And more generally speaking, what are the main themes and elements in your work? What is it that you're trying to explore in your practice?

I am drawn toward the sentimental, the everyday and the overlooked. I like to think of the paintings as exploring everyday archeologies. There is always a focus on what is hand made or self constructed and this feeds into creating compositions that play with arrangement, order and display. The paintings are often littered with hand tied mementos and personal fragments, from twine to ribbon there is always a focus on process of touch.

"I am fascinated by uncovering a space that contains traces of human touch and how memory can be embedded here."

The paintings are focused on creating a space which is intimate and mediative, there is an exploration of the stillness to be found within a shallow painterly space. I want to explore how these restricted spaces can become expansive and open.

You mainly paint with oil—what is it that you treasure about oil painting, what are the advantages and challenges that come for you with this technique?

I love how much can change with oil painting, I prefer working in thin layers, working in oil means that you can change your mind, that things can remain open. I also love the luminosity you get in working with oils, I always try to keep some elements of the ground that will remain in the final piece in order to transfer this feeling of light. It does take a long time to feel comfortable with oils and to know what to expect when using them.

I find your work to be a balance of very realistic objects with a dream-like, oniric atmosphere, and I'm curious to hear how you go about bringing your pieces to life. What does your process look like? Do you start with sketches?

Yes, I often start with quick sketches in pencil that can help to mark out a composition. Of these initial thoughts I usually spend some time working on paper, in particular I make many gouache studies that help to realise what

might happen in the painting, what I might include or not. I then use these studies to help produce the works in oil, sometimes they translate smoothly and sometimes they might change in the making.

“The sources often come from a variety of material that allows for a shifting scale in how they may be recognised.”

Speaking of work, is there anything you're currently working on you'd like to share with us?

I am currently working on a new series of paintings that will focus more on the drawn line within my work. I am really excited about exploring this strand of the work, I have been preparing canvases and am itching to get started post summer.

Next, I wondered if there is a piece of yours that holds a special place or meaning for you?

I think 'Rumination', has become an important painting for me within this series, it contains a lot of what I am interested in. It began with cut outs from school activity given to my daughter to create a picnic. I like how the fragments become a shorthand, a language of their own, how they refer to still life paintings and how they can form a composition that has a sense of playfulness and malleability.

There is a lot of talk about “finding your own style” in the art world, more so when you're getting started as an artist. What are your thoughts on that?

I think this is something that develops over time and something I have always thought is extremely important. I think it is very much the emphasis in British art education. I studied at the HGB in Leipzig for a term and there was a real focus on replication and imitation of the local style, this feels like an accessible and straightforward way



Fruit & Flowers (detail), 2024
Oil on Canvas, 100 x 120 cm
(Photo by Jules Lister)

to learn how to make a painting but then very hard to transition into having your own voice. I am glad that this never really was a feature of my art education as a whole.

And before we wrap up with a few last questions, I'd like to speak a bit about everyday life as an artist. What are some of the regular tasks you perform in your job?

There are 2 strands to this for me. One which involves reading, research and seeing shows, this is a daily part of the work and is endlessly enjoyable. Another strand is more career based and centres around seeking out opportunities, applying for grants and replying to emails.

Sticking with the topic of the artist's work-life, I wonder if there are any routines or habits you follow that help you create your paintings? Or could you think of any other influence that has benefitted your practice?

Yes, I am lucky to be working in large space at the moment and it's interesting how different spaces in the studio have acquired specific uses in the process of working. So a table and wall area has become a place where I work on gouache paintings, formulate ideas and create a sort of working wall. Then I have a room where paintings in the making exist, I can look at them from a distance, see how they operate together and then I bring them to another wall where I actually make the paintings.

And let's finish our interview with five last questions. First, is there any advice you'd like to pass on to fellow artists, especially to those just starting out?

I think it's important not to wait until all the conditions are perfect for making. Just start where you are, with what's to hand and keep going.

Next, is there any upcoming event or project you'd like to share with us and our readers?

I am looking forward to being a part of wonderful painting survey called, 'Flat Volume' showing at A.P.T Gallery London in October. I was asked to be involved by Sarah Long-



*Many Parts, 2024, Oil on canvas, 92 x 82 cm
(Photo by Jules Lister)*

worth West who has carefully curated the show and I am really looking forward to seeing how all the works coincide with each other in the space.

Any fellow emerging artists you'd like to recommend?

I have been enjoying getting to know the work of Stephanie Trow (@stefanietrow), I met her last year when she came for a studio visit and tour of my show, 'Placeholder' in Nottingham. She is currently travelling the world with her family and setting up transitory studios at every stop, that is so inspiring. Her work is playful, gentle but with a dark and mysterious edge.

If there was only one thing that people could take away from your work, what would you want that to be?

That there is value to be found in the minutiae of life.

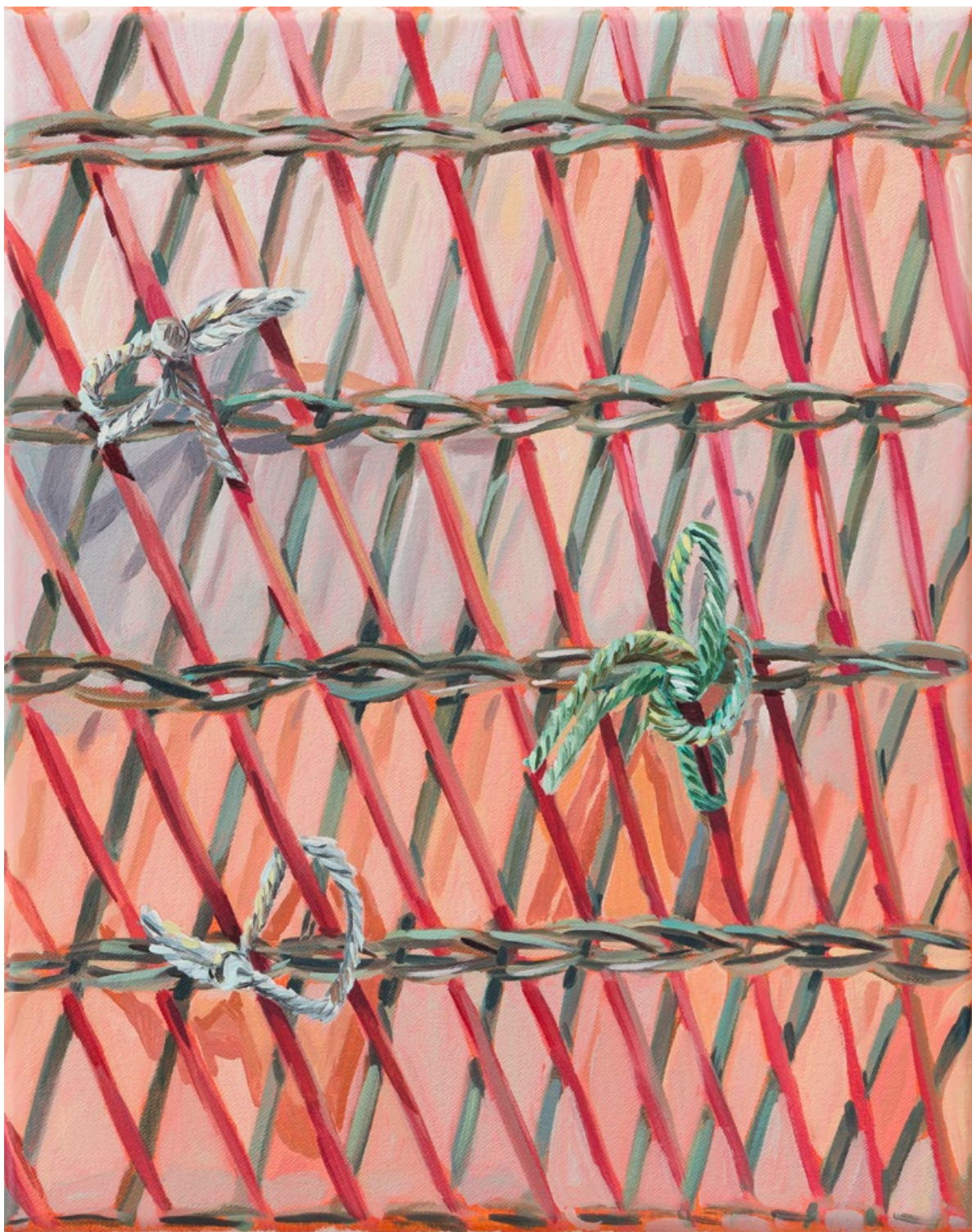
And lastly, please complete the following sentence:

When I create, I feel...

...both engaged and removed from the world.



Up: **Drifter**, 2024, Oil on Canvas, 67 x 77 cm
Down: **Sunset (Pairing)**, 2024, oil on canvas, 80 x 68 cm
(Both photos by Jules Lister)



Tied, 2024, oil on canvas, 35 x 24 cm
(Photo by Jules Lister)

Suzanna Fields

About Suzanna

Suzanna Fields grew up in Appalachia, and lives and works in Richmond, VA. She is the recipient of a Bethesda Painting Award, and a Liquitex Purchase Prize. Exhibitions include: Weatherspoon Museum of Art, Greensboro, NC, Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke VA, Laurel Rogers Museum of Art, Laurel, MS, University of Southern Mississippi Museum of Art, Hattiesburg, MS, Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, Virginia Beach, VA. Residencies include the Studios at Key West, Mountain Lake Biological Station, and Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Her work is in collections including: the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Eleanor Wilson Museum at Hollins University, Wolford College, Capital One, Kimpton Hotels, Bill and Pam Royall, and Shepard and Amanda Fairey. She holds a MFA in Painting from Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond, VA, a BA in Art and English from Mary Baldwin University, Staunton, VA, and studied at St. Anne's College, Oxford University Oxford, UK.

Connections Between Unseen Systems

I am interested in the tension between the familiarity and foreignness of the natural world, how we idealize and mediate it through technology, and how it persistently weaves its way into our subconscious. My work invites viewers to make connections between unseen systems, from the macro to micro, and to consider the fragile relationships between them. I use materials in a way that echoes organic processes, reflecting on notions of time, accretion and decay, and constant change. I wear away paint layers to excavate previous versions of the work or combine materials to create intricate interactions. I cover sections of the work with domes, making small microclimates, that allow me to alter materials as they slowly cure. Mapping fantastical, psychologically-tinged inner landscapes, ever-changing organic forms combine with references to the decorative and glimpses of the grotesque to speak to both the connection and unease of our collective experiences with nature.

*Get in touch with Suzanna: www.suzannafields.com
Instagram: @suzannafields*



Resonance 1, 2025
Ink and acrylic on Yupo 27 by 21 inches
(Photo by David Hunter Hale)



Resonance 2, 2025
Ink and acrylic on Yupo, 27 by 21 inches
(Photo by David Hunter Hale)



Up: **Portal: Bogland Bloom**, 2025, 10 by 10 inches
 Down: **Portal: Shift**, 2025, 10 by 10 inches (left) / **Portal: Great Branch Creek**, 2025, 12 by 12 inches (right)
 All works: Ink and acrylic on panel
 (Photos by David Hunter Hale)

Susanna Cati

About the artist

Susanna Cati was born in Rieti and graduated from the Accademia di Costume e Moda in Rome, Italy. She collaborated with set designer Giovanni Licheri at the Teatro Argentina in Rome and worked as a stylist assistant for major Italian and French fashion brands. After mastering various textile techniques, she dedicated herself to designing and creating rugs and tapestries, producing unique pieces and design collections in collaboration with studios and companies in the sector.

In recent years, her research has focused on Fiber Art, leading her to exhibit in group and solo shows in Italy and abroad (Switzerland, Austria, Russia, the United Kingdom), in private galleries and institutional spaces. One of her works is part of Trame d'Autore, the permanent civic collection of the City of Chieri (TO), and her installation *Spears* is included in the open-air contemporary art trail of the Municipality of Rivodutri. Recently, one of her projects was included in KIUB, winner of the Creative Living Lab grant by the Italian Ministry of Culture. Her ongoing experimentation led her to engage in a textile artwork within the performative dimension of Lucia Di Pietro in a project promoted by Umbria Danza Festival and Teatro Stabile dell'Umbria.



Endless Dialectical Confrontations

My artistic practice emerges from a constant tension, a visceral urgency fueled by a hunger that is both curiosity and disorientation. I am an eclectic artist, driven by an inner force that pushes me beyond the boundaries of the known, challenging every comfort zone in an almost feverish pursuit of what I do not yet understand. Life absorbs me, flows through me, consumes me — and it is precisely from this intensity that I take shape and create. My works are the fruit of an irregular path, made of silent immersions in the studio and in reading, alternated with deep, unsettled

journeys. Every place becomes substance, every encounter a seed. Alongside this physical wandering, another journey unfolds — more invisible, yet equally powerful: a continuous dialogue with human thought, ranging from philosophy to poetry, from science to psychology. From this unceasing exchange, from this industrious solitude, often unseen by the world, my works are born: unexpected presences, born of body and soul, which in turn seek to question those who behold them.

Get in touch with Susanna: www.susannacati.art

Instagram: @susannacati



Up: *Labyrinth*, 2024, Papier-mâché with gauze, 60 x 60 cm

Down: *Opos*, 2024, Papier-mâché and crochet surfaces created by the artist, 120 x 60 cm

Left page: *Inventory 20*, 2022, Natural felt, cotton, ribbon, colored threads, applications and embroidery in 20 glass cases, 27 x 22 x 5 cm

Emilia Evans-Munton

About the Artist

Emilia's sculptural work mainly centres around soft-sculpture and textiles. She has recently graduated from The Glasgow School of Art studying Sculpture and Environmental Art. Emilia is also the co-curator of multiple independent Exhibitions in situated in Glasgow and London. Her exhibitions aim to curatorially challenge the contemporary art-world by giving a platform to young and emerging artists.

Rediscovering States of Childlike Fascination

Working between London and Glasgow, Emilia Evans-Munton is a visual artist and curator exploring sculpture. Best known for her whimsical needle-felted sculptures, Emilia's material-driven practice often encompasses themes of wit and nostalgia.

Largely influenced by her own childhood, her work speaks both personally and universally in the equally tender and harsh qualities of nostalgia that come to contextualise her sculptures. Her playful approach to sculpture takes form in large scale, often interactive sculptural objects that exist in their own uncanny and otherworldly space. Her works are frequently inspired by her own childhood memories and children's puppet shows and toys.

Emilia works with intention of encouraging the audience to rediscover their own (perhaps repressed) states of childlike fascination and wonder through inviting interaction with her work. Her often anthropomorphic sculptures are often heavily process-driven and intuitively led by the textural qualities of different mediums.



Up: *Rubber Band Monster*, 2025, Sculpture, 45 x 30 cm
Down: *Mix And Match*, 2024, Interactive Sculpture, 90 x 45 cm
Next page: *The Dream of Horses*, 2024
Sculpture, Textiles, 35 x 35 cm

(All photos by Callum Harrison)

Get in touch with Emilia: <https://emiliaevansmunton.cargo.site>
Instagram: @emiliaevansmunton



To stitch; a thread or line that holds things together – this is the literal translation of the ancient Sanskrit word ‘sutra’.

– Erin Daniels



Healing Sutra: The Shadow 3, 2024
Hand stitching, Vintage textiles, 12 x 17 in
(Photo by NeighboringStates)

Binding Layers of
Material and
Memory to the
Present Moment

with

Erin Daniels



Erin Daniels photographed by Lyla Bellino (@dustypaeonia)

Hi Erin, thank you for doing this interview with us. Let's start with a few basics for people who are not familiar with you and your work—who are you and what do you do?

Hello, and thank you for this opportunity to share my work. I am a contemporary textile artist from the U.S. and my practice incorporates hand stitching and vintage textiles.

Before speaking about your work, I'd like to go back in time for a moment. What are some of your earliest memories of being in touch with visual art?

My earliest memory of making is of sitting on the floor of my mother's sewing room gathering scraps to create clothes for my dolls. My mother sewed beautiful clothing for me and my sister and the leftover pieces were often just enough to make my favorite doll a matching outfit. Sometimes hand sewn (BIG stitches) but just as likely to

be glued or stapled – whatever did the trick – these are the first things I vividly remember making. By the time I was five years old I was enrolled in private drawing and watercolor classes with a local artist. This was encouraged by my grandmother (also an artist), who recognized my talent and love of creating at an early age.

Fast forward to 1993, you earn your BFA in Textile Design from Moore College of Art & Design in Philadelphia, PA. Was working with textiles something you always knew you wanted to do?

No, despite my early, crude attempts at doll dressmaking, I focused solely on drawing and watercolors throughout my childhood and teen years. By the time I was considering colleges, I had made up my mind to become a botanical illustrator. Growing up in a very rural area, I was fascinated by the natural world and became quite adept at capturing the minute details of my surroundings. Honestly, I did not even know textiles were a “thing” until my first year

in college. The school put on a presentation detailing the different courses of study and as soon as I saw the textile presentation featuring weaving, surface design, and a fascinating variety of fiber techniques, I knew immediately this was my path. I remember that moment like it was yesterday!

I'd like to speak about your work now, particularly about your "Healing Sutras" series, which examines psychological and inherited wounds, oftentimes your own. Can you please tell me more about it and how it came to life?

"To stitch; a thread or line that holds things together – this is the literal translation of the ancient Sanskrit word 'sutra'."

The "Healing Sutras" grew out of a significant life transition—a way for me to process and heal through making. I was raising a young son on my own and thinking a lot about the notion of "women's work" and behavioral patterns that get passed down through generations of a family. I was working with ink and thread on paper at the time, adding collage elements of paper dress patterns that I had inherited from my grandmother. I was really struggling with being too literal and the pieces felt "busy" and forced. I arranged a studio visit with a mentor who was familiar with my work (my drawing professor from college), and he looked around the studio, turned to me, and simply said "make the dress". That was the beginning and end of the conversation.

The next day I got out my huge stash of vintage table linens and started using the dress patterns to create child sized dress shapes which I then stained with walnut ink. The embroidery came as a natural "drawing" tool to expand on and trace the stains created by the ink. It was like alchemy – all the materials I had previously been using to no avail suddenly came together to create these magical new works that embodied all the concepts I had been exploring: legacy, lineage, and a sense of connection.

I read that all of the "Healing Sutras" are sewn on vintage fabric that has been passed down from women in your family...

Yes, the original pieces in the "Healing Sutras" series were all created out of inherited textiles. As I exhibited the work I started receiving amazing gifts of vintage textiles from admirers of my work. The pieces often came with stories of a beloved grandmother or other family member. I am honored to give these often-forgotten textiles a new life in my work. Rather than being packed away in an attic somewhere they are now part of a bigger story. All my pieces are hand stitched, so I spend hours and hours handling these pieces and looking at them very closely. I have a very intimate connection to the work and a deep respect for the care and detail expressed by their original creators.



Healing Sutra 37, 2017

Hand stitching, walnut ink, vintage dress, linen, 34" w x 45" h

The series also has a follow-up series, titled "Healing Sutras: The Shadow." I'd love to hear more about it and about how it connects to the initial "Healing Sutras" series.

My new series, "Healing Sutras: The Shadow" is exploring similar concepts of lineage and belonging but from a different lens, a different stage of life. Mid-life has brought a sense of clarity and equanimity that has translated into calmer, more outwardly peaceful work. Despite the large expanses of white in this new work, dark shapes simmer just below the surface.

"These fragments of vintage garments portray hints of sadness and despair that often accompany a woman's midlife physical/emotional transition."

I do think the following excerpt from my artist's statement encompasses all of what these pieces contain: "...layers of memory and material bound together create a landscape of light and shadow. Depressions and contours are picked out in stitch, tracking an interior landscape made outwardly visible and visceral. Pleats and patterns create a rippling undercurrent beneath a surface of white; barely suppressed behind the stillness."

Let's talk about stitching now. You describe the act of stitching as a type of really slow drawing that has allowed you to express what drawing with pencils hasn't been able to offer you. I'm curious to hear more about that and about your personal relationship with stitching.

Historically, so many women in my family have stitched – from quilters to seamstresses – and the act of putting needle and thread to fabric feels part of my DNA. Each stitch represents a connection to the past, binding layers of material and memory to the present moment.

As for the process, stitching by hand is a slow, quiet and solitary act which allows for contemplation. It is fascinating to see movement and form slowly unfold from the marks, something that might be missed in a more immediate technique such as drawing or painting. The meditative act of stitching allows my brain to relax and helps me

become aware of the present moment. The escape into a tactile and repetitive process has become increasingly important to me to relieve the stress of a fast-paced digital world.

Speaking about stitching, I'd like to talk about your creative process for a moment. How do you usually go about starting a new piece and what are the following steps? And is there any stage of the process you find especially satisfying?

Starting a new piece is a very intuitive process for me and is the most energizing stage of a work. I have a huge stash of vintage linens that I start pulling out and laying around my studio. It is impossible to describe, but when I find the right piece of fabric something just "clicks" in my brain, and I lay it to the side. Once I have a selection of fabric/garments I start arranging them on my worktable. Again, when the composition is right, I just get a feeling. I am very energized by seeing this initial arrangement unfold and love this first stage of the process. I then use very fine entomology pins to secure the layers and folds of fabric be-



Healing Sutra: The Shadow 1, 2024
Hand stitching, Vintage textiles, 36 x 36 in
(Photo by NeighboringStates)

fore I begin stitching. Using a single ply of white embroidery thread, I follow the contours and folds of the fabric as guides to my mark making – nothing is planned or marked out ahead of time. I am mesmerized by the fluid way the shapes and contours slowly unfold.

Back to the “Healing Sutras” series for a moment—I read that it carries many layers of meaning, you write about it on your website. I wonder if it is important to you to share these meanings with the viewers of your work or if you prefer to leave room for interpretation?

I prefer to allow the viewer to interpret my work and add their own story to it. Or maybe they simply enjoy it as a beautiful piece of craftsmanship and that is wonderful too. Often additional layers of meaning reveal themselves to me as I’m working on a piece or even years later, so I hesitate to attach a specific meaning. For me they are about healing and letting go which can be interpreted in so many ways. I can only hope that the viewer feels SOMETHING when they view my work, but I try not to dictate what that emotion should be.

Our interview is coming to an end, so I have four more questions for you. First, what have you been inspired by lately?

I have always been particularly inspired by words and recently read “Hagstone” by Irish author Sinéad Gleeson. I think I have copied half of her book into my sketchbook but the one line that continually comes back to me is the following description which you can see direct inspiration from in my newest work: “the inky water moves in pleats” I have so many beautiful textiles in my collection, and it can be very tempting to focus on the decorative aspects and get too “precious”. Two artists whose work I admire and continually turn to for a reminder that “less is more” are the contemporary English potter and writer Edmund de Waal and Danish painter Vilhelm Hammershoi (d. 1916). The work of both artists exhibits an exquisite peace that I can only strive for in my own work. In addition to his quietly powerful pottery, de Waal’s autobiographical “The Hare with Amber Eyes” is a beautifully written testament to legacy, lineage, and the importance of Art.



*Studio Inspiration from Erin Daniels’ studio in
Southern New Jersey, USA*

Is there any upcoming project you’d like to share with us and our readers?

My work is in great company in the following publication to be released in October of this year, *Le fil dans l’art contemporain – 125 artistes au cœur de la création (Thread in Contemporary Art – 125 Artists at the Heart of Creation)*, Charlotte Vannier – Éditions Pyramyd (@pyramyd_editions).

Any fellow artists you’d like to recommend?

I would love to give a shout out to my voice of reason and “best friend in art”, Christine Mauersberger. Christine is a supremely dedicated and talented multi-disciplinary artist who has been my sounding board for the last 20 years. Working alone in the studio every day can be isolating, and I can’t say enough for the friendship we have nurtured as our art practices have developed (@chris._mauersberger).

And last one, if there was only one thing people could take away from your work, what would you want that to be?

I would encourage everyone, artist or not, to try your hand at creating something. Try to let go of expectations and enjoy the process as there is great joy in making something with your own hands.

*Get in touch with Erin: erindanielsart.com
Instagram: @ErinDaniels_Artist*



Healing Sutra: The Shadow 4, 2025
Hand stitching, Vintage textiles, 17 x 30 in
(Photo by NeighboringStates)



Healing Sutra: The Shadow 5, 2025
Hand stitching, Vintage textiles, 25 x 42 in
(Photo by NeighboringStates)

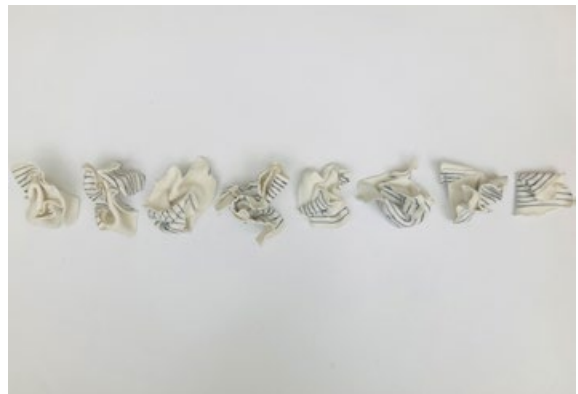
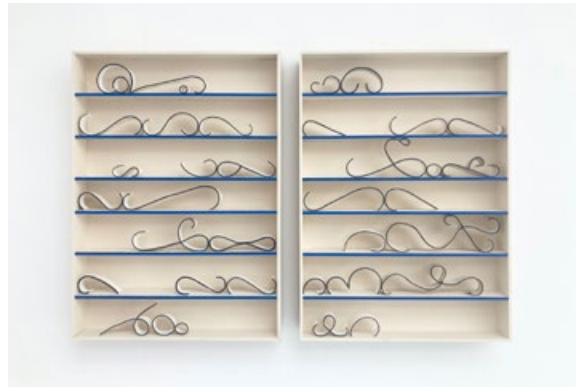
Nathaniel Crow Mercer

Speaking through Silence

Mercer's ceramic sculptures explore the vulnerability of writing, especially the discomfort of exposing personal prose. He prioritises process over outcome, mimicking A-sized pages within thin clay and porcelain sheets that are often torn, crumpled, or blank—symbols of incompleteness. Scrolls inscribed with unreadable codes act as mute stand-ins for concealed words, displayed in vitrines that echo the format of a page. This duality reflects the before and after of writing, where absence replaces legibility. Mercer is drawn to the intimacy of clay, where working with his hands mirrors the quiet of pen on paper. Working in series embraces the kiln's unpredictability and resists porcelain's preciousness. The tension between ceramic weight and paper's lightness invites reflection on material truth. Influenced by language, poetry, and artists such as Cornelia Parker and Edmund de Waal, Mercer draws on calligraphic and clay traditions to create small-scale works that favour presence over monumentality—sculptures that speak through silence, concealment, and quiet form.

About the artist

Nathaniel Mercer is a hand builder ceramicist and poet from East London. Growing up a bookworm in a small town on the outskirts of London made Mercer a writer who looked to the visual arts as a more abstracted form of expression from poetry prose and subsequently found ceramics. Mercer explores themes of vulnerability of writing, absence often replacing the legibility of his texts that are written onto mimicked sheets of paper made of porcelain, half covered or hidden. Mercer studied a Fine Art Extended Diploma and Foundation year in the City of Islington College and continued his studies with a bachelor's degree of Fine Art at The University of Leeds in 2025. Mercer has exhibited in various group shows such as 'MAKE NO BONES' in June of 2025, 'Milk-teeth' in April 2024 as well as a solo exhibition 'Sounds of Shaped Silence' in October 2024 and has featured in the Gryphon newspaper.

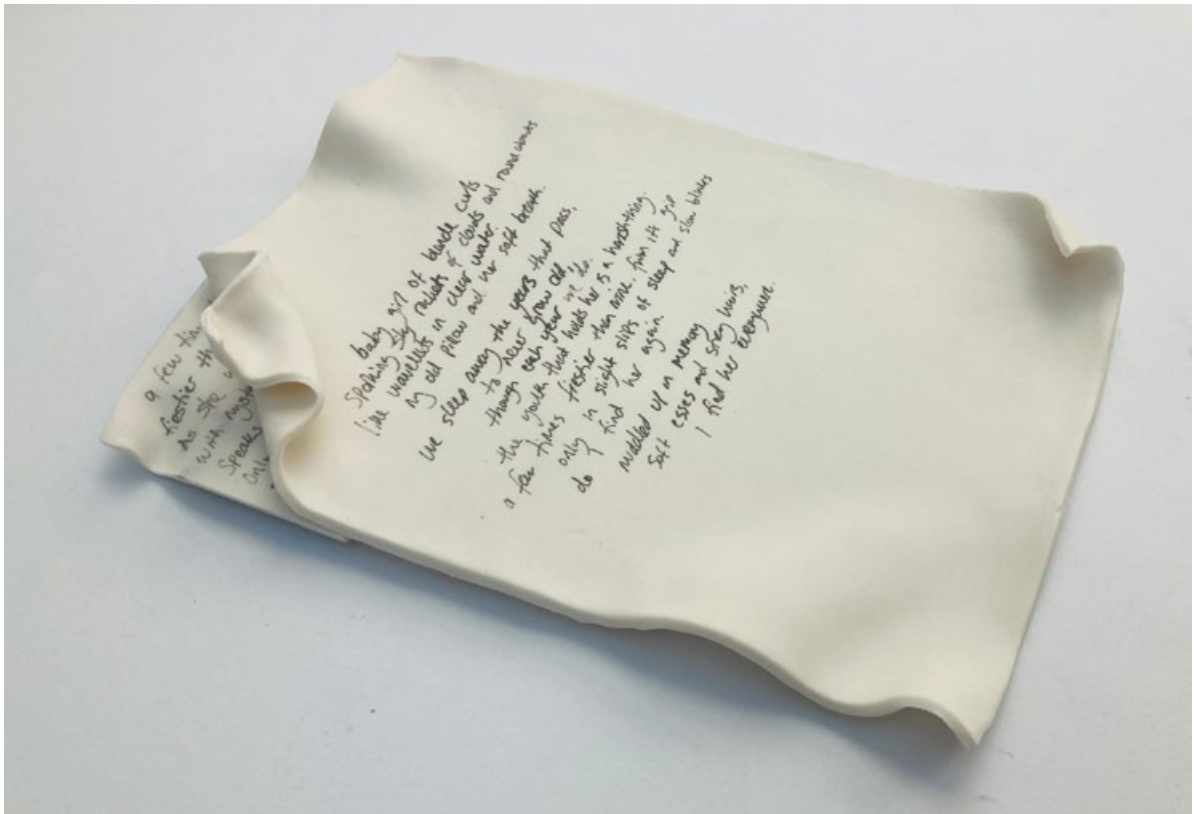


Up: *Words, Becoming*, 2025, ceramics, 3.7 m x 2.1 m

Center: *Forgets*, 2025, Ceramics, varied sizes

Down: *Burnout*, 2025, Ceramics, 29,7 x 42 cm

Get in touch with Nathaniel on
Instagram: @nathaniel.mercer.x



Up: Willow, 2024, Ceramics, 21 x 29,7 cm
 Down: Letters To Andy, 2025, Ceramics, 1 x 1.5 m

Ashley Uskert



About My Practice

I was born in Indiana but lived most of my life in Bentonville, Arkansas where I've witnessed the growing changes. Bentonville was a little town where everyone knew each other's names, the traffic was nonexistent, and the county fair was a big deal. With not much to do, I had to find the beauty within the ordinary. My photographic practice engages in the mundane with observations that relates to researched ecological topics. My current project titled Balance, observes the ecological community within the confines of a specific forest. The forest was in Kansas City, Missouri where most people wouldn't think a forest filled with a vast mycorrhizal network and saprotrophic mushrooms could be on the outskirts of a city. Photography for me is to bridge the gap between scientific research and the mundane in a series of observations, research, notetaking, and documenting.

About Ashley

Ashley Uskert (b. 2002) is a digital and analog photographer living in the Ozarks of Bentonville, Arkansas. She is engaged by the land she has moved to and from that are seemingly mundane yet ever-changing through continuous observations and research. Ashley received her BFA at the Kansas City Art Institute and has exhibited around the Kansas City Metro. Her current project Balance, exhibited at Vulpes Bastille, East Building Gallery, and the Emily and Todd Voth Artspace, observes the ecological community within the confines of a specific forest. Ashley's work bridges the gap between scientific research and the everyday mundane into photographic materials that communicate the importance of our sacred lands.

*Get in touch with Ashley on
Instagram: @ashleyuskert.art*



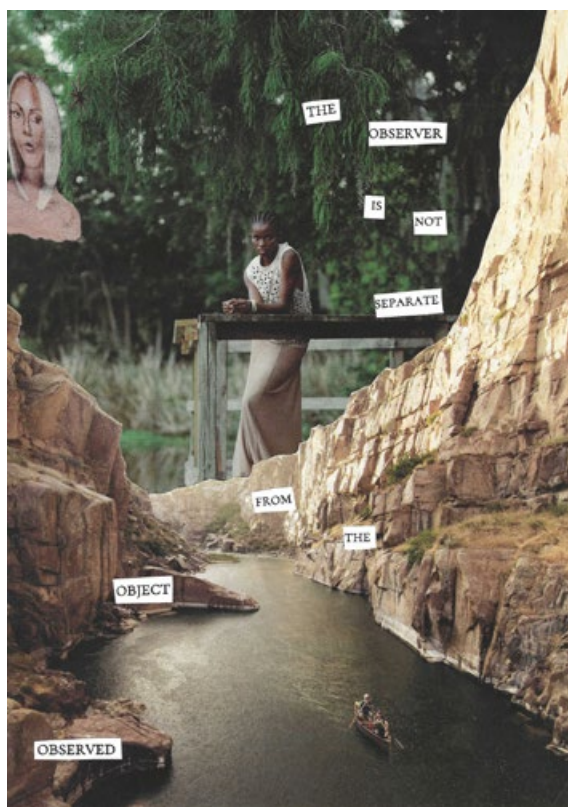


*Up: Normandy, 2025, 17.28 x 11.52 in / Down: Normandy Stump, 2025, 17.28 x 11.52 in
Left page: Melaleuca Quinquenervia, 2025, 11.52 x 17.28 in (left) / WailukuPine, 2025, 11.52 x 17.28 in (right)
All works: Digital Photography*

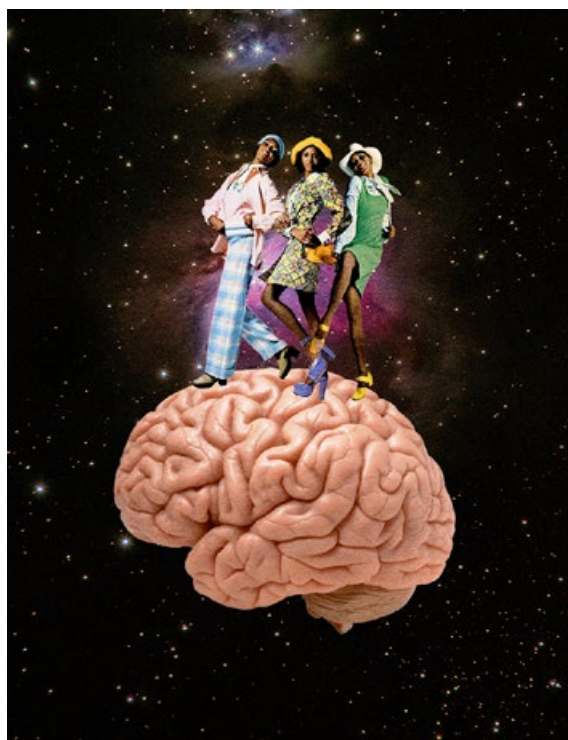
Brittney Francis

About Brittney

Brittney Francis (b. 1997) is a collage-based artist from The Bronx whose work explores themes of Black womanhood, love, and grief through a retro-inspired lens. Her work is sincere, nostalgic and witty, creating thought-provoking visual compositions. In 2024, she completed an artist residency with BronxArtSpace on Governors Island. Her work has been featured in exhibitions in Texas, New York, and online in 2025. Brittney holds a BFA in Graphic Design with a double major of Art History and Spanish from SUNY Purchase.



*Not Separate, 2024
Collage*



*In My Head, 2023, Digital Collage
Next page: Cheers, 2023, Digital Collage*

About My Work

I am deeply passionate about storytelling through collage. Using magazines, scans, photo albums, papers, fabrics, and found materials, I create works that range from narrative and vulnerable to surreal and satirical. I layer images, text, and textures to compose of collages that serve an exploration of memory, identity, and emotion.

*Get in touch with Brittney: brittneyfr.wixsite.com/design
Instagram: @bajanbrittney*

POISON YOUR ABUSER



For me, art, the
making and the
appreciation of it,
is a means for
encounters with
ourselves and
others.

– Médéric Corbin



Triptyque avec peinture jaune (Triptych with Yellow Painting), 2025
Colored pencils and oil paint on linen canvas, 50 x 135 cm
(Photo by Antoine Lussier)

Médéric Corbin

On the Shape of Abstraction and
Keeping the Questions Alive



Canadian artist Médéric Corbin photographed by Mathieu Hénault

Hello Médéric, thank you for speaking with me today. We like to start our conversations with a look into the past, back to where it all began—what were your beginnings in the arts?

Hello! First, thank you for your interest in my work and for the interview. I am really pleased to be with you today. To answer your question, I should mention that art has not always been my natural path. I've always been quite curious and interested in various things, including mathematics, politics, physics, sports... In school, I was aiming for architecture studies. If I had not stopped school for more or less a year due to severe concussions, maybe I would not be an artist today. During my recovery time, I started to paint out of a need to express myself and to keep busy. I was using leftover paint cans: a can of black and a can of white. I was painting portraits in a certain realistic manner. It was a way to release my energy, my thoughts, my frustration, and my emotions....

And once your recovery year was over, how did your practice and interest in art evolve?

After my recovery year, I kept exploring different subjects and mediums as I was finishing my college studies. And then, it was time to apply to universities. I thought, "if I want to give art a chance, it has to be now". Therefore, I applied naively to the two universities in Montréal where there was an art program. I got accepted to both and I picked Concordia University mostly to improve my English. At that time, I was unaware that I was entering one of the best art schools in Canada. Fast forward four years of university, the pandemic, and the discovery of the contemporary art world; here we are. I have my studio in Montréal, and my main occupation is being an artist. It still sounds weird to my ears when I say that. Maybe I'll get used to it one day. I've never doubted since I got into university that art was the "right choice", if it was a choice at all. It might be a good sign.

Let's speak about your work now. In your statement you write that you create to "awaken our existential needs, particularly those to reflect and to situate ourselves within a logic greater than our individuality." Can you please tell me more about that and about your work in general?

I think I can say that this excerpt corresponds to my definition of art; the way I've been seeing and understanding art from the beginning. I haven't used these words since the beginning, but the idea has always been there.

"For me, art, the making and the appreciation of it, is a means for encounters with ourselves and others."

There are physiological and physical human needs. I will let the experts explain what these really are. In my statement, when I write "existential needs", I mean the need to exist, to think. No matter what background you come from or where you live, you can be wealthy, poor, healthy, unhealthy, depressed, or the happiest person... the simple fact that you are alive comes with questions. These questions might come more often for some people or at different moments in their life. Art and collective thinking are there to keep these questions alive, to share them, and sometimes to awaken some that have been sleeping for too long.

There are some questions that we can answer and there are others that we can't, or for which we will never be sure of the answers. The latter are those that interest me the most. They are the ones that give us permission to try, to argue, to reformulate and to suggest without knowing. In a nutshell, they are the ones that make us create concepts, and they are the ones that keep us wanting, searching. From what I understand, this is art, creating concepts and searching. In my practice, it takes mainly the form of paintings or sculptures, but it really can be anything. And, more specifically, in my practice it takes the form of repetition and duplication. I have recurring images.

In comparison to other fields of study or work, where people dig into subjects so deeply that vulgarization becomes an issue, I see art as the opportunity to start again and again with the same study of a specific question or idea. Instead of digging until I get captured in my own hole, I make many little holes, all quite alike but with some small modifications. It is not by trying to answer an unanswerable question once that I will reach satisfaction and that I will move on. Therefore, I try again by painting every composition at least twice. The "questions" in my works are visual symbols or repetitive imagery that, I think, will be with me forever.

Your work lies between figuration and abstraction, figures are recognizable yet as viewers, we can never be sure of their exact contours, of who or what they really are. Have you always worked this way or did this play with the figurative and the abstract enter your practice over time?

It did happen over time, good guess. As I said earlier, I come from "realistic" depictions of faces. The funny thing is, at the beginning, I had difficulties with abstracting things. My very first sketchbook is filled with attempts of abstracting faces and bodies. I really wanted them to look more loose, more sketchy, more cartoony, or more abstract, but I had a hard time deciding what information to get rid of and which to keep.



*Preliminary Painting, 2025 (Photo by Antoine Lussier)
Coloured Pencils On Linen, 32 x 36 cm*

“For example, I didn’t know what shape an ‘abstracted eye’ should have. So, I think it comes from there: feeling the need to abstract things, to add layers of interpretation, to add to the mystery.”

But at the same time, it must come from something specific, some depiction of something I know; I must be grounded somewhere. For some abstract or conceptual artists, this grounding can probably be an emotion or anything else. But for me, it must be the projection of the emotion into something I can recognize. And until now, these things I recognize have been figurative. In other words, I must be able to link my art projects to one or two words, like the “body folded onto itself”. That’s it. That is what I’ve been painting for the past two years.

Could you pick an example to explain more in detail what you mean?

Sure! For example, “Peinture à reprendre II” (Painting to be Reworked II) follows the same pattern as do all my recent paintings: I sketch a simplified body, a head with one ear, two arms, and two legs on a piece of paper. I try to make the body fit in a square by contorting and twisting it. When I am satisfied with the sketch, I take a picture of it, and I perfect it digitally. I rework the lines, the proportions, and the angles. For example, I make sure both hands are the same size... Then I order stretchers with the same proportions as my final drawing. Most of the time, my sketches end up not being perfect squares because I try to get rid of as much background as possible; I want the body to occupy most of the space. Then I prepare my canvas, and I project my drawing on it. And, finally, I paint.

I work and rework the colours, using different strategies to make things happen. In “Peinture à reprendre II” there is a green underpainting, a scumbled red, a scumbled blue and a glazed yellow. On top of all that, I added, with oil sticks, the early hand-drawn sketches of the painting I had

done when trying to find the perfect placement of the body parts. I added sketches on top of a “finished painting”, and I named it “Painting to be Reworked”.

These are some of the strategies I’ve employed in the past few years to paint bodies folded onto themselves. It is always the same thing, the same concept, but the outcome is determined by the early sketches and the technical strategies I decide to employ along the way.

You just mentioned working and reworking the colours, so I’d like to take a moment to dive deeper into the topic. What is your relationship with colours and what role do they play in your work? I would guess they are an important element in your practice...

The colours! Indeed, they play a major role. As I entered university in 2019, I didn’t know what was “my thing” in art, except for the fact that my art was about being alive. But I saw that my classmates knew what they were doing. They already had their nice statement written, they had “their concept”, their way of doing things. I was a guy painting black and white faces in the basement of his parents’ house. So, I thought, “why not challenge myself using colours and why not make colours the central aspect of my work”.



Blue Painting, 2025
Oil Paint On Linen, 32 x 36 cm
(Photo by Antoine Lussier)

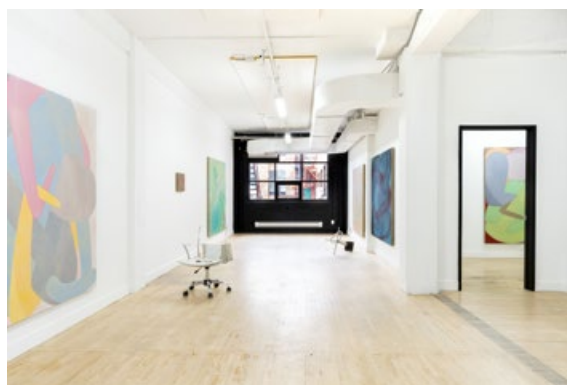
Then I started reading, I was buying every book that was recommended to me about colours, and I wrote essays on colours. I made it one of my subjects for my history and theory courses. And now, here we are. I have concepts and colour theories at the back of my mind, and I paint. I used to reference theories and colour concepts I had read about in my works that I found interesting, but I got rid of that. It was too rigid and boring. I prefer picking up colours freely. So, I can't really say where they come from. I know some things come by instinct, but sometimes it is more unconscious theory as well.

“And sometimes, when I have a colour problem to resolve in a painting, I employ a specific strategy. Classic things, like using a warmer colour next to another one to make it look colder. It is as simple as that.”

Next, I'm curious to know more about your exhibition **“Somewhere Between Desires And Possibilities,”** which took place this past May at Grover Building in Montreal. Can you please tell me more about it?

Sure. As I mentioned before, I've been working for the past few years, on one simple subject, the folded onto itself body. A little more than two years ago, it revealed itself as the concept or idea that I had to be working on for the next year. It had been floating around, and it was now time to give it more attention. My last exhibition is the outcome of this: around 10-15 paintings from my production over the last two years depicting simplified and contorted bodies.

As I started working on this project, I began reflecting on the narrative that would accompany the paintings. Coming close to the date of the exhibition, I realized that the narrative had not stopped evolving. I had not stopped reworking my text, reorganizing my ideas, reconsidering some thoughts, and, more importantly, renaming the exhibition. So, I've translated that observation into words. I



*Quelque part entre désirs et possibles, 2025
(Somewhere Between Desires and Possibilities)
Installation shot (Photo by Antoine Lussier)*

wrote a text about all the concepts and titles I had come up with to describe my paintings and that could not satisfy me enough for some reason. But at the same time, I could not simply get rid of them. They were all quite important to me. In other words, I wanted to write things, but the words felt too rigid, too hermetic. There was always something else to add. This made me realize that I have more difficulty getting satisfied with a text I write than with a piece I make. I feel limited working with words... And there we were, there was an exhibition about being trapped somewhere between possibilities and desires, or capacities and ideas, depicting trapped bodies on the surface of the canvases.

I saw that many of the works from this exhibition are large-scale paintings, more than one meter on each side. I could imagine that creating these pieces was a very physical, hands-on activity. Can you please speak a bit about bringing them to life?

These paintings had to be really small or really big. I wanted the viewers to be absorbed by the scale of the paintings or to force an intimate projection of one's body into a small depiction of a body.

My studio is not that big, around 3 x 5 meters. And I have only one wall on which I can hang things. The biggest paintings in the show were just about 2 x 2 meters, and I was working on almost all the paintings at the same time. I had to be ingenious, so I built a rolling rack to store the

paintings. I also had two paintings drying on each side of what I call my drying rack, which is, in fact, a heavy piece of metal put on top of a wheeled piece of wood. Everything rolls, because I must move things around all the time. And finally, I had the painting I was working on at the moment on my wall. As you can see, I foreplan things. However, painting for me is the opposite of that. It is the moment of free thinking, contemplation and meditation. I go to the studio more or less every second day, but I try not to paint if I know that I must stop at a specific time. Therefore, I do other things, I plan other projects, haha...

“To paint is to be schedule-free, it is being able to be in the studio as long as the painting wants you to be there. Consequently, I try to have everything set up for those special moments to happen.”

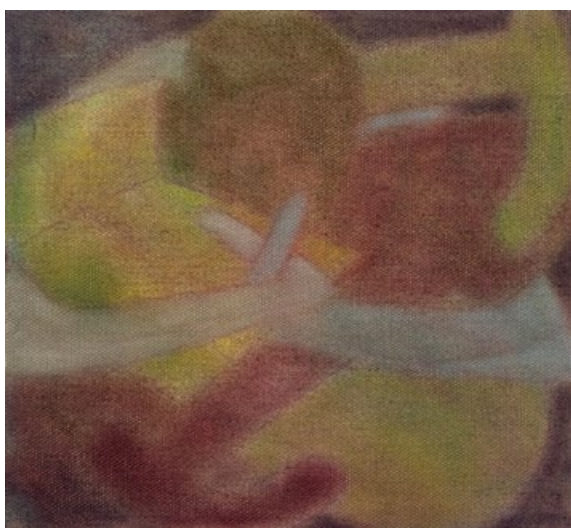
Our little chat is already coming to an end, so I have two last questions for you. First, is there any project you’d love to see happening in the nearer or farther future? A dream project so to speak?

I’ll answer this question because it will force me to do so. I like this idea, saying out loud what I hope to see happen and making it happen out of pride. So here we go. One day, there will be an exhibition of my work that will consist of really small busts of screaming faces mounted on slim metal rods. The busts will be wearing oversized ruffled collars.

I look forward to seeing that! And last one, if there was only one thing that people could remember from your work, what would you want that to be?

I’d like them to realize that I really do not know what I’m doing, even though I may seem like I do!

Get in touch with Médéric on Instagram: @medericcorbin



Left: Conceptual Painting with a Humain Figure Duplication XI, 2024, Colored Pencils & Oil Paint On Linen, 28 x 30 cm
Right: Conceptual Painting with a Humain Figure Duplication VI XI & III, 2024-25, Colored Pencils & Oil Paint On Linen, 28 x 30 cm each

Next page, up: Peinture à reprendre II (Painting to be reworked II), 2024-25, Oil paint and Oil sticks on linen canvas, 183 x 183 cm

Next page, down: Conceptual Painting with a Human Figure I & II, 2025, Oil paint on linen canvas, 170 x 183 cm each

(All Photos by Antoine Lussier)



Art and collective
thinking are there to
keep these questions
alive, to share them,
and sometimes to
awaken some that
have been sleeping
for too long.

– Médéric Corbin



Peinture à finir II (Painting To Finish II), 2024
Oil Paint And Graphite On Cotton, 107 x 107 cm

Filipa Figueiredo

About Filipa and Her Work

Filipa Figueiredo's work is characterized by the use of natural pigments. She learned how to make natural pigments in 2009 when she went to India to learn and develop the technique of ancient paintings "Pata-Chitras", through the Jagannath Vedic Reserch Center in Puri. Here she sharpens his interest in natural pigments and learns from her master/teacher to develop them step by step. Enthusiastic about the context, she starts a research work on these paintings that extends to the cities of Bhubaneswar and Kolkata. She would only start using natural pigments in her works in 2019, 10 years after learning how to make them.

In recent years, all her series of paintings have been developed using natural pigments made by her and brought from the most diverse places in the world. Japanese ink is another material that is often present in his graphic compositions. The support of the paintings is usually engraving paper in large formats. The series of paintings are allusive to atmospheres and impressions of places, trying to capture and refer to silence and all its associated connotations and sensations. All of them include concepts such as amplitude, observation and repetition of the pause.

In recent years, she has had several solo and group exhibitions in various locations of the world like South Korea, Peru, Brazil and now she is participating in the Intercontinental Bienale (Argentina, Brazil, Panama and Puerto Rico). This month she will have a solo exhibition in a gallery in Sweden and in a Museum, in Coimbra, Portugal.

Get in touch with Filipa:

<https://filipafigueiredo.squarespace.com>

Instagram: @filipafigueiredoff



*All works: First Things First, 2025
Natural pigments on paper
(All photos by Filipe Braga)*



*Up & Down: First Things First, 2025, Natural pigments on paper
(Photos by Filipe Braga)*



Holding onto Memory
and Identity
through Art

with

Rebecca
Fruto



Self-portrait by Rebecca Fruto

Hello Rebecca, thank you for doing this interview with us. Let's start with a few basics, for people who are not familiar with you and your work. Who are you and what do you do?

Hello, I'm Rebecca Fruto, an artist raised between places. I earned my BA at California State University Bakersfield, where I began to develop the idea of reinterpreting personal history and narrative.

You describe your work as "resurfacing the complex layers of loss, memory, and identity rooted in the instability of home and the elusive comfort of the past." Can you please tell us more about it?

Through my work, subtle truths about my psyche come to light. It's both disorienting and grounding to understand experiences, the more I analysed them at different periods. I think this has become a common theme lately, where re-living past experiences, whether good or bad, is safer than

not knowing what the future entails, and that's a scary thought. My work carries the place I come from. I mentioned earlier I was raised between places, meaning I'm not too sure myself. Before the age of nineteen, I had fifteen homes. I grew up financially unstable, so my parents worked hard by buying fixer-upper homes and renovating them. My sister and I helped in any way we could, painting the house, pulling wheelbarrows of dry grass, laying tile spacers, and other tasks. Calling these houses fixer-uppers feels like it just glazes over the reality of how abandoned these homes were.

"Times were hard, but I find comfort in understanding how it has shaped the person I am. This idea of reinterpreting experiences is what my art reflects."

A significant influence on your work is Fotoescultura, a traditional Mexican art form that combines photography and sculpture to memorialize loved ones. When did you first come across Fotoescultura and how do you use it in your practice?

The first time I came across the mention of Fotoescultura was in Geraldine A. Johnson's "The Life of Objects," and I became curious about this intersection of photography and sculpture. Upon searching for more insights on this practice, I realized that the information about this art form is scarce. Fotoescultura emerged from Mexico and later spread to Mexican American communities across borders and generations. They were made to honour a loved one as a part of grief, everyday life, and cultural threads.

"In my reinterpretation of Fotoescultura, I explore the idea of reincarnation as a metaphor for the way we hold onto memory and identity."

I want to see where the study of this tradition takes me, as I not only memorialize loved ones, but also experiences, places, and imprints.

Next, I'd like to know more about your most recent, ongoing series. I read that you use past paintings to create new works...

That's right, in my ongoing series, I breathe new life into past paintings, reflecting how time shapes my perception of remembrance. The process involves superimposing a past painting with its reference image, transferring it onto canvas using HTV transfer paper, and then painting around it to give a renewed softness and perspective to an experience. In the past year, I've been working with new materials that create shifts in color in the light, such as holographic vinyl and dichroic glass. This is my way of physically reincarnating a memory.

"I'm also interested in this back and forth between traditional materials that have transcended time and digital materials like printers that I use in my art."

A piece that stands out to me is "Rained In, adolescence." Can you please tell me more about it?

This artwork is my first real try at creating a Fotoescultura, and it's still my largest one so far. Traditionally, they are between six to twelve inches in height, while "Rained in, adolescence" stands at forty-eight inches. In this piece, I used primarily construction materials to reveal themes of loss and personal growth. Materials used include wood, plexiglass, tile, and construction glue.

I often depict my family in my art because we've had similar experiences, so really, the artworks almost feel like self-portraits for me. Feelings of dissociation, missing out, but also comfort in repetition are what's presented in this piece.



*From the blueprint, 2025
Oil, vinyl, and htv transfer paper on canvas, 30 x 30 in*

“The instability of my past also affected my relationships, never really getting past the surface, and an inability to connect.”

The umbrella represents this comfort from the cold and rain. This, combined with growing up a part of Gen Z, as technology began to be implemented everywhere, affected my communication.

All the tension in these conflicting ideas is realized utilizing Fotoescultura. This piece took about four months, where most of that time I spent intimidated to start because I was working with an idea that felt challenging, being primarily a painter. I spent the longest time wood-carving the details on the side to give a relief effect to the wood. It was important for me to continue to find a balance between digital and traditional materials.

Is there any other piece you'd like to speak about more in detail?

Yes, actually, I wanted to talk a bit about a piece titled “From the blueprint,” which is the reincarnation of another painting titled “The American Dream.” What was important for me to show was this disconnect from a real place that felt like a fantasy to me. My dad has always wanted to design and build a house in his home country. I grew up seeing drawings of blueprints and designs in every sketchbook around the house, a dream of his that has just been realized. I visited this house at an early stage, when the foundation was just laid, and I have not seen it since, even though it is now in its final stages of completion. What I mean is, since I haven't seen the completed house in person, my imagination fills in the gaps of my curiosity, and this is what I am capturing in this painting. For me, this house represents the true American dream for my parents.

A question we ask in all of our interviews is about the creative process. Could you please share some insight about yours with us?

My process comes from a lot of wonder and reflection. I always ask myself how I can make my paintings induce more curiosity while also bringing some reality to them. Oftentimes, I paint in silence because I find I cannot focus on making decisions in the noise. These decisions include color choice, subject matter, texture, and other compositional traits of an artwork. I also like to meditate on the reason why I chose to paint something and how I can exaggerate an element in the piece. Although this is the most important part, my favourite is when I feel confident in the painting in front of me and I've reached a point where these choices come naturally.

Before the actual work usually comes the inspiration; I read that you are especially inspired by stories...

That's right. I'm inspired by stories, the ones that are real, but when you first hear about them, they feel like from a different world. I recently learned of the salt flats of Cuyutlán in Colima, Mexico, the state where my parents are from.

Before knowing the process and the ecological significance, I looked at this place as a city that only appears once for a few months in a year, a glorified version of it. It sounds magical when you put it this way, and I'm drawn to that. However, the reality is that collecting the salt is hard work, and the reason it is said to be a city is because the workers build temporary homes of cardboard so they can continue to collect salt, as the time to do so is limited. These are temporary homes, and it's these realities that make me feel like I should question where some stories come from more often, how it is made, and what their significance is. An example of my inspiration from stories can be seen in my painting “Sailfish.” I explore a version of my parents' story that I only know from what they've told me.

“As an artist, I'm familiar with placing myself in others' shoes and wondering who I would be if I had gone through their experiences.”

Our conversation is already coming to an end, so let's wrap up with two last questions. First, when you are the viewer and not the author of an artwork, what is it that draws you towards a piece of art?

What usually draws my eyes is brushwork, when I'm able to imagine where the artist added their colors and brush marks. It's so satisfying for me to see the textures that this creates on the surface. An artist can use any colors they want, but for me, confidence shows through when I see brushwork done in this way; you can even see the different sizes of brushes they used. I also enjoy it when there is none present, and the surface is completely smooth; both are satisfying to me. I also enjoy performance art, the ones that incorporate the body somehow. I've never had the privilege of seeing one in person, but the idea of an artist becoming the artwork intrigues me.



Thistlegrown, 2025
Oil, htv transfer paper, and vinyl on linen, 36 x 24 in

And last one, if there was only one thing that people could take away from your work, what would you want that to be?

I like this confusion my work sometimes creates. I've heard my paintings feel like a portal or dream-like. If my work sparks a question in someone's mind, a wonder, I feel like I'm achieving what I want from my work.

*Get in touch with Rebecca: www.rebeccafruto.com
Instagram: @rebecca_fruto*



Cross-pollination, 2025
Oil on canvas, 81 x 45 in



As an artist, I'm
familiar with placing
myself in others' shoes
and wondering who I
would be if I had
gone through their
experiences.

– Rebecca Fruto

*Left page: Between roots, walls, and a fractured canopy, 2025
Handcarved wood, vinyl, acrylic, pastel and ink on linen, 45.3 x 30 x 3 in*

In tracing, each
line I draw reflects a
specific moment in
time shaped by my
current perspective,
emotions, and state
of mind. No traced
gesture is ever
identical.

– Yasemin Kackar-Demirel



Rhapsody in blue No 57, 2025
Cyanotype on fabric sewn on paper, 18.75 x 11.25 inches

Yasemin Kackar-Demirel

On Converging Past and Present
through Mark-making



Yasemin Kackar-Demirel photographed by Nadide Goksun

Hello Yasemin, it's a pleasure to have you. For people who don't know you, could you please shortly introduce yourself and your work?

Hi, my name is Yasemin Kackar-Demirel. I am a Turkish-born painter based in the Lower Hudson Valley of New York. I work across media including collage, drawing, embroidery, rug hooking, and sculpture, exploring transformation, memory, and continuity. I use abstraction and materials, to reflect my connections to both nature and human-made environments, delving into the remnants of memory and the passage of time.

I'd like to start our conversation with where it all began—you grew up in Istanbul, Turkey, and I read that you had an affinity for the arts from early childhood on...

Yes, growing up in the ancient and vibrant cultural city of Istanbul, I always had an affinity to the arts. I played the

piano, did folklore dance, sang in the school chorus, loved going to the theater, ballet and dance performances. Additionally, I liked making things with my hands. My grandmother would bring arts and crafts kits (needlepoint, cross stitch, stained glass, bead works) from her travels and I remember engaging with them joyously. I remember being always at ease playing with color and paint.

And from there, what was your path towards taking art more seriously and eventually pursuing it professionally?

At the end of middle school, my art teacher submitted my in class project to a competition and when I learned that I won, throughout high school I began taking drawing lessons, going to various artist studios over the weekends. This was also a helpful path back then if you would like to consider going to Art Academies for college since they only accepted students through drawing "talent" exams and not through a portfolio review. You basically needed to

have the foundational skills and the spark. And the more I drew then, the more I was drawn to drawing. I decided to try the entry exams and succeeded in entering different departments. I chose painting thinking of it as the encompassing and foundational discipline and I also wanted to get my heart and hands messy with paint. I also selected printmaking as my elective for three years learning relief techniques. At the end of my bachelor's degree, I got accepted to graduate school in the States and moved there.

As you already mentioned, you combine a wide range of techniques, such as embroidery, collage or tracing, for example. Do you move through these techniques intuitively or are you looking for specific effects when working with each one of them?

It is actually both. Over the years my work has evolved into embracing different mediums and techniques in a very organic way. For instance, when making my paintings, I kept saving my paint palettes, began using them as collage elements and made relief prints on paper out of their shapes. Later, I wanted to give these cut-out shapes form and dimension and began building mixed media 'island' sculptures. And in the recent years, I have been learning hand building techniques in ceramics and began transforming more of these shapes into forms through clay. Sewing is another aspect in my work that first emerged for practical reasons. Right after grad school, I had smaller sized paper on hand and wanted to work larger size so I began hand and machine sewing to merge the papers together.

"This attempt later developed into making embroidery when I began saving my studio paint rags sourced from found and thrifted domestic textiles as base for paintings."

Just as paint palettes, I became very taken by the paint residues, stains and smears and how the various fabrics absorbed paint, as I wiped and cleaned my brushes. This activated surface led me apply structure over it to give it some sort of stability.

"Around this time in my life, I had to be mothering and closely monitoring my son at home. Rather than applying paint, I responded to the paint stains left on the rags with embroidery."

I began to loosely apply traced images over the fabric with embroidery – this way, I could do the embroidery component on my lap, moving throughout the house and not be bound to the studio. Consequently, this has led me to take my 'thread paintings' in my travels. Since I do not preplan the outcome, intuition is ever present in the development of the work, and building of a series. While I do not aim for specific effects, I am aware that they may arise as inherent to the materials that I use and I wonder about their enclosure to the work. From the main theme of what a place, or a territory channels, using a range of techniques create variations to further. I welcome what occurs spontaneously and as happenstance, as I steer the compositions making on the spot decisions in an uncharted manner.

And would you say that working with these techniques gives you a different approach to the materials you use?

At the core, my works branch out from painting and utilize its by-products, which are the palettes and rags as it expands through other disciplines. Painting acts as a common denominator. I apply the techniques according to what I want to explore and experience the materials' diversified inputs. This may give a varied approach since I bear in mind the characteristics of the mediums and ask myself what if I used the materials in this way, added this, subtracted that, what would happen and where would that take the work. Much of my process relies on listening to the work to understand what it needs or calls for along the way and be pliantly curious about it.

There is a sentence about traces in your artist statement I'm particularly curious about, you write "...tracing makes it possible to bring current interpretations to the dissipating past and fickle memories." Could you please explain what you mean by that and how it refers to your practice?



Rhapsody in blue No 47, 2025
Cyanotype on fabric sewn on paper, 25 x 22 inches

Absolutely! I am deeply fascinated by both organic and human-made structures, the perspectives found in landscapes, cityscapes, and architecture. As I encounter these environments, I often document them through photography. When beginning a painting, one of the methods I use to activate the surface is by tracing elements from these images. This process of moving over while observing the forms in a gestural and fluid manner grounds me in the present moment. It allows the work to absorb the atmosphere of the current time, while simultaneously embedding it within a larger continuum of history, accumulated time, and fading memory.

As Heraclitus wrote, we cannot step into the same river twice. Likewise, in tracing, each line I draw reflects a specific moment in time shaped by my current perspective, emotions, and state of mind. No traced gesture is ever identical. In this way, the compositions become expressions of both immediacy and introspection, where present and past converge through the act of mark-making.

There is always a 'before', a prior experience or history that informs and culminates in the painting process of the

now. I find solace, hope, and a sense of continuity through this change: even as traces of the past remain elusive, they become anchors for what is yet to unfold.

Next, I'd like to speak about your series *Rhapsody in Blue* — what inspired it and how did it come to life? I also wondered if there is any piece from this series that holds a special place for you?

I began this cyanotype-on-fabric collage series in the coastal town of Bodrum, Turkey, being inspired by the radiant sun and the contemplative hues, emotions, and movements of the Aegean Sea. Though I do not hold one piece above the others in this series, each work evokes in me a distinct affinity with an unfamiliar, often intangible space.

I explore nuanced spatial relationships and shifting memory forming various fractal configurations that echo both natural and built environments. I use transparency prints of places I've encountered that are loosely referenced in my paintings alongside locally found plants and cut-out shapes from my paint palettes to create each cyanotype. These elements are hand-sewn onto handmade paper in various colors. The impressions of place begin to dissolve, submerge, and resurface getting transformed into an underwater world where obscurity glistens and serendipitous connections emerge.

“This body of work feels akin to experiencing the sea through the senses: from dreamy gazing to swimming, from the pressure of submersion to the quiet stillness of floating and listening.”

A question we always ask is about the creative process, and I'm especially interested in the early stages of conceiving new work. Are there any routines that help you generate ideas and get started with a new project?

Yes, I routinely engage in stream-of-consciousness writing, noting down feelings and observations of place in small notebooks or on my phone. I also document locations through photography by capturing viewpoints, details, and moments that resonate visually. Alongside this, I collect meaningful quotes, words, and fragments from books, poems, or song lyrics that strike a chord. For me, the genesis of a piece or series often begins intuitively by selecting a medium and simply initiating the process. While each work unfolds at its own pace and through its own path, beginning without fixed expectations feels liberating. It enables me to take risks and remain open to discovery.



Rhapsody in blue No 55, 2025
Cyanotype on fabric sewn on paper, 12 x 17 inches

I would imagine that creating your pieces is also a rather physical, hands-on experience. Could you put into words how creating makes you feel?

Engaging in the act of creation evokes a sense of boundlessness, an opening of possibilities for me, wherein I often lose track of time. I am particularly drawn to the tactile tension and physical engagement of the hands during processes such as sculpting, rug hooking, embroidering, and cutting shapes. These repetitive, embodied gestures hold a meditative quality that deeply informs my painting practice, just as painting, in turn, inspires my exploration of other mediums. I investigate how the interplay between various techniques can negotiate spatial tension, generate texture and form, and influence paint handling. There is a reciprocal relationship in which each medium brings new

sensibilities and methodologies to the other, creating a dynamic exchange across disciplines.

Speaking about creation, is there anything you're currently working on you'd like to share with us?

I typically work across multiple disciplines and series simultaneously. I am motivated by the ongoing, generative nature of this approach where works evolve in parallel, intersect, and cross-pollinate. Currently, I am developing my *Rhapsody in Blue* cyanotype collage series, expanding its scale and complexity. In tandem, I am making watercolor studies that explore color, shape, rhythm, light, and shadow as experienced in my immediate environment. I am also thinking about building new armatures for my island sculptures. Upon returning to my studio in fall, I will resume oil painting, reflecting on and integrating the influences that have emerged through these concurrent processes.

I have the impression that traveling and nature are important sources of inspiration for you...

That's right, traveling and being immersed in both natural and architectural environments are enduring sources of inspiration in my practice. During the summers, I reside in Bodrum, Turkey. It is a place that continues to offer an ever-deepening well of visual and sensory stimuli. From the act of swimming and gazing into the expansive blue sea to observing the heat-laden softness of the sky and the ochre-toned, succulent-dotted landscape, I am continually drawn to how light and breeze transform these elements. Each return reveals new subtleties.

This summer, I have been particularly struck by the unpredictability of the wind and its sudden transitions from powerful gusts to complete stillness. These ephemeral shifts prompt reflection on rhythm and sequencing, on the sea's shifting currents and the swaying of bougainvillea. I am currently exploring how to capture these fleeting qualities through the form of leporello books.

Besides nature and Bodrum, what else have you been inspired by or interested in lately?



Rhapsody in blue No 56, 2025
Cyanotype on fabric sewn on paper, 17.5 x 11.75 inches

I recently read Haruki Murakami's *The City and Its Uncertain Walls*. His metaphor of human existence as breath, and of human actions as moving shadows, resonated deeply with my ongoing exploration of presence and absence in visual form. This is particularly evident in my evolving use of palette shapes, those physically extracted from the palette and their counterparts, the ghost/shadow shapes traced from cutouts on black paper. I am interested in the dichotomy between permanence and impermanence in the material world, and how this tension can be extended into alternate, abstract realms through painting and its means.

Recently, I have begun cutting these shadow shapes also as hollow forms, reducing them to their silhouetted contours. I have been incorporating them into my cyanotype collag-

es, where they appear as erratic line work, existing in a parallel, yet subtly displaced, blue dimension.

And let's wrap our conversation up with four last questions. First, let's talk about "finding your own style," a prominent topic of conversation in the art world. What are your thoughts on that?

In the back of my mind, I know the importance of this notion, but I don't let myself get caught up by it. I believe your style and voice are something you develop over time. The more I create, the more my work aligns with who I am, becoming more authentic and honest. I continue to evolve, focusing on refining my technique, all through my own vision.

Next, what have you learned in your life as an artist so far that you'd like to pass on to your peers? Any advice you'd like to share?

Be open to whatever comes your way, keep creating at your own pace, and take the time to really get to know yourself through the process.

If there was only one thing that people could remember from your work, what would you want that to be?

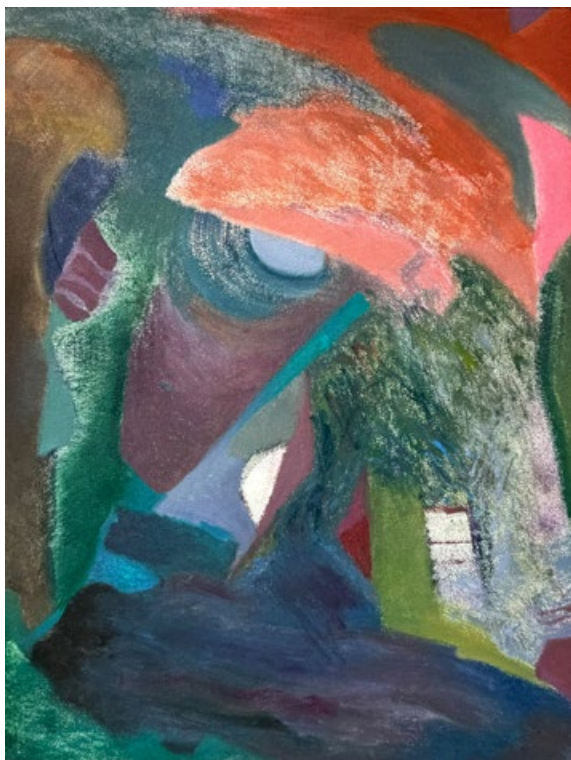
I want my work to stir the heart by challenging and deepening the viewer's sense of what they desire to perceive.

And, finally, please complete the following sentence:

I believe that art has the power to...

"I believe that art has the power to challenge the mind and heart, broaden perspectives, shift the status quo, cultivating love, beauty and compassion."

*Get in touch with Yasemin: www.yaseminkackar.com
Instagram: @yaseminkackardemirel*



Up: *Dawns*, 2024, oil on oil paper, 16 x 12 inches (left) / *Day into night sail*, 2025, oil on oil paper, 12 x 9 inches (right)

Down: *Deeper columns*, 2023, gouache, ink, watercolor, colored pencil, pen on paper, 25.5 x 20 inches (left)
Ode to unmoored love, 2023, gouache, watercolor, color pencil, artist pen, acrylic marker, ink on paper, 30 x 22 inches (right)



Rhapsody in blue No 50, 2025
Cyanotype on fabric sewn on paper, 22.75 x 17 inches

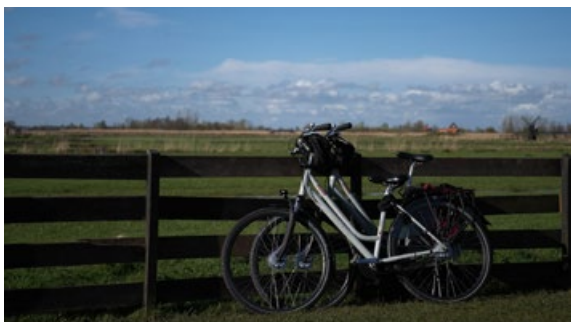


Rhapsody in blue No 48, 2025
Cyanotype on fabric sewn on paper, 27.5 x 20 inches

Xiuzhuo Zhou

Absence

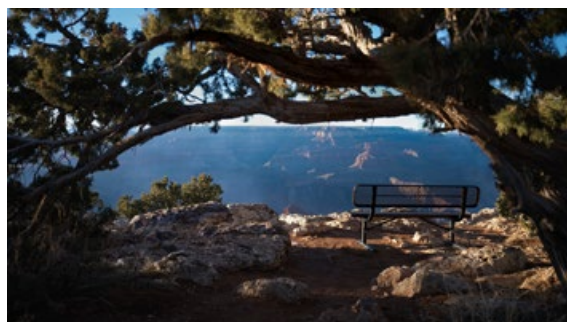
This series explores absence as a metaphor for existence. Through quiet images of empty benches, grounded boats, and waiting bicycles, it reflects on memory, impermanence, and how absence, as presence in another form, holds space for loss, hope, and reunion.



*Get in touch with Xiuzhuo on
Instagram: @xiuzhuo_z*

About Xiuzhuo

Xiuzhuo Zhou is a photographer from Hubei, China, now based in Southampton, UK. His work explores emotion, memory, and identity through a realistic style that captures the quiet poetry of everyday life. Combining photography, installation, and new media, he uses collage and AI-generated imagery to blur the line between reality and imagination. Centering on themes of temporality and existential reflection, Zhou documents subtle moments of introspection and beauty, inviting viewers to re-examine their inner worlds and find meaning in the ordinary.



*All works: Absence, 2023
Photography, 22 x 12.4 cm*



*All works: Absence, 2023
Photography, 22 x 12.4 cm*

Clothilde Lasserre

About the artist

Clothilde Lasserre is a French painter and sculptor whose artistic path is rooted in a humanistic and socially engaged approach. Raised in an inspiring family environment, she has always nurtured a deep creative freedom and a strong sense of conviction. For over twenty years, she has developed her practice in her own studios, officially recognized by the Ateliers d'Art de France label. From her vantage point above Paris's La Défense, she draws inspiration from the ebb and flow of crowds, the fleeting encounters, the movement of lives. Her works — both paintings and sculptures — explore the need to cultivate our singularity while learning to live together. Represented by galleries in France, her work is included in private collections in New York, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and France. Her career includes solo exhibitions, contemporary art fairs, and juried shows, and has been recognized with multiple distinctions.

The Silent Choreography of Urban Life

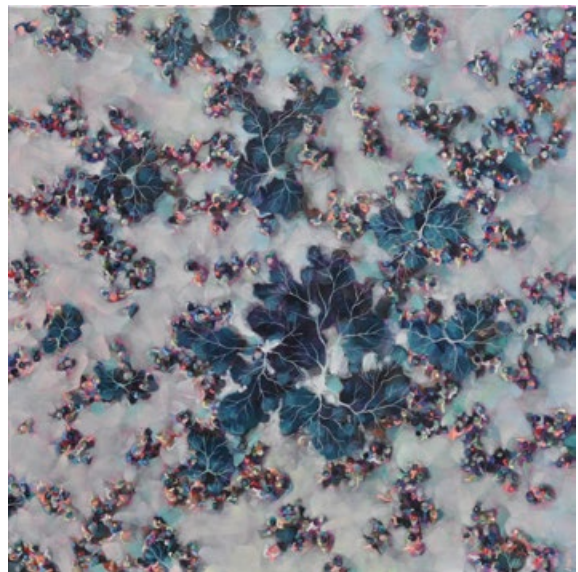
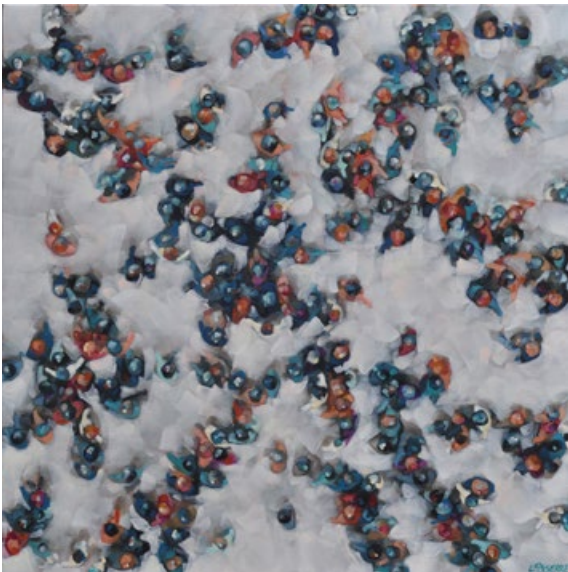
Clothilde Lasserre creates work that explores movement, human connection, and the place of the body within the social landscape. Inspired by the flow of crowds and the silent choreography of urban life, she develops a visual language of rhythm, momentum, and pause. Her paintings and sculptures engage in a constant dialogue, seeking balance between strength and fragility, density and emptiness. Her compositions, often inhabited by figures seen from above or forms in tension, reflect a sensitive reading of human interaction—where every individual contributes to a larger whole. Her gestures are intuitive yet deliberate, aiming to capture the essence of connection: what binds us together, and what remains elusive. Across her series, Lasserre builds a universe that is both personal and collective, driven by the conviction that we must hold space for the other and embrace the richness of singularity.



Territoires suspendus, 2025, Porcelain, 45 x 45 x 35 cm



Ilots de vie, 2025, Porcelain, 35 x 35 x 35 cm



Up: *Vie animée horizon serein*, 2025, Oil on Canvas, 120 x 120 cm
 Down: *Soubresauts*, 2025, Oil on Canvas, 110 x 110 cm (left) / *Bulles de Vie*, 2025, Oil on Canvas, 110 x 110 cm (right)

Rebecca Wickham

Once Was

How do we mourn for more-than-human loss, when all that remains is empty space? Once Was explores the hollow land left behind when glaciers melt, and the grief and guilt that coalesces in the bare earth revealed by their erasure. Images recording sites of recent glacier loss sit alongside a series of death masks, made with rock, earth and melt-water collected from each site, and cast from a mould of the artist's own face. A memorial photograph pre-photography, the death mask acts as an object of grief and remembrance, the haunting of a presence no longer there. Here, it ties our fate together with that of our glaciers – the Earth's skin is our skin too. These images speak to our entanglement with, and responsibility for, these sites of loss, an elegy and prophecy both.



*Calderone Glacier, 2024
Lithographic Prints, 43 x 46 cm*



*Tiefen Glacier, 2024
Lithographic Prints, 43 x 46 cm*

About Rebecca

An Australian early-career photographer, Rebecca has recently graduated from London College of Communication with an MA (Distinction) in Photojournalism and Documentary Photography. Her research-based practice sits between photography and other mediums, with work concerning the climate crisis and our relationship with the earth. Primarily focused on landscape, she is interested in the materiality of place, often working directly with the environment to bring a record of its history and physicality into the work.

*Get in touch with Rebecca: rwickham.com
Instagram: @bectic*



Calderone Glacier, Death Mask, 2024
Digital Photographs

Arwen Duggan

Napoli and Monte di Procida

This body of work consists of black and white analog film photographs taken during a 2024 trip to Napoli and Monte di Procida. It forms part of my ongoing practice, which is grounded in documentation and archiving, a process I return to often in my work. Street photography plays a central role in my approach, and during my time in Italy, it felt like a natural fit with the beauty of the Italian landscape and people. This project continues from my street photography in Limerick City. Street photography is important to me because it preserves moments in a world that often looks away, drawing attention to what is often missed or overlooked.

About Arwen

Arwen Duggan (b.2003) is an Irish visual artist from Tipperary, currently based in Limerick. She is a recent graduate from Fine Art Painting at Limerick School of Art & Design in 2025. Her practice spans painting, video, photography, and installation, exploring themes of identity, surveillance, and the intersection of technology and perception. Duggan has exhibited in several exhibitions, most recently, Concordia, 2025, and Limerick Showcase, 2024. Duggan will begin her MFA in Fine Art at Limerick School of Art & Design in 2025.

*Get in touch with Arwen on
Instagram: @arwendugganartist*



*Sposini, 2024
Black and White Film, 21 x 29,7 cm*



*Paffuto, 2024
Black and White Film, 21 x 29,7 cm*



Up: *Monte*, 2024, Black and White Film, 21 x 29,7 cm
Down: *Ragazzi*, 2024, Black and White Film, 21 x 29,7 cm

Annamária Rita Tóth

Searching for Connection

In her work, Annamária Rita Tóth examines timelessness and constant change, searching for connections with time, space, nature, people. Her paintings balance on the border of abstraction and figurality. She is interested in both material presence and intangible feelings and attachments. In most cases she works with oil on canvas, but she also creates drawings and uses other materials, like glassfabric and ceramics.



Biophilia I., 2024
Oil on canvas, 130 x 100 cm
(Photo by Márián Gábor)



Connections IV, 2021
Oil on canvas, 140 x 120 cm

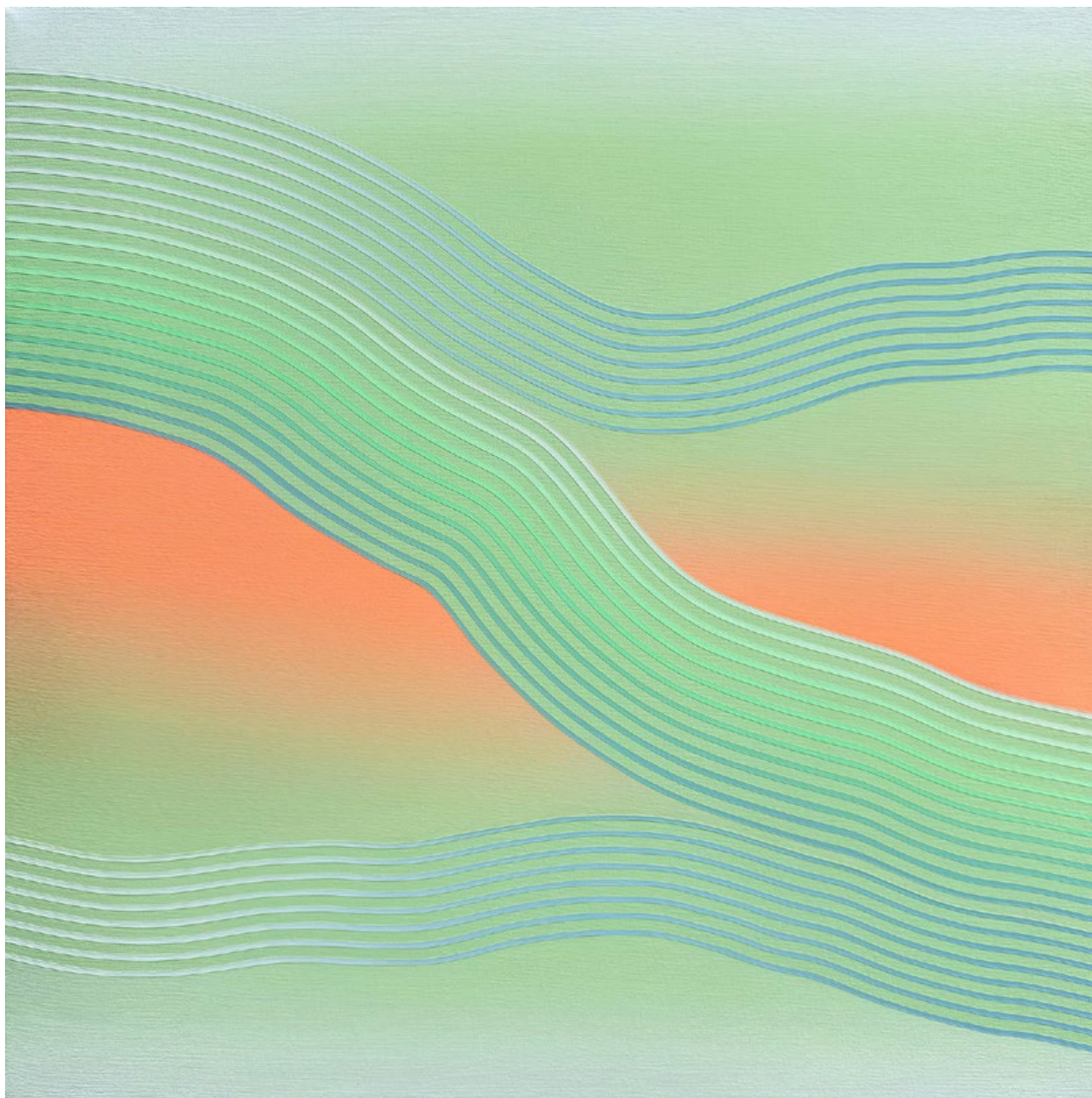
About Annamária

Annamária Rita Tóth graduated from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts as a Painter in 2018, and received her Artist Teacher degree in 2020. In 2017, she was awarded the National Higher Education Scholarship, followed by the Barcsay Award in 2018. She is a member of the Society of Hungarian Painters, the National Association of Hungarian Artists (MAOE). She is the co-founder of the FÜZ art group, founded in Budapest, 2021. She has participated in numerous domestic and international exhibitions.

*Get in touch with Annamária: <https://tothannamariarita.com>
Instagram: @toth.annamaria.rita*



Layers of mine II, 2021
Oil on glassfabric, 130 x 100 cm



Glitch, 2025
Latex on canvas, 61 x 61 cm

On Colors,
Luminescence
and Landscape
Painting

with

MK Lavigne



Self-portrait by MK Lavigne in her studio in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada

Hi Marie-Kim, it's a pleasure to have you. We like to start our interviews with a little time travel—do you remember the first time you created something?

When I was little, we lived in an ancestral “piece-sur-piece” house. I was always drawing the architecture of this blue house, built from an old barn, with very unique structures. The typical dormer windows, the exposed beams, the chimney, the curved double-pitched roof. My father was an art teacher, and there were always art supplies at home. Also, from the age of 4, I had pottery classes and I remember making many clay pieces.

Later on, you studied Visual Arts, and I read that for some years, photography was the main focus of your practice. Nowadays, you dedicate yourself to painting, creating vibrant abstract works with UV sensitive paint. Can you please tell me more about your work and also about the Hard Edge technique that you use frequently?

I have always been passionate about photography, but also about painting. I practiced both mediums during my art studies. At the end of my master's degree in visual arts (in 2008), I chose to focus solely on photography, out of laziness, I think. A little before turning 40, on a whim, I decided to start painting again. I cleared out half of my basement to set up my studio. It's been 7 years now that I've been spending almost all my time painting. A true obsession drives me; Art demands a lot of rigor, time, and work. In the studio, time doesn't exist, and it's the best refuge. The hard-edge technique has always attracted me, and over the years, I have decided to push it further by working with curved, repeated lines and gradients. To start a painting, I like to divide my surface into sections with which I build my composition. I plan very little for the next steps, advancing instinctively with each added layer. At a certain point in the painting, I reflect on strategies of connection, recall, and/or fusion. Harmony often occurs (or not) at this stage.

“I admit to producing a lot and keeping only a small body of work. I do many trials and experiments because I strive for perfection.”

In my humble opinion, a good hard-edge painting should have no imperfections; whether in the sharpness of the lines, the application of varnishes, the execution of gradients, etc. It's not to showcase technical prowess, but rather to allow for vibrant, hypnotic, dynamic effects, free from visual distractions.

Some of your paintings remind me of landscapes, the lines on the canvas seem to draw mountain-like contours. I wonder if they are conscious abstractions of landscapes or if these shapes enter your practice subconsciously?

The truth is that all my paintings are driven by my passion for mountains and, in my eyes, all my paintings are landscapes. I have a horizon line, depth of field, mountains, skies, and sometimes I add an ocean or a body of water. I cannot control the viewer's gaze; I can provide clues, use codes, but the artwork exists on its own and offers itself as an experience of contemplation, not representation or understanding. That said, I like to think of myself as a landscape painter!

Next, I'd like to know more about the vibrant colours in your work—can you tell me more about your fascination with neon colours and UV sensitive paint?

I really enjoy creating gradients with pastel colors. I am a big fan of subtle transitions within the same surface; from lilac to pink, from white to sky blue, from lime green to light yellow, etc. I love the color that results from the fusion of the two colors. Essentially, the UV fluorescent lines were added as small interventions to accentuate the contours of my gradients. Gradually, I created full gradients by integrating a UV agent into my latex mixtures. I was quickly captivated by the fact that a painting now had two versions: one under normal lighting and another under ultraviolet lighting.

That brings me to my next question, the creative process. You already shared some of it but I'd like to dig a bit deeper—how do you usually get from an idea for a piece to bringing it to life?

I always work on several paintings at the same time. My main driving force lies in color. I create a series of colors, almost always pastels, without thinking too much but always with a main color, depending on my mood at the moment. Sometimes, I jot down 2-3 lines on a piece of paper to start a composition, but decisions are constantly made in the present. I only paint if I am joyful. I am unable to work if my mental health is affected by a difficult situation. That being said, if a painting is going well and makes my heart race, it is certainly capable of influencing my mood.

There is a piece I'm curious to hear more about, it's "Airplane." I love the colour palette of blues and purples and the dreamy feel the piece emanates...

Airplane is a fabulous landscape with great depth of field. There are several dimensions in the composition of this painting that give the impression of being in the clouds. It's a painting that was made with confidence and light-hearted joy. Not all paintings can be successful.

“Accepting to abandon a painting is part of the practice; even if a ridiculous number of hours and materials have been spent.”

The high of a successful artwork is great, but the down also exists in abandonment. I try to remain stoic both in success and in failure, and it's not easy. With Airplane, I followed instinctive decisions and good moves without ever stopping, and the high was immense.

Is there any other piece you'd like to speak about more in detail?

EMANATION. One of my favorite works. The painting was finished, but I had a vision. I decided to take a risk; if I failed my process, I would lose the painting. I added the two small light green lines above the two mountains at the top, and I succeeded. This small intervention suddenly illuminated the painting...I loved creating this painting from start to finish—I didn't want to finish it; I wanted to stay in that emotion for a long time.

We're reaching the end of our conversation, so I have three last questions for you. To start with, let's look behind the scenes for a moment—who are some of your artistic references, artists whose work you admire? And besides art, what else inspires you?

James Turrell, Maude Corriveau, Josiane Lanthier, Denis Villeneuve, Katia Konioukhova, Jordan Tran, Dan Brault, Xavier Dolan, Jason Cantoro, Karine Locatelli, Cynthia Dinan-Mitchell, Peter Zumthor. Besides art, I am passionate about mountain hiking, specifically in Switzerland. I try to plan all my trips based on the mountains I want to explore.

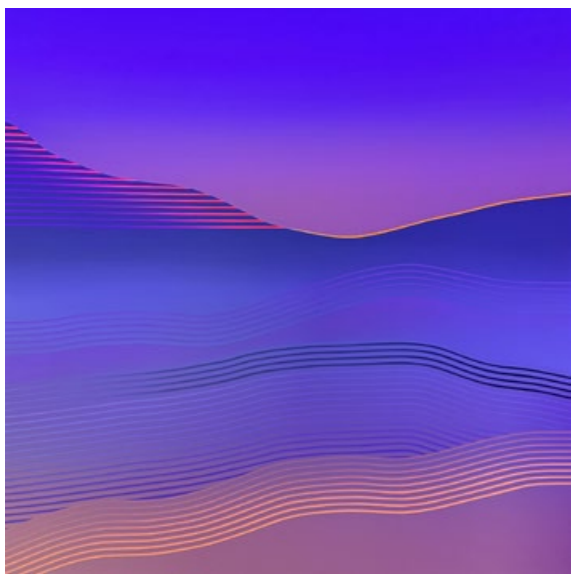
I also enjoy architectural and interior design. I am particularly interested in architects who skillfully integrate natural light into their structures, creating lines of light, shapes, and shadows that shift across interior surfaces throughout the seasons.

Is there any special project you're dreaming about realizing in the future?

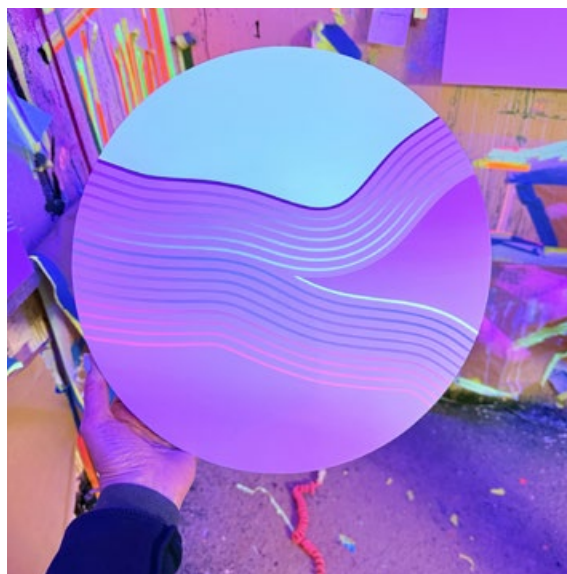
I dream of having an exhibition in a gallery where, during the opening, the lighting on my works could alternate between white light and ultraviolet light. I would also love, one day, to see my works in beautiful architect-designed homes.

And last question, if you had to describe your work in one word only, what would that be?

LUMINESCENCE. I really like this question. I find that Luminescence is the perfect meeting of Light and Reminiscence, two words that I am fond of.



Airplane (UV), 2024
Latex on canvas, 76 x 76 cm



Emanation (MINI-UV), 2025
Latex on canvas, 35 x 35 cm

Get in touch with MK: www.mkfluo.com
Instagram: @mkfluo



Emanation, 2025
Latex on canvas, 76 x 76 cm



Pink Valley, 2025
Latex on canvas, 61 x 61 cm



Emanation (Mini), 2025
Latex on wood, 35 x 35 cm

Michael Ivan Schwartz

About Michael

Michael Ivan Schwartz combines portrait and documentary photography with an approach that is inquisitive and artistic. He thrives on learning from others and uncovering their hidden beauty. This behind-the-scenes method captures the true vibe and spirit of his subjects. Michael has a passion for capturing people's stories in a way that is authentic, compelling, and deeply resonant. His keen eye for beauty, combined with his decades of experience, make him a true master of his craft as he unlocks the untold stories that lie within.

TATT2U

The series TATT2U is a visual exploration of the connection between body art and personal identity. Tattoos, serve as testimonies of experiences, memories, beliefs, and transformations. In this series, I invite viewers into the intimate worlds of individuals who carry their stories, hopes, and struggles on their skin, framing their tattoos within spaces that reflect the broader narrative of their lives. Each photograph captures a subject not just posing with their tattoo, but engaging with the environment that has shaped them. The backdrop serves as an extension of their personal history. The series seeks to amplify the complexity of the human experience, highlighting how tattoos are not isolated markings but intricate parts of a larger, ongoing story. Through these portraits, I aim to shift the narrative surrounding tattoos—often viewed as mere decoration or rebellion—toward an understanding of them as potent symbols of identity, culture, and personal transformation.

Get in touch with Michael: www.loud-communications.com

Instagram: @michaelivanschwartz

Next page: *Dance Dance*, 2024, 4398 x 6597 px



Up: Escape The Monotony, 2024, 6038 x 4025 px

Center: Overhead, 2024, 5782 x 4626 px

Down: Stay Scrappy, 2025, 4536 x 3024 px

All works: Digital Photography



Gabriel Campoy

About Gabriel

Gabriel was born in Baja California, Mexico, and raised in Lawrenceville, Georgia. His interest in the arts began at an early age, drawing characters for his classmates. Even in elementary school, he won the T-shirt design competition for the school's Field Day. As he grew up, he took weekend painting classes to further develop his skills.

In high school, Gabriel attended the Suwanee Arts Association and competed in a statewide art competition, receiving a callback during his junior year from Valdosta State University. His creative journey continued when he was accepted into the Savannah College of Art and Design, where he studied color theory, life drawing, painting, and took electives such as fashion illustration. Gabriel graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion Design.

While building a career in New York's fashion industry, Gabriel maintained his passion for painting. His color work and fashion designs have been featured in brands such as Vera Wang, Marchesa, Reem Acra, Michael Kors, Rhone, and Sergio Tacchini. Gabriel also worked as a freelancer for accomplished activist and artist, Zoe Buckman for almost two years. In 2019, he held his first solo exhibition in Williamsburg. After a setback due to the pandemic, he showed his second solo three day art show "A/way With Words this summer in the East Village.

Connecting to Each Other through Art

This body of work is an accumulation of pieces I've created over the past year and a half. The central metaphor I've explored is that painting, much like language, is a form of communication. Through my experimentation with different mediums and techniques, I've come to understand that each medium functions similarly to words—each brushstroke, color choice, and texture has its own meaning and intention.

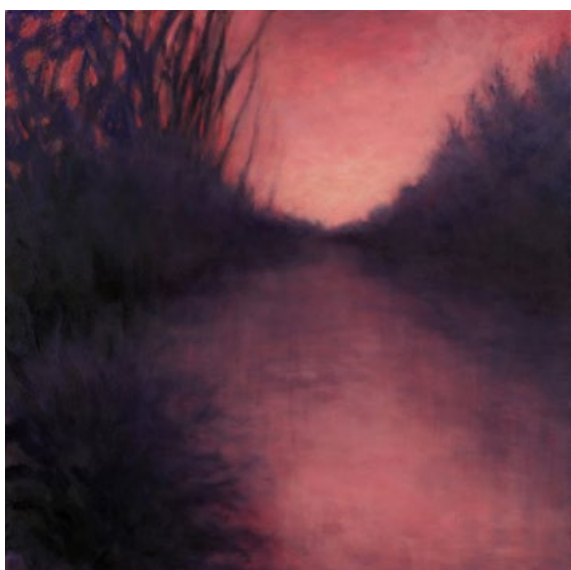
One moment, you might be speaking softly with smooth acrylic paint, creating a subtle flow of expression. In the next, you could be shouting with bold, expressive brushstrokes, striking the canvas like an intimate thought you might keep locked away in a diary. But then, there are also paintings that feel more like a conversation, where the language is clear, open, and meant to be shared with the world. Just as with words, the way we use our artistic language shapes how we communicate our deepest emotions, thoughts, and stories.

Art, like language, is a universal medium through which we connect with one another.

*Get in touch with Gabriel: www.gabrielcampoy.com
Instagram: [@gabrielcampoy](https://www.instagram.com/gabrielcampoy)*



Angel Grapes, 2025
Acrylic on Canvas, 40 by 30 inches



Up: *Nightfall San Francisco*, 2024, oil on canvas, 36 x 36 inches
Down: *The Last Quiet*, 2025, oil on canvas, 36 x 36 inches (left) / *Edge of Morning*, 2025, oil on canvas, 36 x 36 inches (right)

Victoria Veedell

A Connection to the Land

Places have a memory, a history, a feeling that we connect with. These memories, like faint echoes, are revealed as light moves across the landscape, transforming the color and texture of a place. It is these moments and experiences that I capture in my atmospheric landscape paintings.

My fascination with the landscape stems more from an interest in exploring our primal connection to the land rather than a focus purely on the aesthetics of a place. My paintings trace the effect light has on a location, how it leaves its mark on the landscape, how it illuminates the essence of nature--creating different moods, transforming a scene, drawing us in, focusing our gaze, changing the temperature physically and emotionally, and capturing movement. Combined, these elements relay the feeling and memories of a place. My paintings are a snapshot of a particular moment in time. Recording these moments is an act of resistance documenting places that are threatened by increased urbanization and catastrophic climate change. They are a call to preserve these places and a reminder of the important symbiotic relationship that we have with nature.

Travel is an integral part of my process. Participating in artist residencies around the world—Japan, India, Finland, and Iceland—allows me to explore different landscapes and record the dramatic shifts in light and color in various geographic locations. During long walks, I immerse myself in the feel and texture of a place recording my observations in photographs and small studies. These studies become the basis for my series. Ultimately, my work is about chronicling timeless moments in nature where we feel a sense of serenity and a connection to the land.

About Victoria

Victoria Veedell captures the essence of nature by examining the effects of light on form in the natural world. She is known for her unique approach to the landscape that focuses on relaying the emotional memory of a place and fleeting moments in time.

She has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions and has been awarded artist residencies nationally and internationally. Her work has been included in exhibitions at The Triton Museum, Santa Clara, CA; Maturango Museum, Ridgecrest, CA; Chico Art Center, Chico, CA; James Baird Gallery, Newfoundland, Canada; Sakai Museum, Sakai, Japan; among others. She has been an artist in residence in Japan, India, Iceland, Finland, Newfoundland, Vermont and California. Victoria's paintings are part of numerous private and corporate collections including Adobe Systems, San Jose, CA and Sutter Health, San Francisco, CA.

After receiving a BFA in painting from Texas A & M Corpus Christi, Veedell attended L'Ecole Albert Defois, Association D'Ateliers D'Art Internationaux, Les Cerquex, France and then studied painting at the graduate level at NYU. She worked for over six years in galleries in New York City before moving to Tokyo. Veedell spent two years exploring Japan and other parts of Asia before settling in San Francisco in 2003.

Get in touch with Victoria: www.veedell.com
Instagram: [@victoria_veedell](https://www.instagram.com/victoria_veedell)



Fears, 2024
Mixed media collage, 11 x 14 in

Madcollage

An Element of Freedom and Color

Everyone craves a meaningful life. I've crafted purpose out of modest materials: paper and glue. They are ubiquitous in my studio. I've also created a silent way to bond with strangers using images. It's wonderfully fulfilling. I think the need to communicate is intrinsic to art-making, and collage beautifully bridges the space between artist and viewer. Color is crucial to my visual language. It stirs something deep and intuitive in me. I currently lean towards color drenched surfaces. I relish their tension, saturation, and brightness. I also seek a bit of color shock through bold combinations. Color is playful and joyous. There's an element of freedom, of splendid confidence. Strong colors are like a double espresso: they pack a punch that stimulates the mind.

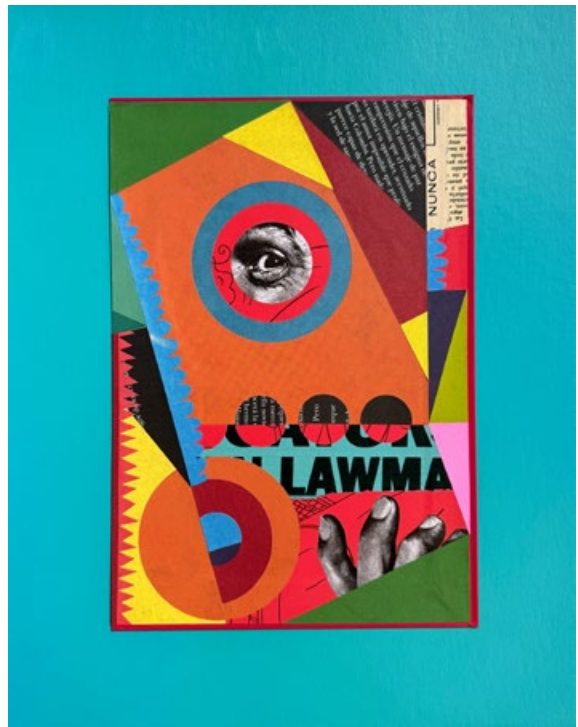
About Madcollage

I'm from Madrid, Spain. I'm formally trained in the strict European tradition but work primarily with collage. I freelance and own an online art business. Yep. I like to live dangerously. I have persisted through divorce, illness, personal loss, and a pandemic, but let me just say that burnout is real. Yet here I am. The school of hard knocks is unkind, but it's efficient. At almost sixty, I see myself with clarity: the good, the bad, and the ugly. I accept myself. When restless, collage helps me tap into much needed self-compassion. It helps me cope. It soothes me. Art is an appallingly underutilized therapeutic tool, and creativity is an excellent prescription to alleviate harm done to body and soul. I want people to know art is there for them. It is accessible. It is forgiving. It is revealing. It's worth it.

*Get in touch with Madcollage: www.madcollage.com
Instagram: @lovemadcollage*



*New York Frida, 2023
Mixed media collage, 11 x 14 in*



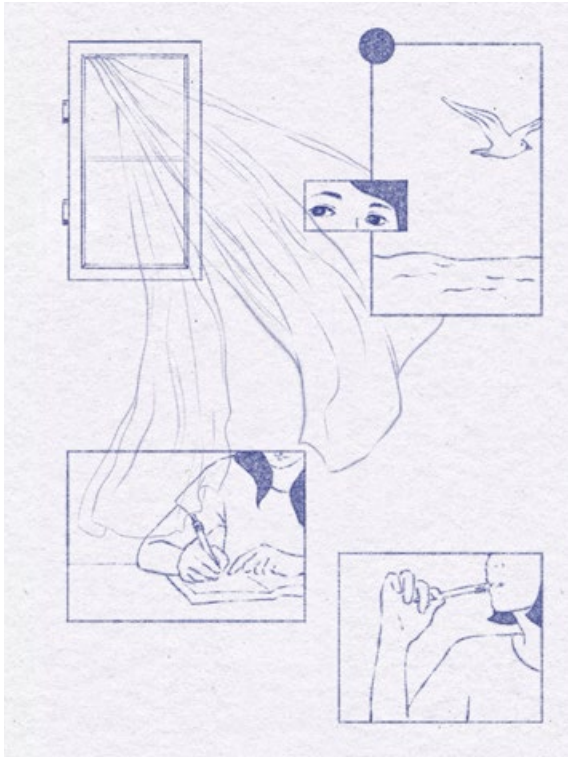
*Nunca, 2025
Mixed media collage, 11 x 14 in*

Guesswho

Twin Size

Twin Size is a series of illustrations that explores the intimate, everyday world of twin illustrators. These drawings capture the quiet and loud moments that resonate between two closely connected individuals: the rhythm of a shared laugh, the echo of an argument across a small room, the imagined creaks of bedtime fears, the pulse of music during a midnight dance, or the near-silence of simply existing side by side.

In this visual diary, sound is never directly seen—but always felt. Twin Size invites viewers to “hear” the inner soundscape of twinhood through delicate lines and atmospheric scenes.



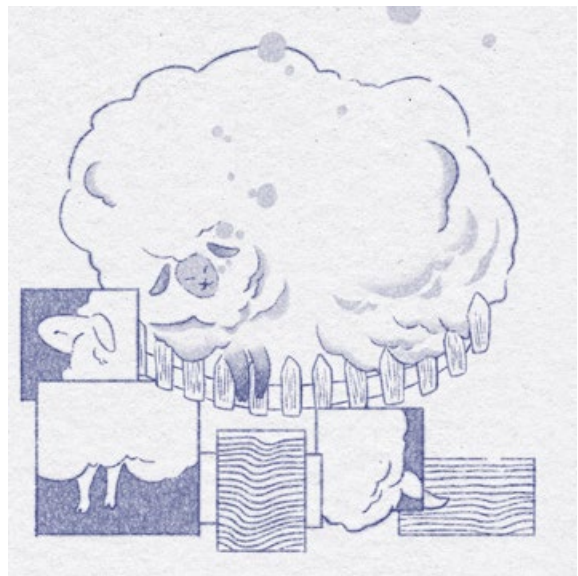
Twin Size - detail image

About Guesswho

Guess Who Studio is a twin-led creative venture based in New York City, founded by Chenxin and Chenyi Luo. Graduates of Pratt Institute, the duo brings a fresh perspective to illustration and graphic design, blending individuality with collaboration.

Their shared experience as twins deeply informs their work, allowing them to explore themes of identity, connection, and human relationships. Their illustrations often capture the tension and harmony between closeness and independence, mirroring both their personal bond and broader interpersonal dynamics.

At the core of Guess Who Studio is a passion for visual storytelling and emotional resonance. Through their art, Chenxin and Chenyi invite viewers to reflect on their own connections and the subtle, often invisible ties that link us all.



Twin Size - detail image

Get in touch with Guesswho: <https://guesswho.studio>
Instagram: @naaameiii



Twin Size, 2025
 Digital illustration, 24 x 8.5 in

Miss Sunday

About Miss Sunday

Miss Sunday is a 28-year-old queer South African artist whose work embodies joy, community, and radical self-acceptance through painting, sculpture, and illustration. Winner of the Superbalist New Artist Search in 2019 and semi-finalist for the Yogi Sip Artist Collaboration in 2020, she has established herself as both a creative problem solver and a visual storyteller dedicated to uplifting her community.

Her practice has been shaped by a series of collaborations with organisations such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation, TedX, and Congenerate, where she has created open-licensed artworks addressing subjects ranging from climate change to sexual health awareness. These partnerships, developed over the past five years, have significantly influenced her commissioned projects and expanded her artistic vocabulary. In addition to her professional work, she has exhibited in both group and solo contexts at galleries including The Fourth, as well as on an ongoing basis at Cape Town's Kaya Café. There, she not only presents her art but also facilitates creative workshops centred on themes of body positivity and self-love, nurturing a sense of belonging within her community. As a part-time artist still early in her career, Miss Sunday demonstrates a strong and compelling voice, with a message that carries both promise and resonance.

Inspiring Joy & Mutual Understanding

Miss Sunday's art is, at its core, an exploration of joy. Through dopamine-rich palettes, soothing linework, and geometric-inspired structures, she captures the fleeting essence of joy and transforms it into something enduring. Having experienced her own struggles with mental health, her painting process becomes an act of gentle resistance - each canvas a reminder that joy remains present, waiting to be rediscovered. Her work suggests that even amidst difficulty, beauty and brightness are never too far away, if only we pause to notice them.

Yet joy is not her only subject. Her art also cultivates dialogue around community, body acceptance, and queer representation - recurring themes that surface throughout her pieces. When asked why she chooses not to depict faces, she explains:

"I don't want to prescribe how a viewer should feel. I want them to bring themselves to the work - to see their own reflection, to step into the future of joy before them. That is what they deserve."

Get in touch with Miss Sunday on
Instagram: [@misssunday_art](https://www.instagram.com/misssunday_art)





Stay, 2023, Acrylic and Paint Marker on Canvas, 15 x 21 cm
Left page: *Church*, 2020, Acrylic and Paint Marker on Canvas, 122 x 46 cm

James Frew

About the artist

Dr James Frew is an artist, teacher, writer, and academic. He currently teaches on the Art and Design Foundation course with OnCampus Southampton, in association with Winchester School of Art. As an educator he lectures widely on art and culture, whilst also possessing a keen interest in pedagogy and its evolving manifestations within practice-based learning, specifically, the interplay between theory and praxis. Frew completed his practice-based PhD in painting at The Glasgow School of Art in 2021 and is an active researcher – he has published original writing featured in *The Journal of Contemporary Painting* (2023) and the book *PhotographyDigitalPainting* (2020). In 2016 he was awarded the John Mather Rising Star Scholarship for his research into expanded field painting, and in 2017 The Glasgow School of Art's Chairman's Medal.

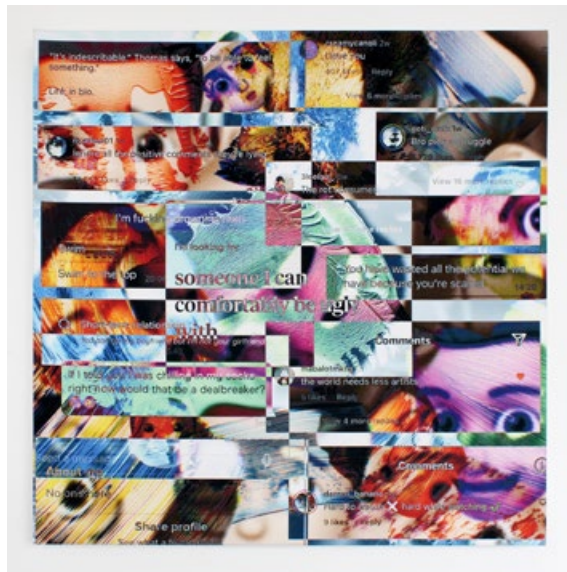
Internet Culture & Post-Digital Art

James Frew's practice explores expanded painting and post-digital art production in the age of the Internet and social media. Specifically, how paint(ing), images, and language translate via traditional mediums and new media, through the process of using digital technologies. Thematically, his work nods to contemporary Internet culture and imagery, frequently employing irony, profanity, and transgressive humour. Formally his work attempts to reassess and rejuvenate the histories and languages of painting, expanding its territories by using analogue and digital technologies to blend 'medium' (discrete, analogue objects) and 'media' (networked, digital information). His recent work explores post-digital art practices through the creation of what he calls 'digipaintages' – hybrids of digital paintings and photomontages manifest as both digitally circulated images and physical textile printed paintings.

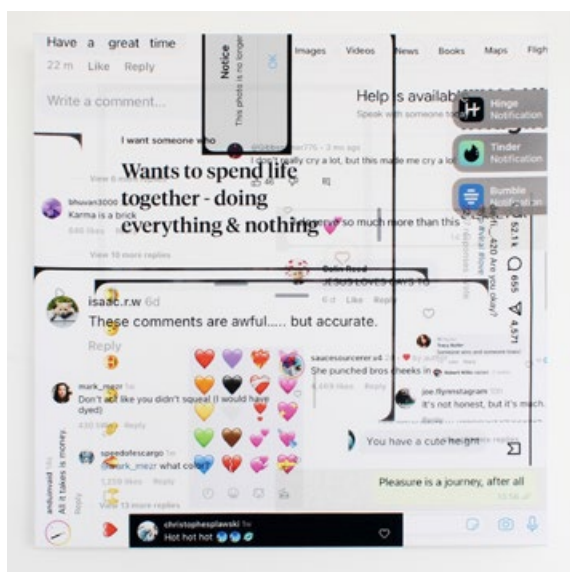
Get in touch with James: www.jamesfrewfineart.com
Instagram: @James_frew



Everything? Oh, Everything., 2025
Digital textile print, 55 x 55 cm



Someone I Can Comfortably Be Ugly With, 2025
Digital textile print, 55 x 55 cm



Up: *The Poet vs. the Computer*, 2025
 Down: *Have a Great Time (Karma is a Brick)*, 2025 (left) / *It's (Not) Too Late to Begin Again*, 2025 (right)
 All works: Digital textile print, 55 x 55cm

Louise McGunnigle



About Me and My Work

My work explores themes of the spectral and the unknown, often drawing from ghost stories, folklore, and superstition. I use painting as a way to navigate the space between abstraction and figuration—allowing forms to emerge intuitively through mark making, suggesting apparitions that aren't always visible at first glance. Since 2022, I've exhibited in a number of group shows across Glasgow, including "Flesh Girls" at The Old Hairdressers, "Embedded Bodies" at Barnes Garage, and "Ectos Chronos" at New Glasgow Society.

My work is held in private collections in Scotland, Finland, and Japan, and I'm represented by Art Pistol Gallery in Glasgow. A Glasgow native, I continue to live and work in the city, where my practice is rooted in an evolving interest in the spiritual, the narrative, and the unseen. In 2024, I graduated from the Glasgow School of Art in Painting & Printmaking.

Responses to the Ephemeral

My work is driven by an ongoing fascination with the unknown—spectral spaces we sense but cannot fully grasp. I use painting to explore our collective curiosity around ghosts, superstitions, and the haunting presence of what remains unseen. Each piece is a response to the ephemeral, where figuration emerges slowly and intuitively through layers of abstract mark making.

I'm particularly interested in how figures can materialise not only within a single canvas but also across a body of work, creating what I think of as a spiritual dynamic between them. These apparitions are deliberately ambiguous—at times they recede into the surface, at others they confront the viewer more directly. Colour and titling are also central to my practice, guiding the viewer through a narrative that echoes ghost stories while remaining open to interpretation. Ultimately, my paintings ask what it means to be haunted—not just by spirits, but by memory, myth, and the stories we pass between generations.





Up: *Ghost Woman*, 2024, Acrylic, 70 x 100 cm
 Down: *Tangina Seance*, 2024, Acrylic, 130 x 160 cm (left) / *The Fifth Horseman*, 2024, Acrylic, 130 x 160 cm (right)
 Left page: *They're Here*, 2024, Acrylic, 130 x 160 cm (left) / *None Remain But a Few Ghosts*, 2025, Acrylic, 75 x 100 cm (right)

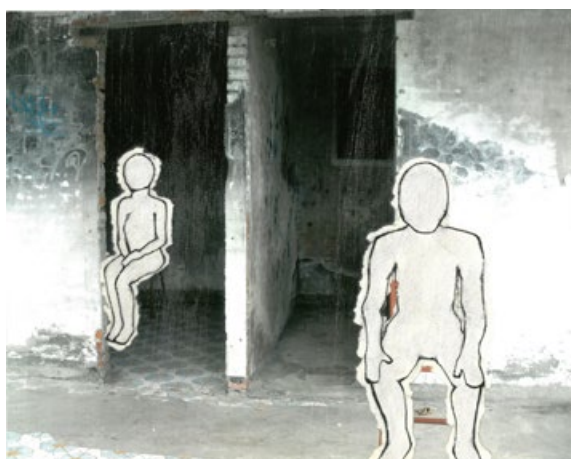
Gina Restivo

Black & White Cutouts in a Technicolor World

My work is shaped by movement through unfamiliar environments and encounters with different cultures. These experiences help me notice patterns in how people relate to themselves, each other, and the world.

Black and White Cutouts in a Technicolor World is a mixed media series that reflects on the universal nature of human experience—beyond borders, identities, and timezones. Though the photographs originate from specific locations, the settings are intentionally vague, creating a tension between presence and absence.

I hand-tear drawn figures from paper and integrate them into each scene to explore the space between what is shown and what is suggested. Rather than fixed narratives, the pieces offer open-ended moments that invite viewers to imagine who the figures are, where they are, and what they might be feeling, and reflect on the often ambiguous terrain of being human.



*Black and White Cutouts in a Technicolor World, 2024
Acrylic and paper on photo print, 8.5 x 11 in (both works)*



About Me

I'm Gina Restivo, a multidisciplinary artist working in digital art, photography, painting, and drawing. Originally from San Francisco and now based in Massachusetts, my work is driven by a deep curiosity about the world and my place in it. At the tender age of 24 I've traveled to 24 countries. These experiences have shaped not only how I see the world, but how I express it through art. I'm inspired by the connections I make with people and places, the feeling of being both a part of and apart from something larger, and the moments of self-discovery that travel and art consistently bring.

My work explores themes like isolation, imagination, identity, femininity, humanity, and the intercultural spaces where these ideas intersect. I've had an artist's eye for as long as I can remember. My first instinct to create started at age two with a marker and an "off-limits" surface (much to my parents' dismay). Through every medium I use, I try to tell stories, ask questions, and blur the line between reality and the imagined.

Get in touch with Gina on Instagram: @eyesallOver

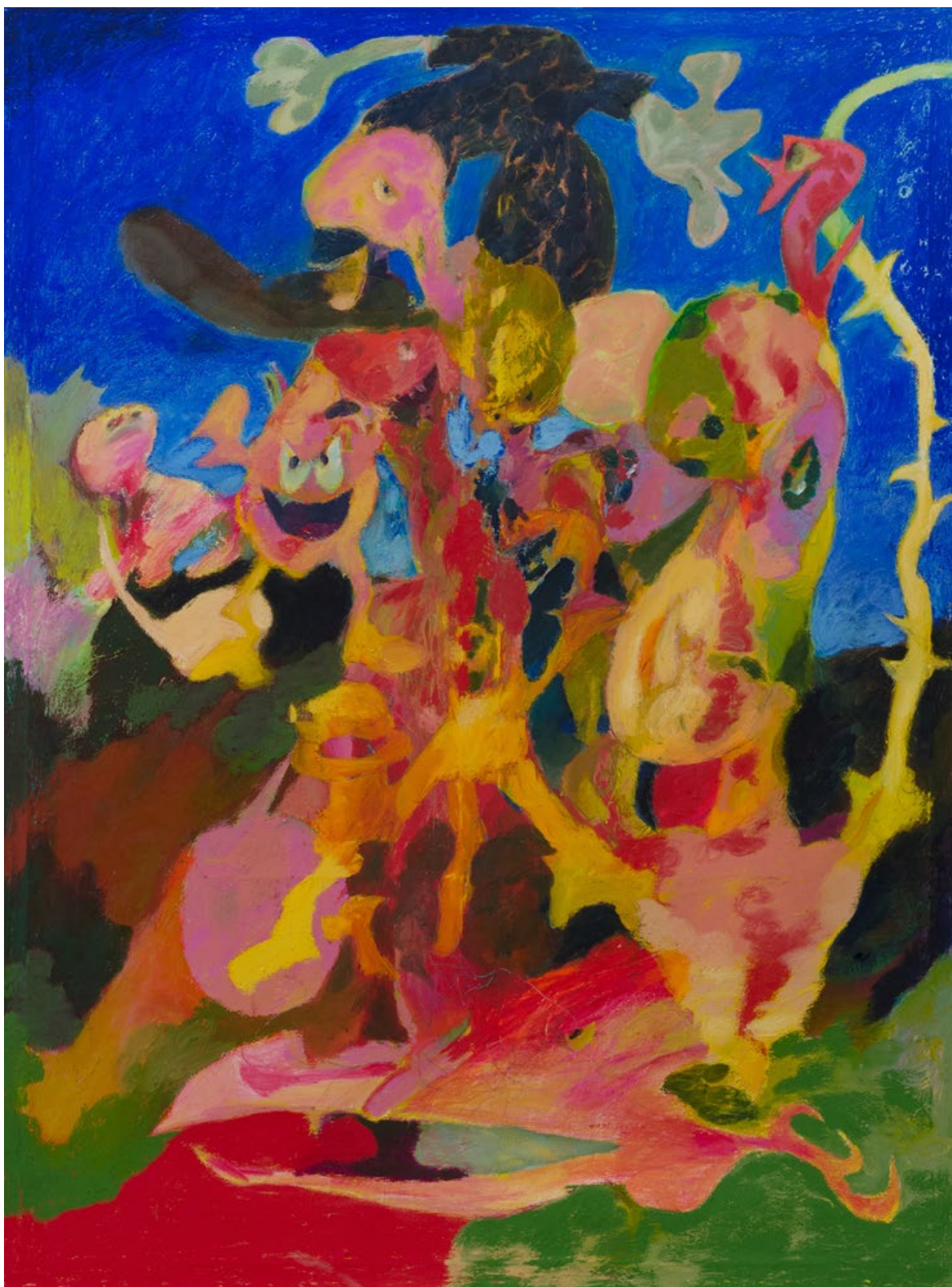


Black and White Cutouts in a Technicolor World, 2024
Acrylic and paper on photo print, 8.5 x 11 in

Pastel is very
intuitive for me.

It had a gateway
impact to going large
scale with my work
in a way that painting
never did. At the heart
of it, I'm a drawer.

– Gabor Bata



Death in Park, 2025
Oil Stick, Oil Pastel On Canvas, 36 x 48 inches
(Photo by William Sabourin)

Something Goofy,
Something Scary
and Something
a Little Sad

with

Gabor Bata

Gabor Bata photographed by Béatrice Dubreuil



Hello Gabor, it's a pleasure to have you. Let's start with a few basics for people who are not familiar with you and your work. Who are you and what do you do?

Hi! My name is Gabor Bata. I'm a Canadian artist and I draw from the visual languages of film, comics and design to create images of cartoonish figures who'd rather rip your arm off than admit they love you. They could probably use a hug.

Let's go back in time for a moment—what were your beginnings in the arts?

I was always drawing, but I specifically started out drawing and writing comics with my brother. We used to sell them on the playground at school. Then I got into movies with him when I was a preteen and we would write and direct horror films with our friends and edit them on iMovie. We

had the cops called on us a couple times for getting fake blood all over the street. Somewhere on the internet, there is a YouTube channel with all of our videos that is very haunted and very annoying in a 13 year-old-boy kind of way.

And how did the decision to pursue art professionally come about?

To tell you the truth, it wasn't like being part of the gallery world was a lifelong passion of mine. I was pretty convinced I was going to be in film or cartooning. I still love those mediums, but there came a point when I went to art school, and I began to enjoy a creative flexibility I hadn't felt before. I was lucky to have had several mentors and artist friends believe in my work enough to guide me and challenge me along the way, and I guess the gallery thing just sort of stuck.

Your practice explores social alienation and how it transforms us, portraying figures who have lost their humanity and have devolved into cartoons. Can you please tell me more about your work and why it is important to you to open conversations about loneliness?

Important isn't the word I'd use. I just think loneliness is a part of life, and it's something I feel and a lot of folks I know feel to various extents. I'm just illustrating the extreme, most ridiculous end of that, and asking what happens when that need for connection isn't met. How does desperation change a person? What happens when one can't connect or communicate any longer? You see that in some of my drawings: the characters just auto-cannibalize and become abstracted. They merge violently with others. The speech bubbles and the dialogue is abstracted as much as the characters can be. It's all serious and morbid...but then, I think it's funnier and more real if the people experiencing these things are a bit ridiculous looking along the way. You can look at the different ways people manoeuvred Covid, and how quick we are to forget it all, to get an idea of that...

Speaking about Covid, would you say that the pandemic influenced your work to some extent?

I don't want to say Covid influenced my work, but I will say I began zeroing in on alienation in my drawings more directly in the second year of my MFA, around 2021 to 2022. It was never a conscious thought to even reference that, but I suppose the big, invasive faces and the wide-open mouths I draw as points of horror and anxiety are sort of unmistakable. The desire to connect and, simultaneously, the fear of it.

As you already mentioned at the beginning of our conversation, you have a great love for film, animation and comics. I'd love to hear more about that and about how they have influenced your practice.

I just consumed so much of that growing up. It was like a salve for me, even the stuff I probably shouldn't have been reading and watching. Reading Mad Magazine, Life in Hell and Fritz the Cat, watching Godzilla, Evil Dead, The

Exorcist. I had this memory from when I was about 6 years old, watching this bit on TV where this hairy, muddy creature attacked a man in a back alley. For the longest time, I thought it was a dream, but it was only when I was a teenager that I discovered it was David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, the scene behind the Winkies. My parents had rented it, and I walked in on that early moment in the film. When you see shit like that at that age, you don't forget it.

Comics and film are different mediums, but they both play with sequencing, motion, and narrative. I liked telling stories, and I think that's not gone away, even if it's a different medium. Peter Doig talked about how he views his paintings as though they were movies, and the viewer their director. I like looking at it that way too, with the music and sounds and everything!

You mostly draw with oil pastels that you apply in thick layers, creating these heavy textures so characteristic of your work. Can you tell me more about your use of oil pastels and how working with them makes you feel?

Pastel is very intuitive for me. It had a gateway impact to going large scale with my work in a way that painting never did. At the heart of it, I'm a drawer. While some people have described what I do as painting (which makes sense given the emphasis on form and colour), someone recently said to me that I approach painting from a drawer's hand, and I thought that was really apt.



The Field, 2024
Oil Pastel on Gessoed Paper 57 x 40 inches
(Photo by William Sabourin)

“Pastel is both a blessing and a fucking curse, because it’s an utter mess.”

It never dries, and with the way I really like to use it, which is to build it up and build it up, any hope of it not smearing on everything and everyone it makes contact with is futile. I can’t believe I haven’t been laughed out of this business yet.

But again, I love that build up. I love the messiness. It’s like radioactive. In a way, it’s of a piece with my subject matter. I like it looking cruddy and goopy. It’s both ugly and attractive. It’s my lizard brain, seeing the light and colour reflect off the surface of a tar pit. It’s like a trap, and for me, it works.

That sounds all like a very bodily, hands-on activity. Could you put into words how creating your drawings makes you feel?

Both energized and frustrated. As much as I’m streamlining my process the further along I’m going, intuition is a part of the process I never completely shed. I do plan out certain elements, like the basic composition, but there’s a lot I end up leaving to chance. The colours and textures I like to discover as I go, and that can be really exciting and moving. It’s just such a dynamic material and process. If I know too much in advance how everything will shake out, I get a little bored. Maybe I just live comfortably with instability, so the moments of anxiety and doubt settle nicely with the happy surprise that whatever I’ve been making doesn’t end up looking like a dog’s breakfast. But that’s usually the trouble with it: there’s way more of a chance of investing a lot into something that’ll suck. But I guess that’s showbiz, baby!

I read that drawing in your sketchbook is also a very important part of your practice and creative process...

That’s right, I’ve usually got my head buried pretty deep in my sketchbook. In fact, a lot of my big drawings begin as

digital collages ripped from scans of my sketchbooks. I’m a pretty avid doodler, and I’m probably drawing at least 10 pages a day. It’s been like that for as long as I’ve been drawing, so that’s the part of the process that comes the most naturally to me.

And, while working on a piece, would you say you are usually trying to convey a certain emotion or message?

Something a little goofy, something a little scary, something a little sad. If I hit all those, I’m pretty happy.

Next question, is there any piece you’d like to speak about more in detail?

A couple of years ago, I wrote this script for a play called *The Chase*. It’s written pretty informally, partially in prose, partially in screenplay. I illustrated it, and my partner, Béatrice Dubreuil (@__breuil on instagram), designed it. I feel this thing has come the absolute closest to capturing the themes and the specific tone and kinds of characters and scenarios my art aims to present.



The Chase, 2023
Risograph on Paper, 4 × 9.5 inches

It's about Elmer Fudd and Sylvester the Cat from Looney Tunes, being in this insane, volatile romance. They're chasing each other around a dining room table, trying to rip each other to pieces. It's like Wong Kar Wai's *Happy Together* meets Looney Tunes meets *Funny Games*. It's very stupid and embarrassing. When I began writing this project, I had all the intention in the world to make something serious that I could be proud of. My mind, however, kept going to the dumbest possible idea I could think of. I would spend hours trying to brainstorm this other, more respectable concept, and all the while I'd quickly jot down a scene where Elmer Fudd is screaming and banging on the walls because his cat-puppet husband proposed polyamory.

That was the tone I struck and fell in love with: This deeply intimate story about a desperate, crumbling relationship — something we've all been in or have been witness to — but having these two insane, embarrassing failures be the focus of it. In the old cartoons, they speak with these lisps and speech impediments, so I'd written it phonetically to read as garbled and as incomprehensible as they would actually sound. It's stupid, and funny and sad and also kind of disturbing. I've gotten a LOT of different reactions towards it. I think, if you ever want to understand my work better, you should read *The Chase*.

Our interview is coming to an end, so let's wrap up with a few last questions. First, what have you been working on or thinking about recently?

I've been thinking a lot about context and about fleshing out more of the world that my images inhabit. I had a critique at this residency in New York back in May with ARTCH and the NYC Crit Club, and the biggest takeaway was the question of "WHERE do my characters feel the most alienation." It was such an obvious, basic question, but one I hadn't given too much consideration.

I've mostly steered clear of fleshing out a "universe" (I hate that word, but yeah) or an avatar representing me the way Trenton Doyle Hancock or Ebecho Muslimova have in their paintings. But lately I'm interested in moving towards that and bringing more specificity to my drawings.

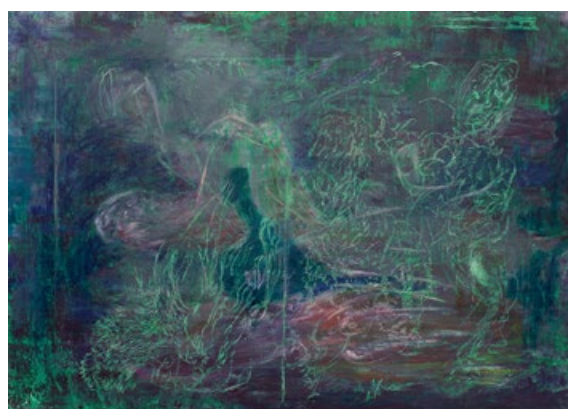
I could easily see it becoming too general and decorative otherwise. I saw this Salman Toor show during that same residency, and that was really eye-opening in terms of storytelling in a composition. Every character was doing something, interacting with someone, living their own little story. It was great.

Second, what have you been inspired by lately?

I've been slowly digging through this Frank Auerbach book by Robert Hughes, and that's already been pretty inspiring and validating to read as an artist. Sometimes you just need to hear how the other artists before you kept chugging along to understand why the hell you're still doing any of this and to feel a little less alone in the process. Speaking of, check out these fine folks here: Béatrice Dubreuil (@__breuil), Parker Davis (@parker_dav), Allegra Harvard (@allegra.harvard), Laurel Rennie (@laurelhrennie), Darcy Roop (@darcyroop), Avery Suzuki (@suzukiavery). I don't personally know Shelley Uckotter (@shelleyuckotter), Lotus L. Kang (@lotuslkang) or Julia Yerger (@julia_yerger), but they're new favourites of mine. I'm also inspired constantly by the works of RB Kitaj, Betty Goodwin, Chris Harnan (@chrishchris), Joe Kessler (@joe-baskervillekessler), Gary Panter, and Mike Kelley.

And last one, what are your hopes for the future?

I'm looking at a giant smog-red sun outside my window, so maybe less of that would be great, please.



This Time Will Be Different, 2023 (Photo by Alberto Porro)
Oil Pastel on Canvas, 33.25 x 47.25 inches



A World Without Dracula Would Just Be Too Sad, 2020
Pastel Graphite Colour, Pencil on Paper, 7 x 10 inches



Smoker Walking Dog, 2024
Oil Pastel on Paper, 16 x 20 inches
(Photo by William Sabourin)

These works
treat space not as
a neutral backdrop
but as an active
body that carries
social, cultural,
and political
implications.

– Lin Chang-Rong

Right page: Spatial Reality– Before Vanishing, 2025, Land art



Lin Chang-Rong

On Spatial Reality
And Space as an Active Body



Lin Chang-Rong photographed by Jheng, Yuan-Dong

Hello Lin, thanks for taking your time to answer our questions. To start with, could you please introduce yourself and your work?

I am from Taiwan and work as a scholar, curator, artist, and designer, focusing on the complex relationships between contemporary society and the environment. I am currently a professor in the Department of Art Industry at National Taitung University, where I also served as department chair for six years.

My artistic practice spans a wide range of media, with a particular focus on site-specific installations that engage deeply with the natural environment. I am interested in how materiality, symbols, and space intertwine to construct multilayered narratives of power, identity, and memory. Combining academic research with artistic experimentation, I aim to reveal the subtle interactions be-

tween humanity and nature, while critically reflecting on how capitalism and the information age shape individual identity and social structures. Many of my works convey the concept of “space as a body,” using minimal materials and symbolic gestures to construct poetic sensory realms that embody both the fragility and timelessness of space. These works invite viewers to reconsider their relationship with the environment and to sense the interwoven connections between nature and imagination, as well as between reality and fiction.

Before speaking further about your work, let’s quickly go back in time for a moment. Do you remember the first time you got in touch with visual art?

My first encounter with visual art began right at the doorstep of my childhood home, which was surrounded by the rural landscapes of my hometown. Growing up in such a

natural environment, I often found myself observing the subtle changes in the seasons and the land. I would shape small three-dimensional forms out of the sandy soil in front of the house, or stack stones in the flowing streams nearby. In many ways, nature was my very first studio and playground for creation.

At the beginning of our conversation you spoke about your interest in exploring themes of power, identity and memory, and I read that your work is deeply influenced by French philosopher Jean Baudrillard. Can you please tell us more about your work and his influence on it?

That's right, I am deeply influenced by the ideas of French philosopher Jean Baudrillard. He observed that as we follow global currents and become embedded in the world system, commodities and symbols function as instruments of power, reflecting the mechanisms of the market and the logic of capital. In this context, symbols no longer correspond to or conceal any concrete reality but instead become detached from their original referents. As a result, people are easily manipulated and controlled by information and media, gradually losing the ability to make independent judgments.

Through my art, I aim to awaken the viewer's perception and critical thinking, encouraging them to explore, decode, and dismantle various "black boxes." In doing so, I hope they can discern the truth of events for themselves and resist the pull of passive conformity. My recent *Spatial Reality* series is closely connected to these concerns. Working in vast and often extreme environments such as deserts, frozen lakes, and remote mountain landscapes, I use minimal materials such as strands of light, reflective surfaces, and subtle spatial interventions to reveal how perception can be shaped, framed, or distorted.

"These works treat space not as a neutral backdrop but as an active body that carries social, cultural, and political implications."

By creating situations where the boundary between reality and its representation becomes fluid, the series invites viewers to question what is seen, what is hidden, and how meaning is constructed within the spaces we inhabit.

You just mentioned treating space not as a neutral backdrop but as an active body and I'm curious to hear more about that. Where does your interest in space come from and could you please expand on the role that spatiality plays in your pieces?

"From an early age, I have regarded the environment itself as my creative arena, with space serving as a material in its own right."

Even in my doctoral dissertation, I explored the aesthetics of urban design in Taiwan through Roland Barthes' concept of "text," positioning the urban designer as the "author," the urban space as the "text," and the residents as its "readers." From this perspective, the arrangement of objects and the composition of space can be seen as a form of artistic creation. In my recent work, whether land art, public art, or even ceramics, spatiality remains central. I consider the relationship between the work and its surroundings carefully, allowing space to become not merely a backdrop, but an integral, inseparable part of the piece.

Back to your project *Spatial Reality* now—can you tell us more about the process behind it? How, when and where did you bring it to life?

This work is part of a series I began during my residency in Finland from late 2023 to early 2024. Creating in a completely different country meant that the work had to diverge from what I had made back home, which pushed me toward bolder and more experimental ideas. January in Finland is the coldest time of the year, and with the country's reputation as "the land of a thousand lakes," I was inspired to work directly on a frozen lake. By summer, the same location transforms back into open water, making it

a fascinating and ephemeral exhibition space. The process involved extensive experimentation and spatial exploration. I tested the thickness and safety of the ice by tapping and drilling into it, experimented with how light appeared under varying layers of snow, and observed how weather changes and snowmelt affected the work. I found that the best conditions required extreme cold and fresh snowfall. However, the low temperatures also drained the batteries of my cameras and drones quickly, which meant I had to warm them using my own body heat.

Because I was working alone on the frozen lake, I would tell the other resident artists before leaving that if I was not back in three hours, they should come find me on the lake. This was said half-jokingly but also with genuine concern for my safety. I carried an array of equipment including drones, a 360-degree camera, a DSLR, a phone, and multiple tripods, positioning them at different angles to capture the creation process.

That sounds like a very unique and adventurous experience. Was there any moment during the residency you'd say you treasure the most?

One of the moments I treasure most was lying alone at night in the middle of the frozen lake, gazing up at the stars. The world felt completely silent and free from human interference, allowing me to listen to the subtle sounds of nature. I see space as a living body, and by immersing ourselves within it, we experience its authenticity. This authenticity emerges from the interaction between the individual and the environment's character, essence, and atmosphere.

"The cold, steady surface of the lake, stretching from beneath my body to the expanse of the night sky, connected imagined space with tangible reality, allowing both to coexist."

Let's stick with the creative process for another question —do you follow any routines or habits that help stimulate your creative work?

Traveling and spending time in nature, as well as allowing myself moments of complete stillness, have become essential parts of my creative routine. Traveling allows me to step outside the familiar frameworks of daily life, encounter different cultures, landscapes, and people, and gain fresh perspectives and ideas. Immersing myself in natural environments, whether in the mountains, by a river, or within vast open landscapes, helps me reset my senses and tune in to the sounds, scents, and shifting light of the surroundings.

Equally important is the act of emptying my mind. This period of stillness gives my thoughts the chance to settle and reorganize. Often, genuine creativity does not emerge under pressure but surfaces naturally in moments that seem unproductive on the surface. These habits help me maintain an open mindset and a heightened sensitivity whenever I return to the process of making art.

Parallel to your work as an artist, you're also a professor at National Taitung University in Taiwan. How does teaching influence your art practice and vice versa?

As a university professor, I believe my role goes far beyond lecturing in the classroom or guiding students through studio exercises. I actively involve them in real-world projects such as curating exhibitions, managing cultural programs, and participating in my own art productions so they can experience firsthand how different kinds of projects operate. These opportunities not only broaden their understanding but also enrich their professional experience. For me, art-making and teaching are inseparable; they constantly inform and inspire each other.

We're already approaching the end of our conversation, so I have a few last questions for you. First, is there any advice you've been given that you'd like to pass on to fellow artists, especially to those just starting out?

There is a saying that “failure is the mother of success.” Many of my creative breakthroughs have been built upon lessons learned from repeated failures, whether in experimenting with materials, achieving the desired presentation, or finding effective ways to convey an idea. These imperfect moments are valuable, and I encourage others to accept and embrace them, as they will ultimately make you stronger.

Next, when you are the viewer and not the author of an artwork, what is it that draws you towards a piece of art?

I am most drawn to works that resonate with my own experiences or emotions. This sense of resonance does not necessarily come from the subject matter itself; it can also emerge from the sincerity and depth the artist conveys, or from an atmosphere that is difficult to articulate yet profoundly moving.

I am particularly interested in works that challenge my perceptions or offer new ways of seeing the world. Whether through the transformation of space, the use of materials, or an interpretation of time and memory, such works reveal the artist’s unique observation of life and the world. When a piece engages me on a sensory level and also sparks an ongoing dialogue in my mind, I find it worth pausing for and exploring in depth.

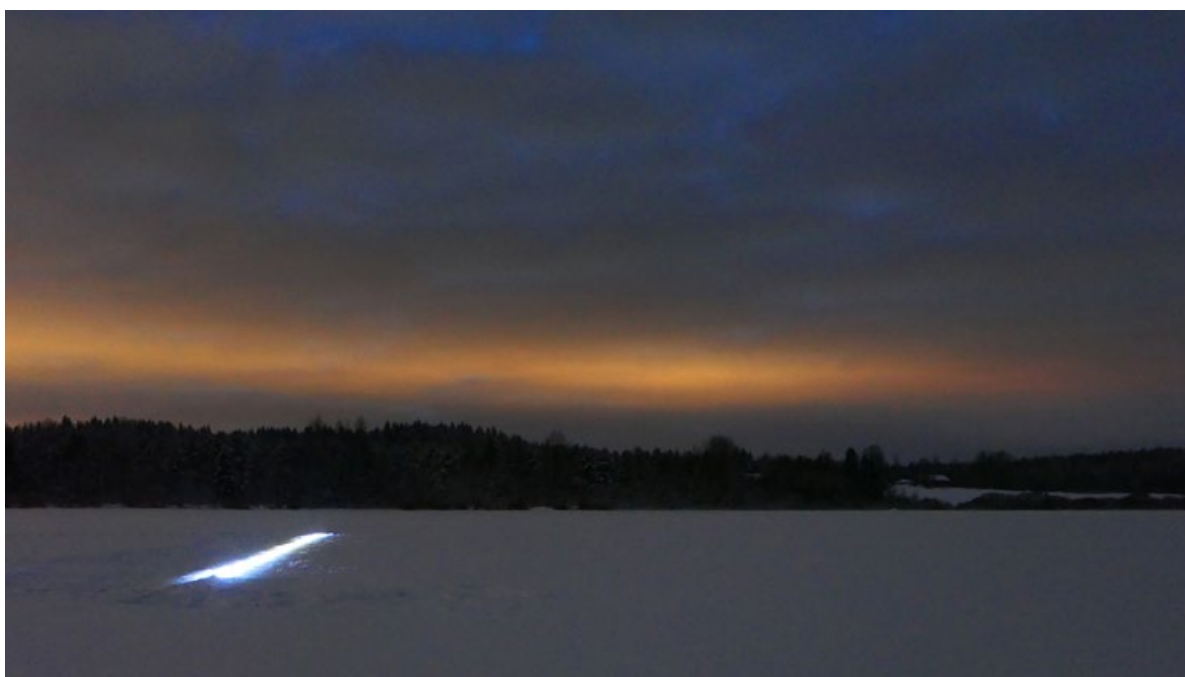
And, finally, what are your hopes and dreams for the future?

My dream is to travel the world, and I hope to realize this through art by participating in residencies and exhibitions in different countries. Immersing myself in new environments and engaging with diverse cultures will continue to bring fresh perspectives and ideas into my work.

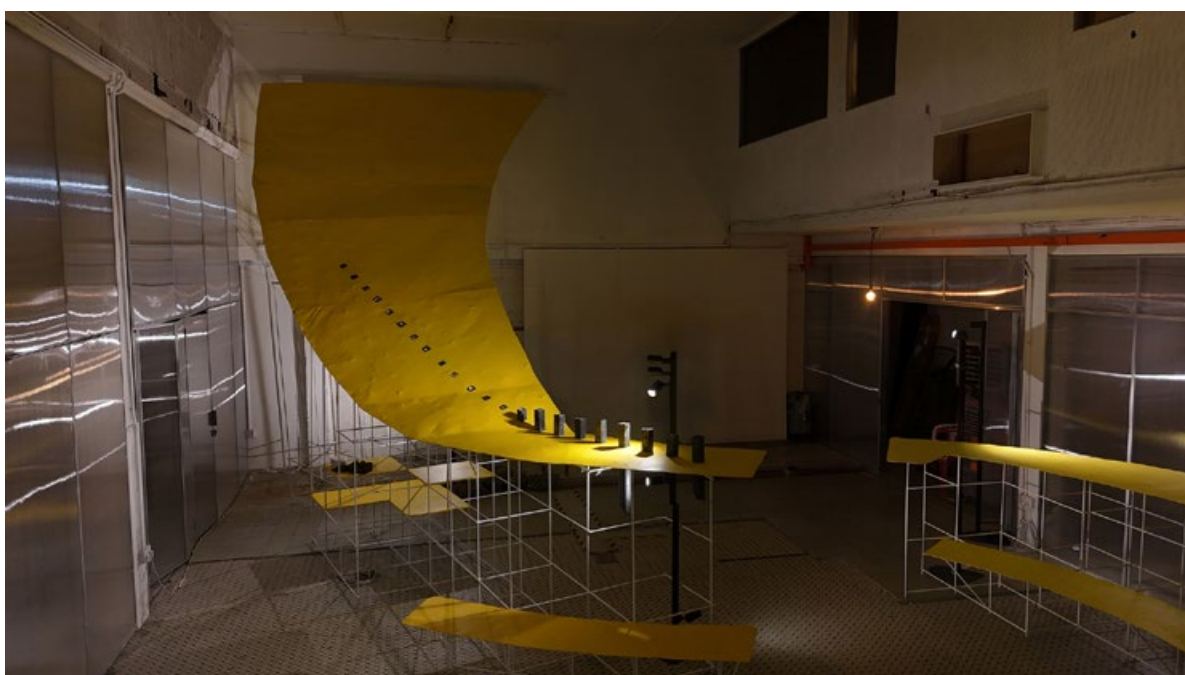
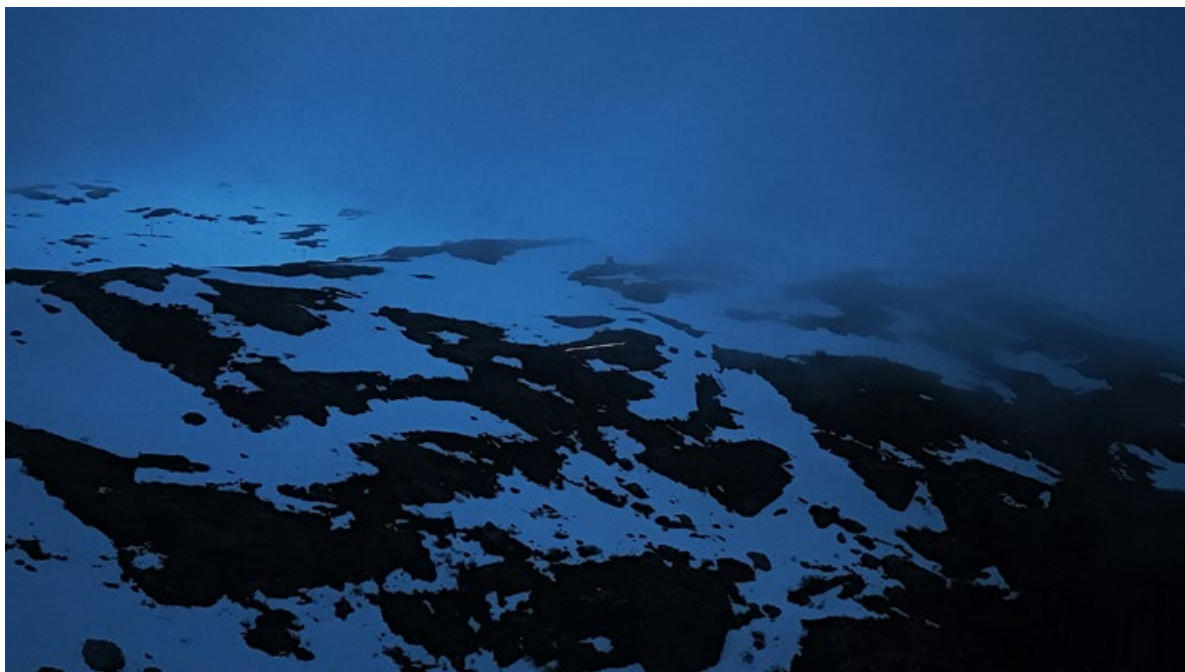
*Get in touch with Lin: www.chang-rong.org
Instagram: @changrong_art*



*Spatial Reality, 2024
The land art is presented through photography and fine art giclée printing, 49 x 28 cm*



*Up: **Spatial Boundari**, 2025, The land art is presented through photography and fine art giclée printing, 49 x 28 cm*
*Down: **Spatial Reality**, 2024, The land art is presented through photography and fine art giclée printing, 49 x 28 cm*



*Up: **Spatial Reality**, Norway, 2024, The land art is presented through photography and fine art giclée printing, 49 x 28 cm*
*Down: **The Container to the Earth's Core**, 2024, ceramic, 300 x 200 x 50 cm*

Elahe

Sediment

Psychic wounds never truly disappear; they only settle and accumulate in the layers of time. Past, present, and future are not separate, but an extension of a continuous pain—roots woven into the fabric of identity. These psychic wounds are deposited deep within us, continuing to influence our behaviors, choices, and silences. At a certain point in my life, it felt as though my connection with the “self” had fractured. A desire to vanish, to withdraw from

the world, and a yearning to disappear from others’ field of vision emerged within me—a striving to fade away from the margins of perception. This rupture marked the beginning of a process where nature ceased to be a refuge and became a realm for confronting the hidden self. A confrontation with this internal disconnection, and a journey to reclaim the self that had sedimented beneath layers of roles, expectations, and silences.

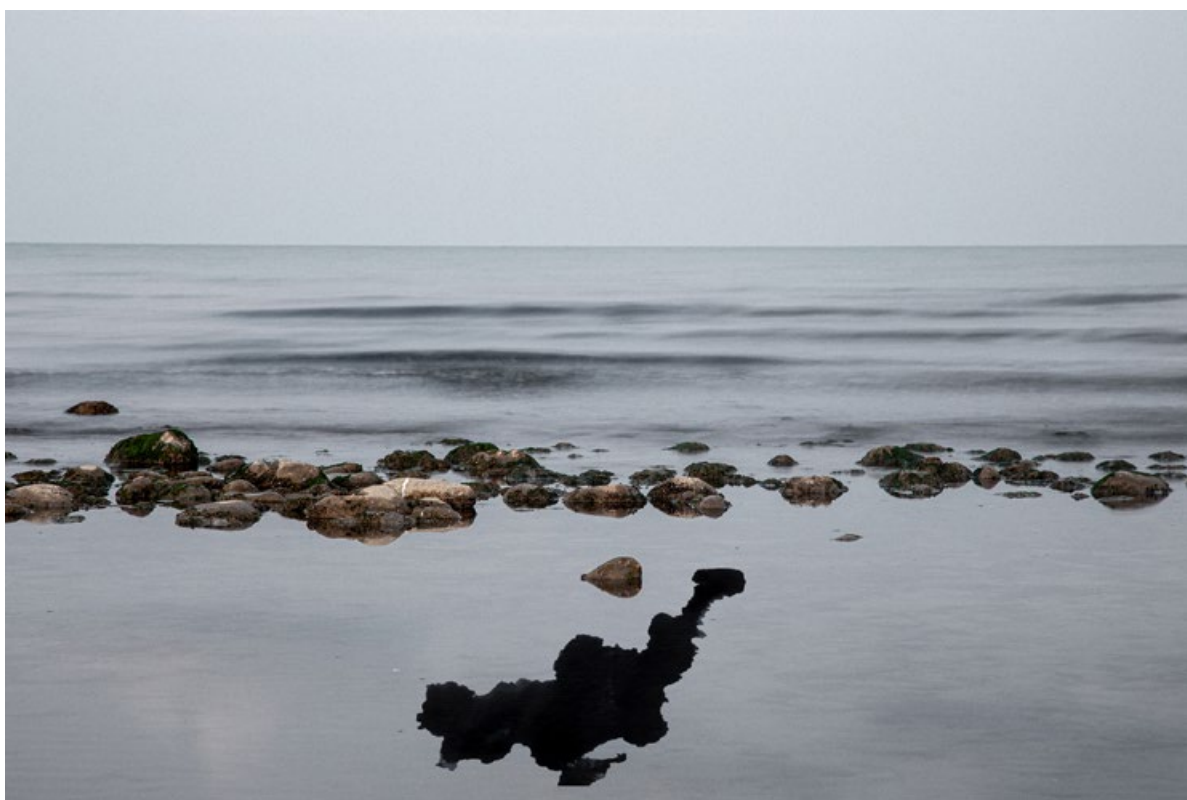
About Me

My name is Elahe, and photography for me is more than just a simple visual medium; it is a way to express myself—a bridge connecting my feelings, thoughts, and inner reflections that words alone cannot fully convey. Photography is a tool for me to deeply understand myself and the world around me; sometimes by revisiting my personal wounds and weaving together my past, present, and future, and other times by tracing the lines of hardship and effort on the faces of nomadic people. This path is not merely about capturing images; it is an internal and external dialogue—a journey where others’ stories intersect with my lived experiences to create new and meaningful perspectives.

I am 33 years old and hold a Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering, but my life’s path has led me away from my field of study. After finishing university, I turned to photography, a passion that had always been present in the back of my mind. This art allowed me to express emotions that words could not contain and deepened and enriched my understanding of life.

Every project is an opportunity for me to immortalize special moments using modern techniques and diverse viewpoints; an experience that each time opens a new window to the world and broadens my horizon. One of my most important and profound works is the series “Residue,” in which I explore the traumas and deep wounds of my soul. This collection was an opportunity for me to soothe some of those inner pains through the art of photography and advance my path toward self-discovery. “Residue” is not merely a reflection of personal pain; it transforms those feelings into a visual language that evokes empathy and deeper understanding in the viewer. This collection is a place where wounds are not seen as weaknesses, but as part of the process of growth and healing, artistically expressed and marking a new beginning for a more meaningful and fulfilling life.

Get in touch with Elaheh: linktr.ee/asurapics
Instagram: @elahe.dehghaniii



Both works: Sediment, 2025
Photography

Aliza Katzman

Revealing a Story of the Hybrid

Aliza Katzman is a Brooklyn-based painter and printmaker interested in the power of narrative and taxonomical frameworks. Inspired by the constant interface between the natural world and human society, their work explores parallels between naturalistic imagery and our psychosocial landscape.

Aliza draws on a host of influences to experiment with the visual language of storytelling: comics, scientific research, history texts, religion, and folklore. Portraying stylized, fantastically entangled subjects within the borders of torn pages, Aliza's works on paper reference the material's function as a means for communication and storytelling, and highlight the reality of the story as a created thing.

By addressing the subjectivity and potential limitations of existing frameworks, they aim to make art about the experiences which fall between the cracks of intelligibility - human and nonhuman blur, revealing a story of the hybrid, the monstrous, and the fantastical.

About Aliza

Born (1998) and raised in the CA Bay Area, Aliza Katzman is a nonbinary artist whose queer identity and mixed heritage (Ashkenazi Jewish, Korean, and Irish) influences their interest in social cohesion, taxonomy, and storytelling. They received a BA in Political Science from UC Berkeley and an MFA in Painting and Drawing from Pratt Institute. Their work has been shown across the CA Bay Area, Portland, Miami, Boston, Brooklyn, and Tidaholm, Sweden. Previously, Aliza has been an Artist in Residence at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley CA, and at the New York Academy of Art in New York City.

Get in touch with Aliza: www.alizakatzman.com
Instagram: @alizakatzman



*Up: Inside Out, 2025, oil on panel, 16 x 20 in
Down: Sunflowers, 2025, oil on paper, 18 x 24 in*



Up: *Nothing Left To Say*, 2025, oil on paper, 30 x 48 in
Down: *Substrate*, 2023, oil on paper, 36 x 48 in

In our culture,
I believe there is
a vital need for
simplicity—paring
down to the bare
essentials and
fostering moments
of patience, pause,
and reflection.

– Natalie Dunham





Talking
Materials
and Geometry

with

Natalie Dunham



*Natalie Dunham lives and works in
Daytona Beach, FL, USA*

Hi Natalie, it's a pleasure to have you. Let's start with a few basics—who are you and what do you do?

I am a sculptor and installation artist. I received my BFA in painting from Birmingham-Southern College, in Birmingham, AL, in 2007 and my MFA in sculpture from the Maryland Institute College of Art, in Baltimore, MD, in 2010. My artwork has been collected and exhibited both nationally and internationally. I currently live and work in the United States, with an additional workspace in Europe.

You describe yourself as a process-based artist, creating geometrical sculptures and studies from different materials such as wood, iron or textiles, for example. Can you please tell us more about your work?

That's right, my work is process-based, focusing on the creation of three-dimensional material studies and sketches. These are primarily composed of basic geometric shapes and lines, developed through the method of accu-

mulation. Each study is meticulously assigned a numerical title, serving as both a record of the materials and processes used and a narrative thread that reflects the evolution of my artistic journey. This systematic approach documents my creative exploration and invites viewers to engage more deeply, encouraging reflection on the significance of each element within the broader context of artistic development.

What fascinates you about geometry and who are some of the artists that have influenced your practice?

I was influenced by various minimalist artists from the 1960s, such as Eva Hesse, Donald Judd, and Carl Andre, early in my career. I was attracted to the basic geometric forms, monochromatic color palettes, and the elimination of unnecessary details to highlight the essential qualities of the work. I admired the sense of purity and objectivity, encouraging viewers to engage more deeply with the fundamental aspects of the art. My work closely relates



*No. 1.132.5_S [B+N], 2019
Wood and metal, 61cm x 36cm x 16cm*

to these principles. In our culture, I believe there is a vital need for simplicity—paring down to the bare essentials and fostering moments of patience, pause, and reflection.

Let's talk about materials for a moment—how do you select the materials you work with and what role do the materials play in your practice?

Whether it's the texture, color, or shape, I select materials based on their inherent qualities. This approach fosters an authentic connection between the material and the concept, ensuring that the integrity of the original elements remains evident. At the same time, I employ careful refinement and deliberate manipulation to elevate these materials.

“The tension between their raw origins and the refined outcome is navigated through a mindful balance—respecting the material's characteristics while shaping them with precision and intent.”

This process aims to highlight the transformative potential of simple, everyday elements, resulting in works that are both rooted in their origins and elevated through accumulation and composition.

A piece I'm curious to learn more about is “No. 16.8512.11__CF [N],” can you please tell me more about it?

No.16.8512.11__CF [N] was a commissioned suspended installation created for Shaw Industries/Anderson Tuftex for their Surfaces International exhibition booth in Las Vegas. The white hanging material is carpet fiber that they provided. To achieve the texture, eleven large spools of fiber were utilized to produce a total of 8,512 individual strings that draped from the powder-coated steel frame.

And three last questions to wrap this up. First, what are you currently working on?

I am currently working on one of the smallest pieces I have created to date. Despite its modest size, it is composed of 49,489 individual elements, which is the highest number of individual elements I have incorporated into a sculpture or installation thus far.

Next, if I asked you to describe your work in three words only, what would those be?

Repetition, Accumulation, Simplicity

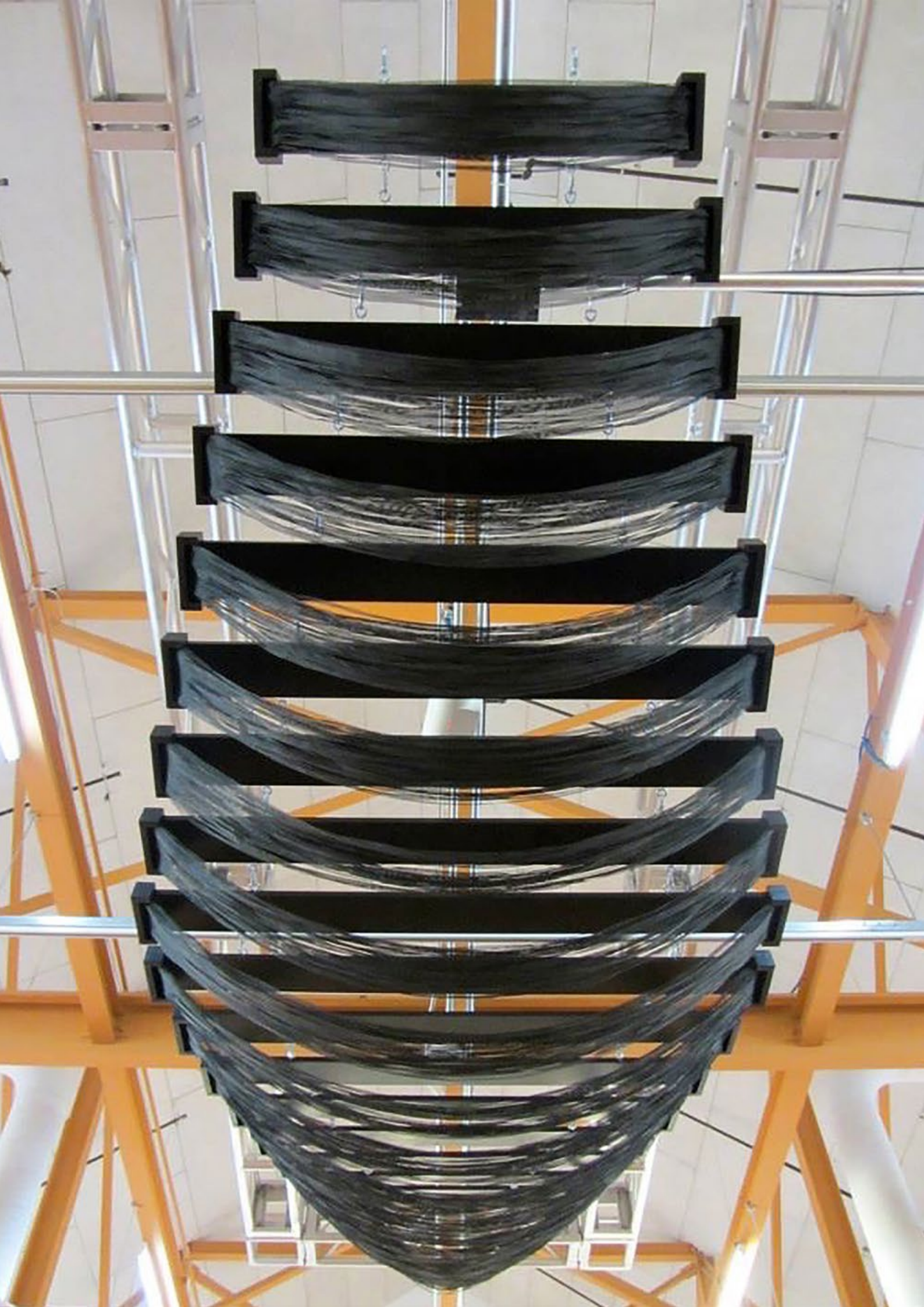
**And last one, please complete the following sentence:
To me, art is...**

...not merely a finished product but a dynamic journey that unfolds over time, revealing layers of thought, experimentation, and discovery.

*Next page (left):
No. 295.738.1R_ [UST], 2023, Strapping, 95cm x 21cm x 9cm
Right: No. 1.437.2_F [white], 2024, fabric, 95cm x 21cm x 9cm*

*Get in touch with Natalie: www.nataliedunham.com
Instagram: @n_dunham*







Up: No. 6.788.20_S [cb.gold], 2019, wood and metal, 61cm x 241cm x 13cm
 Down: No. 16.8512.11_CF [N], 2018, Metal and carpet fiber, 518cm x 366cm x 366cm
 Left page: No. 19.1.22_PS, 2014, wood and nylon coated screen, 114cm x 487cm x 183cm

Dear artists,

Thank you for allowing us to share your works with our readers. Creating this magazine has been a real pleasure.

All the best for your future artistic ventures, maybe our paths will cross again.

Nina Seidel & Carolina Castilho

(Editors)



Additional credits & information

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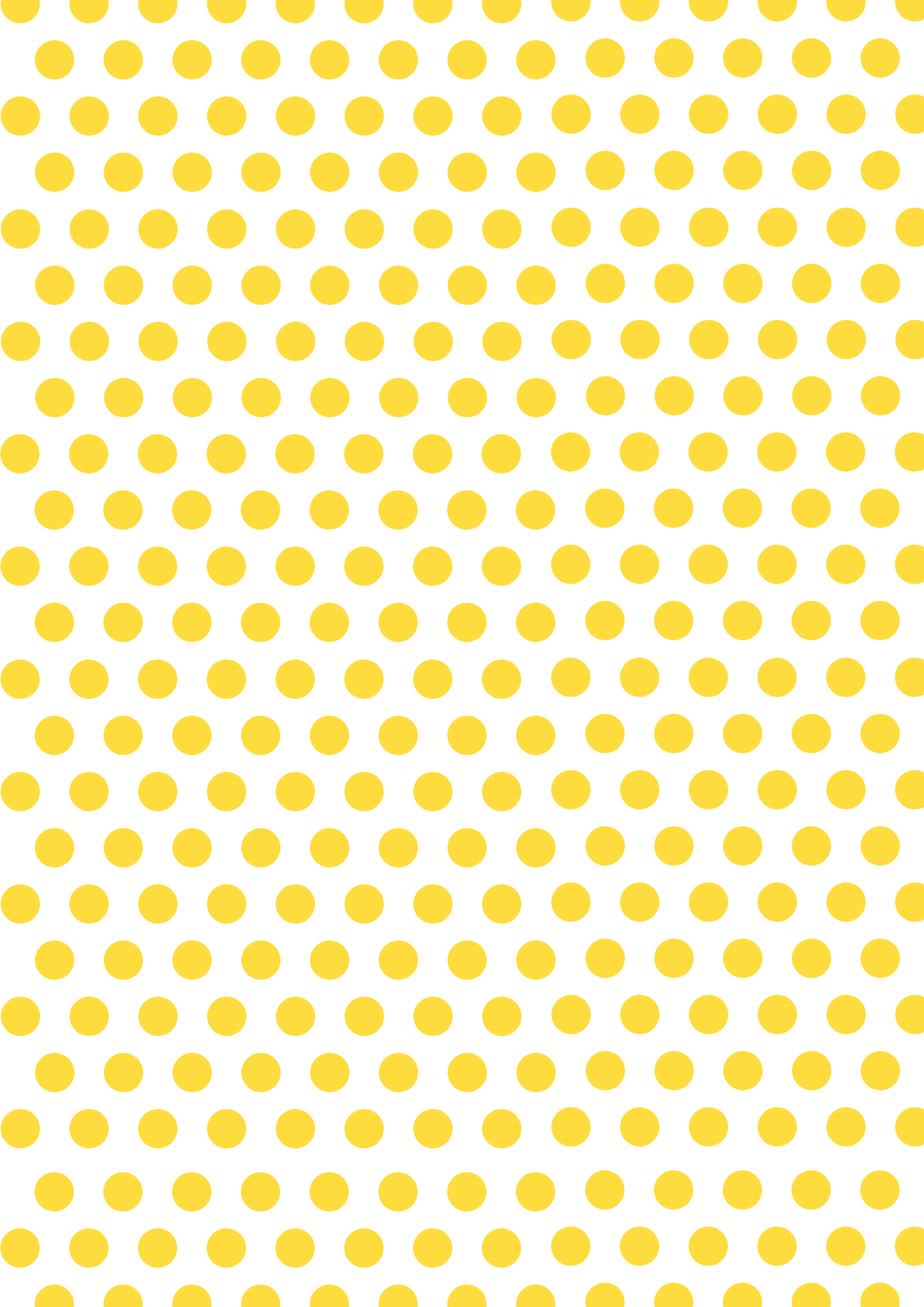
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Editorial

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POISON YOUR ABUSER

