
WOMEN
OF
THE
PACIFIC
NORTHWEST

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The Bo Bartlett Center
Columbus State University
Columbus, Georgia

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

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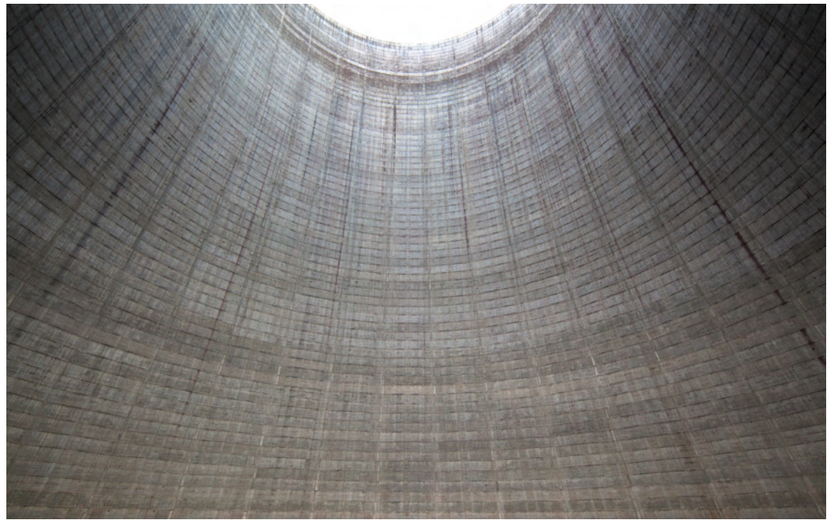
COLLEGE OF THE ARTS, COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

January 18 - April 26, 2025



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WOMEN OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

THE NEW PIONEERS

Betsy Eby

Isolated in the remote uppermost corner of the United States lies the Pacific Northwest. Now known for technological innovation, entrepreneurism and natural beauty, the region was once abuzz with logging, fishing, agricultural settlements and gold rushes, a promised land for the independent and pioneering. Determinism, self-reliance and rugged individualism continue to inform the ethos of the region, qualities much unchanged since its early settlement days.

In 1805, President Thomas Jefferson commissioned the Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the country's latest land acquisition known as the Louisiana Purchase, a treaty which doubled the size of the United States. Thus began the Western Expansion, lasting from 1801-1861, and the ethos of "Manifest Destiny," a phrase used to describe the mindset of individual conquest. To move west and claim "free land," in the mid-nineteenth century, was to be a pioneer willing to extirpate oneself from family roots, societal belonging and tradition in pursuit of freedom and opportunity. Prospectors settling the Wild West and taking advantage of its abundant natural resources were part of this mass movement synonymous to patriotism. Often omitted from this storyline is the bloody annexation of western expansionism. Opportunity was rich if you were white and male as the displacement of Native Americans was largely decided by policy makers in DC if not by settler militias.

Captain Meriwether Lewis and Second Lieutenant William Clark achieved notoriety as frontiersmen

Albert Bierstadt, *Mountain Scene*, 1880-90

paving the way for this mass movement west. They mapped passable waterways, trails, mountain ranges and trade routes while studying native tribes, plants and animals. But their expedition's success can largely be attributed to the kidnapped and traded Shoshone teenager, Sacagawea (translated as "bird woman"), who, with an infant on her back, served the roughly forty men as communicator, translator and geographic navigator. The explorers calculated that the presence of a woman and child would signal peace to the encountered native tribes. Not only was Sakagawea the crew's masthead, she also negotiated horse acquisitions, identified edible plants and medicinals, and, through her keen assessment of terrain and the elements, sited their Pacific coast winter encampment at their Oregon terminus. She was vital to their survival in the quite inhospitable terrain. Yet, like so many women, Sacagawea is a footnote in history.

The unspoiled Puget Sound, Washington's Pacific Ocean deep inlet, is described by novelist Annie Dillard as, "The rough edge of the world, where the trees came smack down to the stones. The shore looked... as if the corner of the continent had got torn off right here, sometime near yesterday, and the dark trees kept on growing like nothing happened."

Inhabited by western civilization roughly 200 years after the thirteen colonies, the West is a

George Catlin, *Buffalo Bulls Fighting in Running Season, Upper Missouri*, 1837-39

relatively young addition to the country. To put it into perspective, the United States' claim to the Oregon Territory, once stretching from the Pacific Coast to the Rocky Mountains, was settled in 1846. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City was founded in 1870. The Northern Pacific Railroad completed its direct route from the East to Portland in 1883 and to the Puget Sound in 1888.

The history of western figure painting does not hold a firm grasp in Northwest art. Representational artists who ventured west were more or less documenting the landscape with surveying expeditions. George Catlin followed the Lewis and Clark trail documenting Indigenous tribes through portraiture, but he only made it as far as the North Dakota and Oklahoma line. Later expeditions would take artists to the more accessible California. Between 1859-1863, landscape painter Albert Bierstadt made a few trips to gather photos and plein air studies of the Rockies, Yosemite and the Columbia River which he would later turn into his large paintings that satisfied American curiosities about the newly found, expansive West. Between 1871-1874, Thomas Moran joined expeditions to Yosemite and the Grand Canyon, respectively, from which he produced some of his most sublime landscapes. But the Puget Sound's climate and terrain proved too difficult a journey, so artists and culture of European influence were slow to arrive there.

This place of wild, majestic natural beauty shares the Pacific Rim with Asia. Chinese and Japanese immigrants were instrumental in the growth of the region that was resource rich but labor short. Another group to migrate to the region were of Nordic or Scandinavian descent, either coming by way of the Midwest or directly from Northern Europe, as they were attracted to the landscape's similarities to their native landscape and the opportunities in timber, fishing and boat building.

What constitutes Pacific Northwest aesthetics in art and design is still largely influenced by this early convergence of heritages. Where the east coast often borrowed from classical, figurative, European traditions grounded in the Renaissance, the Pacific Northwest's overriding aesthetic was long informed by Indigenous Pacific Coast Native American symbolism, totems, basket weaving, and carving, Asian calligraphy, zen placement and rhythmic vitality, and Scandinavian aesthetics of spareness and utility influenced by nature. Although the Northwest land was claimed by white prospectors, and while Christian missionaries managed some conversions, its soul remained, and still remains, largely steeped in nature-based, secular spiritualism carried over from Indigenous animism, and Buddhist, Confuscianist, and Taoist influences from Asia. Today the region values wilderness conservation seemingly still informed by the words of Chief Seattle, " All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the son of earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it."

The region's cloudy, rainy climate does not inspire observations of light on form, but rather an appreciation of silhouetted form, shallow space, diffused edges and restrained palette. It could be argued that this is why European academic figuration has been slow to trend on these shores. The climate's gauzy and diffused light informs Pacific Northwest art's analogous tonalism over the full chroma of traditional European painting, and atmospheric perspective proves dominant over linear perspective. The region's affective atmosphere could be easily characterized in an Asian ink landscape painting, with distant mountains backdropping calligraphic trees, all somewhat gestural as obfuscated by coastal mist mitigating detail. Borrowed views of the Olympic and Cascade mountain ranges and bodies of water ultimately feeding the Pacific Ocean inform the regional psychology with an integral holism, a

respect for a larger, universal order of which we are an interdependent piece.

Many artists have lived in and been informed by the region. Among them are Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, Agnes Martin, Imogen Cunningham, and Thelma Johnson Streat. But the first to bring Northwest Art into the national conversation was Mark Tobey. He, along with Morris Graves, Kenneth Callahan and Guy Anderson, are historically considered the "Northwest Masters." In 1953, a *Life* feature would call them the "mystic painters of the Northwest." Their notoriety burgeoned around WWII when nature-inspired, universal, spiritual and moral unity was desired, especially among the New York art world and market. In the background of this story are four women vital to bringing some of these artists into the national conversation.

Margaret Callahan, a successful journalist, nurtured the group and set the standards, elevating conversation and insisting art be made to communicate higher moral consciousness. Elizabeth Bayley Willis, an educator and artist, left her four children in the care of her mother and moved to New York City to ensure gallery representation and eventual notoriety for Mark Tobey. She would later prove to be a leading authority of art on the West Coast. Dorothy Miller, curator at Museum of Modern Art in New York, recognized Graves's and Tobey's oeuvre as the next zeitgeist and included them in two exhibitions. Marian Willard of the Willard Gallery in NYC, who represented Graves and Tobey, saw in their work what the war-torn American psyche needed at the time, the spiritual side of modern humanity through experimental, abstract art forging harmonious understanding beyond ideology or politics. It has been documented that Jackson Pollock, around the advent of his allover drip paintings, frequented Mark Tobey's Willard Gallery exhibition of his allover White Writing paintings. It has been suggested that it was Tobey who invented the allover style of abstract painting which has historically been credited to Pollock, but the Abstract Expressionist movement of art for art's sake, devoid of spiritual, political or religious concept, would eventually eclipse the Mystics on the national stage.

Decades after the Northwest School, another artist responsible for shaping the direction of Pacific Northwest art was Dale Chihuly who brought glass blowing from Murano, Italy to the outskirts of Seattle when he founded the Pilchuck Glass School in the 1970's. The physical and alchemical aspects of glass blowing led the way for innovative, experimental, process-centered practices in other mediums by artists throughout the region such as the nationally acclaimed forerunners Barbara Earl Thomas and Carrie Mae Weems.

The exhibition, Women of the Pacific Northwest, celebrates the voices, visions and material mastery of female artists working today, with roots from this rich and progressive region. Through the execution of disparate media from bronze, steel, glass, tin, plaster mylar, printmaking, hair nets, cloth, rubber, wax to paint, these artists have achieved inventive, creative practices originating from critical, generative, inquisition of natural, social or subliminal forces. Stitching, sanding, exposing, cutting, torching, brushing, layering, blowing, weaving and fabricating, the means to the ends are gritty and boundless. The results are works holding a common spirit of aesthesis, invitations into the sensory realm which disarm preexisting idioms and convictions. It's through this disarmament that we can see and receive. Their work is non didactic, anything but mansplainery. Like jazz, without lyrics or simple resolutions, to be moved by it, one must move it in equal measure, as with meditation's prerequisite emptying of the mind.

Women have long been communicators, organizers, and makers, yet, their place in history is incommensurate. This show highlights a group of female artists working in diverse media creating art that explores connections to place, whether sociological, environmental or spiritual, in a region supportive of equality, ecology and enterprise.

Mark Tobey, *Shadow Spirits of the Forest*, 1961

Dale Chihuly
Bazinet Chandelier, 2003

Natural, environmental forces inspire Victoria Adams's sublime vistas, Drie Chapek's clashing of internal and external elements, Ann Gardner's interplay of transparencies in atmospheric palettes, Emily Gherard's steely, geometric constructions, Katy Stone's reductive installations of shimmering sun rays and waterfalls, while natural, biological elements are at the heart of Jaq Chartier's fugitive matter when exposed to natural light, and Susan Zoccola's sculptures echoing dendrites to galaxies.

Subliminal and spiritual forces are central to the works of Susan Dory's color juxtapositions of interconnectedness and transcendence, Etsuko Ichikawa's environmental messages through Zen Buddhist spareness, and Marie Watt's poetic suggestions of Indigenous myth and the ties that bind through storytelling and the passing of traditions.

Sociological forces are at play in Brenda Mallory's translations of systems, and human interactions within those systems, Julie Speidel's modernist-totemic, anthropologically referenced forms and Lisa Jarrett's interpretation of socio-structured environments influencing racial identity.

The impetus for this exhibition was originally hatched at the height of the MeToo movement. As today's climate of hyper-polarization and siloed media saturation can engender feelings of dislocation and alienation, there seems a greater urgency not only to recognize the role artists play in shared experience but the role women specifically play in social cohesion, environmental awareness and stewardship and the breaking of barriers. These artists are among today's pioneers, interpreting universality through personal observation and inventing poetic, transcendent works inspiring greater, pluralistic understanding, connecting us to one another and to the world around us.

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Victoria Adams invents landscapes out of the American tradition of Thoreau and Emerson. As elegies to the past, she paints from a place of solastalgia, a nostalgia for the way nature has been all our lives, before we ever knew we were at risk of losing it. Inspired by weather systems and hydrological features of place, she renders flickering light of sea and sun, of passing showers, distant shores and atmospheric patterns.

Drie Chapek's paintings are collisions of external and internal environments, imbued by the majestic forces of the natural world in her Pacific Northwest surroundings, reconciling the uprooting, dislocations of her childhood. Starting with collage, she assembles mashups of imagery on paper. This becomes her reference study for the painting to come. The result is a merging of compressed, disparate worlds surging together as dreamscapes often with reference to water as the salve. Chapek hikes the Cascade and Olympic mountains and cold plunges in the Puget Sound, keeping close to the natural sources that both humble and inspire her practice.

Jaq Chartier's paintings explore the fugitive impermanence of matter through material interactions. Early curiosity of grid-arranged bleeding edges gave way to biological references when she, and the nation, watched the OJ Simpson trial's presentation of DNA analysis. Inspired by the archetypical lozenge shapes of electrophoresis, she organizes drops of permanent and impermanent dyes and then records their degradation and sometimes ultimate disappearance as they are exposed to natural light.

Susan Dory mines the subliminal forces of the subconscious, tapping self-knowledge and trust of intuition to guide her work. From childhood she was obsessed with color combinations and form, kindled by games of the era, Lightbright and Spirograph. Her love of material began when melting crayons on wax paper with an iron. Color became so central to her experience, she sometimes chided her mother for her choices of outfits. A devoted meditator and yogi, Susan brings that focus and movement to her work. She cites an early encounter with a John Chamberlain sculpture as the moment she realized what was possible in the nonrepresentational genre.

Ann Gardner's glass work is informed by the grey skies and big waters of her birthplace, Coos Bay, Oregon, and her current surroundings of the Puget Sound. She spent her life trying to escape that grey, only to realize later her lifelong infatuation with it. Her glass work is minimal and decidedly reduced in saturation so that when combined in assembly, what's created is interplay of light and shadow through transparent layers. Producing refined surface variation, the glass blowing process is alchemical, leaving much to chance.

Emily Gherard's work is tied to the physical labor of making, the reduction of subject matter, and the minimization of color. Achieving poetry through austerity, her work evokes both translucency and mass through often unexpected means of plaster, staples, exposed bracing, and intaglio inks. She creates formal reductions ranging from a ship's hull to hunched figures through a steely and atmospheric palette that translates to quiet meditations.

Etsuko Ichikawa creates visual poetry through pyrograph drawings, glass, installation and video. Her spiritual and aesthetic sensibilities are informed by her native home, Japan. The Fukushima nuclear meltdown of 2011 prompted her to learn the vitrification technology which transforms radioactive waste into glass for ultimate disposal, bringing together her studies at Pilchuck Glass School and her love for both of her home countries.

Lisa Jarrett's sense of place was informed early by her mother's hair salon. She sources her materials in inner city, black beauty supply stores where she finds a respite from environmental disjunctures relegating "ethnic" signifiers to a small corner of a

shelf. Through decontextualizing synthetic hair, Jarrett's work symbolizes the power in being able to create one's own space when society at large doesn't often assign you that space. Intrinsic in Jarrett's work is time and process, about which she says "there are no short cuts" for fixing hair suitable for societal acceptance.

Brenda Mallory was born in Oklahoma and is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. She utilizes cloth, fibers, beeswax and found objects to convey ideas of disruption and repair in nature and human cultures. Joinery made of crude hardware implies tenuous connections and mends within these fragile systems, echoing childhood memories of her father working with latches, fittings and bailing wire. The use of beeswax also speaks to memories of her grandfather who was a beekeeper.

Julie Speidel's sculptures and prints echo histories of Pacific Northwest indigenous tribes, Zen Buddhism, megalithic stone structures and twentieth century modernism. Her stacked forms in both media hold traces of totemic figuration. Julie's early European boarding school days informed her lifelong passion for travel and study of ancient cultures. Through her work, she expresses her intimate connection to the natural world, fostering broader understanding of people and place.

Katy Stone remembers the green shag carpet in her childhood bedroom and the color drenched woods behind her house where she would free-play, inventing a game she called "moss factory." In fourth grade, alone outside near those woods, she first had the feeling that seeded her pursuits as an artist. In her work, she uses materials that can be seen as common and mundane but also precious or even fancy. Inspired by the relationship between depth and surface, permeability and transience, her pursuit is to create installations accessing a sense of awe in the sublime.

Marie Watt is a member of the Turtle Clan of the Seneca Nation of Indians, and also has German-Scot ancestry. Her interdisciplinary work draws from history, biography, Haudenosaunee protofeminism, and Indigenous teachings; in it, she explores the intersection of history, community, and storytelling. Through collaborative actions, she instigates multigenerational and cross-disciplinary conversations that might create a lens and conversation for understanding connectedness to place, one another, and the universe.

Susan Zoccola developed an early curiosity for science and the natural world. Her sculptures and public installations are often inspired by the beautiful similarities between patterns in nature; branches, neurons, mycelial networks - all indicating points of connection. These patterns limn the innumerable divisions by which living things survive, demonstrating how the endless branching that we can see becomes an endless branching of what we cannot. To her, materials, form and process are an interdependent dance in the creation of work existing at the junction between physical and interior worlds, where forms store delicate memories of their own.

Albert Bierstadt
Mountain Scene
1880–1890, Oil on paper, 14 3/4 x 21 in. (37.5 x 53.3 cm).
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Gift of Mrs. J. Augustus Barnard, 1979. Accession Number: 1979.490.2. Creative Commons License: CC0 1.0 Universal (CC0 1.0) Public Domain Dedication

George Catlin
Buffalo Bulls Fighting in Running Season, Upper Missouri
1837-1839, Oil on canvas, 24 x 29 in. (60.9 x 73.7 cm).
Smithsonian American Art Museum,
Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison, Jr., 1985.66.424
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Mark Tobey
Shadow Spirits of the Forest
1961, Tempera on paper, 19 x 24 in. (48.4 x 63.2 cm).
Photo: Walter Klein

Dale Chihuly
Bazinet Chandelier
2003, 10 x 5 x 5 in.
© 2024 Chihuly Studio / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Curator's note:

As a native Pacific Northwesterner, I am honored to assemble this exhibition of fellow artists I consider colleagues, friends and peers. Many thanks to the artists, to Martha Lee and Russo Lee Gallery, Jessica Shea and Winston Wächter Fine Art, Judith Rinehart and J Rinehart Gallery, Greg Kucera Gallery, Sean Horton and Marc Straus Gallery, Gail Severn and Gail Severn Gallery, John Braseth and Woodside Braseth Gallery, and Lori Uddenberg. Thanks to the Bo Bartlett Center for hosting the show, director Michael McFalls, staff and interns. Thank you to the generous donors who made this exhibition possible. Thanks also to copy editors Anna Flournoy and Cathy Fussell and to Bo Bartlett who was my sounding board throughout the formation of this exhibition.

Special thanks to American art historian, curator and researcher Patricia Junker, whose book "Modernism in the Pacific Northwest", as well as hours of discussion, provided much of the essay's midcentury history.

- Betsy Eby

MARIE WATT

Marie Watt is a member of the Turtle Clan of the Seneca Nation of Indians, and also has German-Scot ancestry. Her interdisciplinary work draws from history, biography, Haudenosaunee protofeminism, and Indigenous teachings; in it, she explores the intersection of history, community and story-telling. Through collaborative actions, she instigates multigenerational and cross-disciplinary conversations that might create a lens and conversation for understanding connectedness to place, one another, and the universe. Watt holds an MFA in painting and printmaking from Yale University; she also has degrees from Willamette University and the Institute of American Indian Arts; in 2016 she was awarded a Doctor Honoris Causa from Willamette University. She has attended residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the Vermont Studio Center; and she has received fellowships from Anonymous Was a Woman, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Harpo Foundation, The Ford Family Foundation, and the Native Arts and Culture Foundation, among others. Watt served two terms on the board of VoCA (Voices in Contemporary Art) from 2017–2023. She serves on the Native Advisory Committee at the Portland Art Museum, where she also became a member of the Board of Trustees in 2020. She is a fan of Crow's Shadow, an Indigenous-founded printmaking institute located on the homelands of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla; as well as Portland Community College. Selected collections include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Seattle Art Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Yale University Art Gallery, the Crystal Bridges Museum, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian and National Museum of American Art, the Tacoma Art Museum, the Denver Art Museum, and the Portland Art Museum. She is represented by PDX Contemporary Art in Portland, OR; Catharine Clark Gallery in San Francisco, CA; and Marc Straus Gallery in New York, NY.

Sky Dances Light (Chorus) XX, 2023-24

Sky Dances Light (Forest) XVII, 2023-24

An installation of thirteen jingle clouds comprised of selections from the series *Forest*, *Chorus*, *Kin*, and *Solo*; and incorporating the 2022 series Vivid *Dream*: *Awakening*. Historically, jingles were created from the rolled tops of tobacco cans and other tin lids. They are grounded in Indigenous histories of making and storytelling, adornment and ritual. Here, they hover between the sky and the earth. Simultaneously heavy and weightless, the jingles nudge and tap each other, creating murmurs of sound when animated by a breeze. They amplify each other's stories, reverberating with each passing movement. The tin jingles in this piece acknowledge the Jingle Dress Dance which began as a healing ritual in the Ojibwe tribe in the 1900s, during the influenza pandemic. The idea for the dance came to a tribal elder in a dream. When it was performed, according to the vision, the young girl who was sick, in time became well. The Jingle Dress Dance was also a radical act. In 1883, the United States banned Indigenous ceremonial gatherings. Though the ban was repealed in 1978 with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, during its century long prohibition the Jingle Dress Dance was shared with other tribal communities. Today it is a pow-wow dance and continues to be associated with healing. The relevance of this dance extends beyond pandemics. The jingle cloud-like forms recall a story, "Lifting the Sky," that Watt heard as a child, told by Vi Hilbert from the Upper Skagit of the greater Coast Salish tribe. As the story goes, the sky was starting to press down on the people. Overwhelming the world with darkness, it became incumbent on the people—who spoke different languages and did not necessarily understand one another—to find a common vocabulary, even just one phrase, that would allow them to work together. The word they found is yəhaw which means to proceed, to go forward, to do. Working together using sticks and saying that one word, yəhaw, with group effort they push up the sky. These clouds are lifted together, hoisted by many hands just as they were created by many hands. They are the first steps in a rhythm of healing and gathering, of being and hearing together.

JAQ CHARTIER

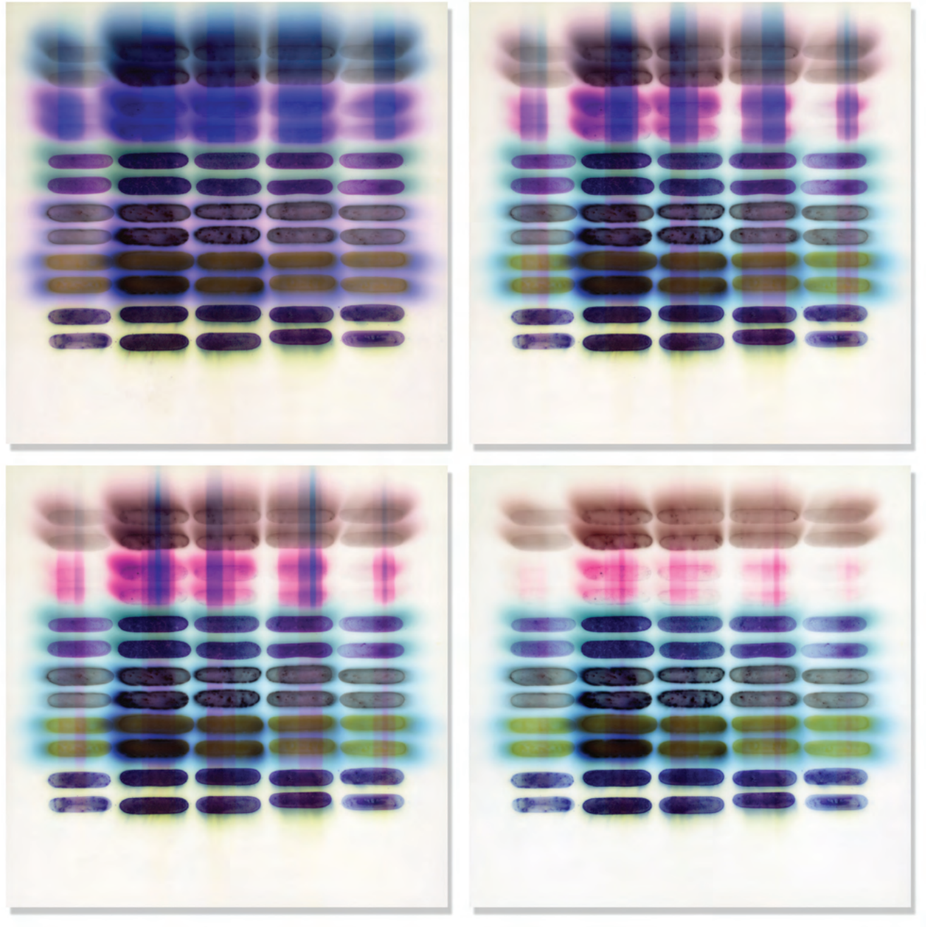
A lot of my work is about the feeling of transience and impermanence that I sometimes glimpse under the surface of the day. Curiosity helps me embrace that feeling and find beauty there. I love collecting intriguing scientific images from chromatography and DNA gel electrophoresis, as well as things seen under the microscope and under the sea. Science keeps me inspired by the wondrous. Like a scientist, I call my paintings tests because I am following real questions and running real experiments, setting the stage for materials to interact and revealing hidden chemistries.

I like to set up tension between a minimal, stripped-down aesthetic and effusive lush color—a type of color that suggests something outside of our ordinary, everyday world; beautiful but also sort of bizarre, inflamed, suggestive of energies that we cannot see. Instead of paint, I use my own custom formulas of saturated inks, stains and dyes. These mediums can do things paint cannot do, such as bleed and migrate through other layers of paint, or change color, or even completely disappear.

Like most painters I have studied archival materials and proper painting techniques. My earliest light tests were a way of sorting out fugitive colors from those that are lightfast. But over time I have found myself attracted to the additional layer of complexity that such changes suggest and to the feeling of impermanence.

In my *SunTests* series, I am looking closely at these fragile colors. I design some formulas to shift in hue (such as green-to-pink), while others completely disappear leaving no trace behind. I make small paintings using these light sensitive colors and expose them to sunlight in my studio windows, documenting the changes with a scanner over many weeks and months. Each digital image is essentially a still frame in a time-lapse movie, capturing the fleeting moments as the physical images evolve and dissolve. At the end of the process, the paintings no longer exist except as ghosts of their former selves. The final artworks are limited edition archival prints on aluminum or on paper—permanent records of transient moments.

SunTest #11 (Day 2, 14, 17, 74) started as a 10 x 10 inch "matrix" painting made with six different purple/blue-ish color formulas. I designed one formula to be highly fugitive, wanting it to completely disappear eventually. The other five formulas shift in color but don't disappear. The vertical bands include areas that I temporarily masked during the process to show the differences between the original colors and how sunlight was changing the piece. I scanned the painting on a flatbed scanner a number of times while it was evolving. The final artworks are limited edition archival dye sublimation prints on aluminum. The title of each panel (Day 2, 14, 17, 74) refers to the number of days the original painting had been exposed to light on the day each image was captured.



SunTest #11 (Day 2, 14, 17, 74), 2023

LISA JARRETT

Migration Studies (2018-present) is an ongoing project. I work with drawing, sculpture and installation to examine hair care and beauty routines within Black culture as a bridge to themes about inventing our own survival. These routines are rituals wherein we claim beauty standards existing beyond and before dominant narratives. I use the tools of these ritual practices as drawing materials whose histories both trace and extend our lost languages and homelands. These materials and formal choices reflect my broader interest in repetition and reproduction as tools of consumer culture and cultural preservation. I am curious about how our personal, or private, routines (and the attendant products and purchases) live within our imaginations, conversations and stories while also connecting us to ourcollective pasts and futures. The art object is the transformative mechanism by which different systems of value become visible and knowable.

Migration Studies (No. 14, prototype), 2020

BETSY EBY

I make nature-based, abstract paintings that convey the musical frequencies of an ecologically balanced, natural world unspoiled by human encroachment. They are meditations on undisrupted skies, habitats and oceans, calling attention to the natural rhythms of our environment and the elements and our interconnectedness within them. With trowels, knives and heat, I pour, spread, articulate and fuse wax-based paints made from organic wax from bees and resin from trees, layering gestures of mark making.

My lifelong classical piano practice, the interpretation of notations and musical phrasing, and Pacific Northwest modernism and its ties to elemental sparseness, Japanese Zen restraint and calligraphy are foundational to the work. My dueling origin story is one of prospering from the land and one of spiritual cohabitation with the land recognizing the relationship between reverence and cultivation. On the Indian reservation of Neah Bay, Washington, my grandparents owned the trading post and my father worked in timber. I was born on the Pacific coast in Seaside, Oregon; this coast is historically noted as the Lewis and Clark expedition terminus. Interconnectedness through indigenous myth and nature-based mysticism holds equal presence with hard work and determinism of pioneers and prospectors.

My use of materials is inspired by a 1693 shipwreck site that is located miles from where I was born. A galleon carrying Asian luxury goods bound for Mexico was blown off course and crashed, spilling all its content upon the Nehalem Spit. For years, beeswax blocks destined to be Catholic liturgical candles for altars of Spanish colonists peppered the dunes. Later I would discover my medium, encaustic, as used in the Egyptian Fayum portraits. Each painting is an invitation to reconnect with the music within the natural world and contemplate one's part in its survival.

Astral, 2024

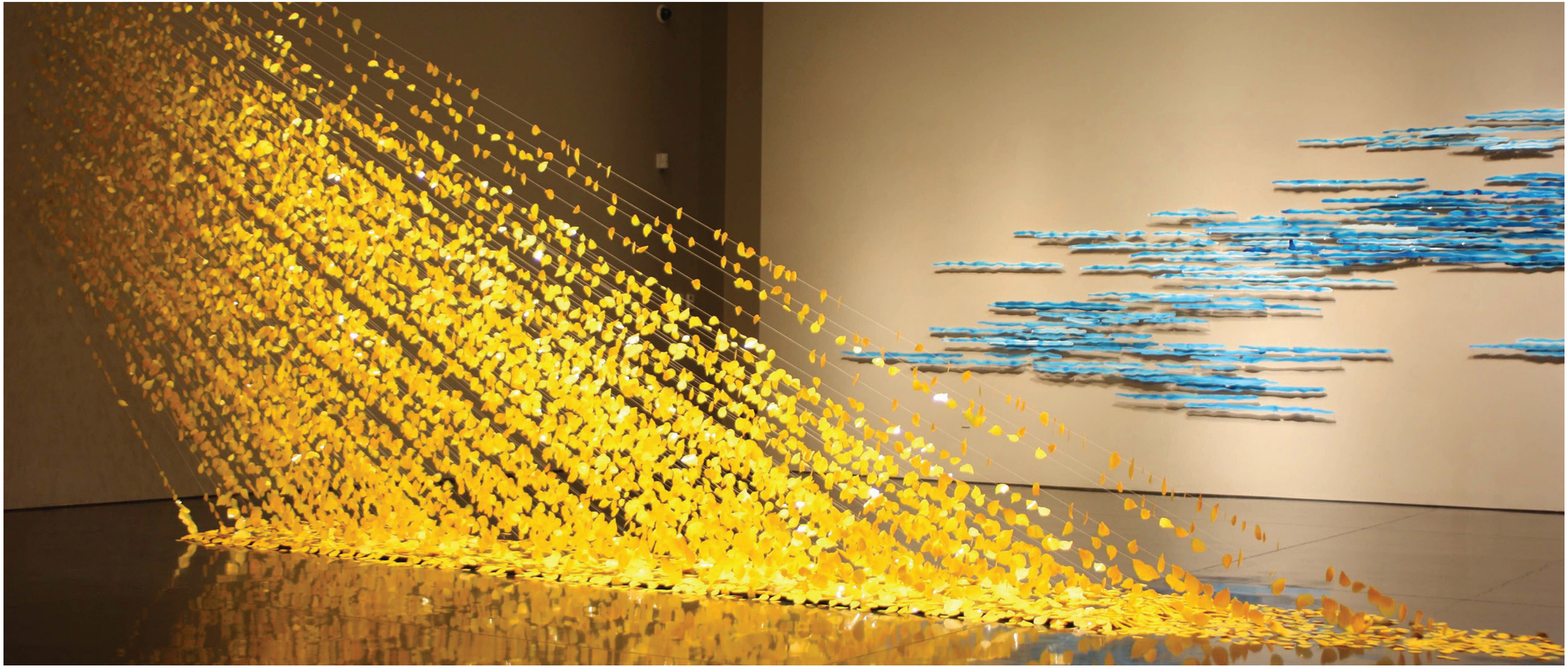
Quantum, 2024

KATY STONE

My work explores materiality, phenomena and beauty. I use industrial materials that are lightweight, that call attention to themselves as surfaces. Everything I choose is a thin thing. I paint, cut and layer these surfaces into constructions that blur the boundaries between drawing, painting and sculpture. My pieces capture a kind of monumentality and at the same time a feeling of transience. They brim with dualities: organic/synthetic, micro/macro, real/imaginary, moving/still. Everything is itself and something else. Clouds, light, branches, waves: the recurring natural forms and forces I evoke are allusions of elemental power and symbols of transformation.

My work can be seen as painting unbound from the confines of the rectangular frame. For the past 20 years, I have been working with Dura-Lar, an archival polyester film that I paint on, cut out and layer into sculptural assemblages. Ever-present in my works are the phenomena and landscape of the Northwest. I live with a view of Puget Sound, and every day I reflect on the horizontal expanse of water and the light passing through the clouds. *Ray* is a construction that captures these ephemeral presences. Like a swirling wedge of petals or leaves, or a bold shaft of light, this sculpture—an amalgam of natural forms and forces—extends a physical and psychological space for the viewer to enter.

Ray, 2016



Ray, 2016

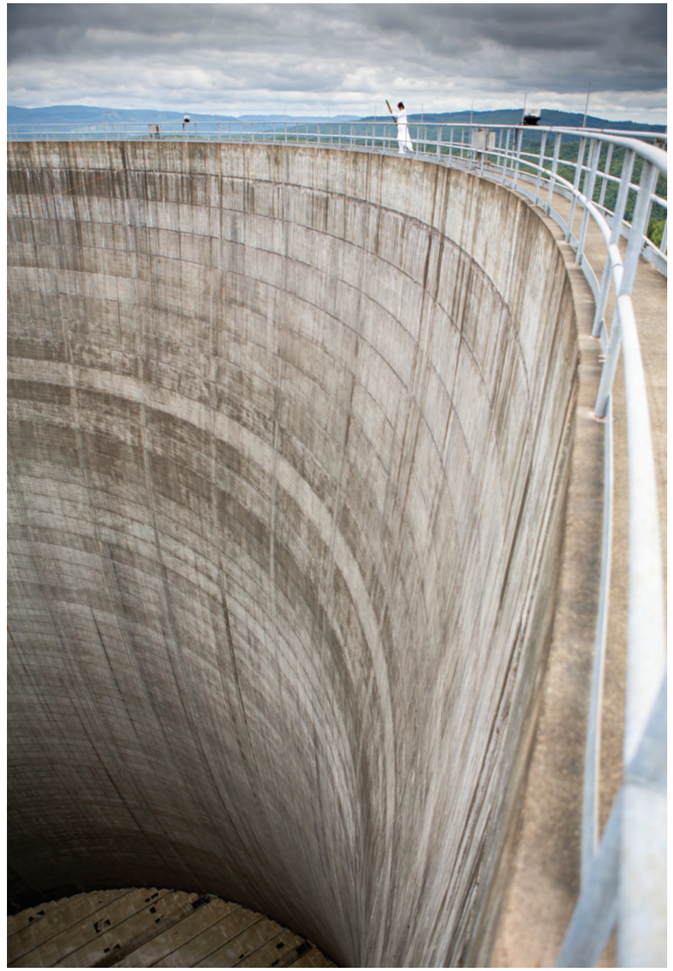
ETSUKO ICHIKAWA

In response to the Fukushima nuclear disasters, I decided to create a film that would only be possible to realize within the nuclear cooling tower at Satsop. When I first visited the site in 2012, I became anxious as I approached the facility. Once I entered the Cooling Tower #3, which became my filming location, I experienced something unexpected—a complete transformation of my emotions. The space within the tower was overwhelmingly beautiful and truly inspirational. I felt like I was embraced by something ethereal.

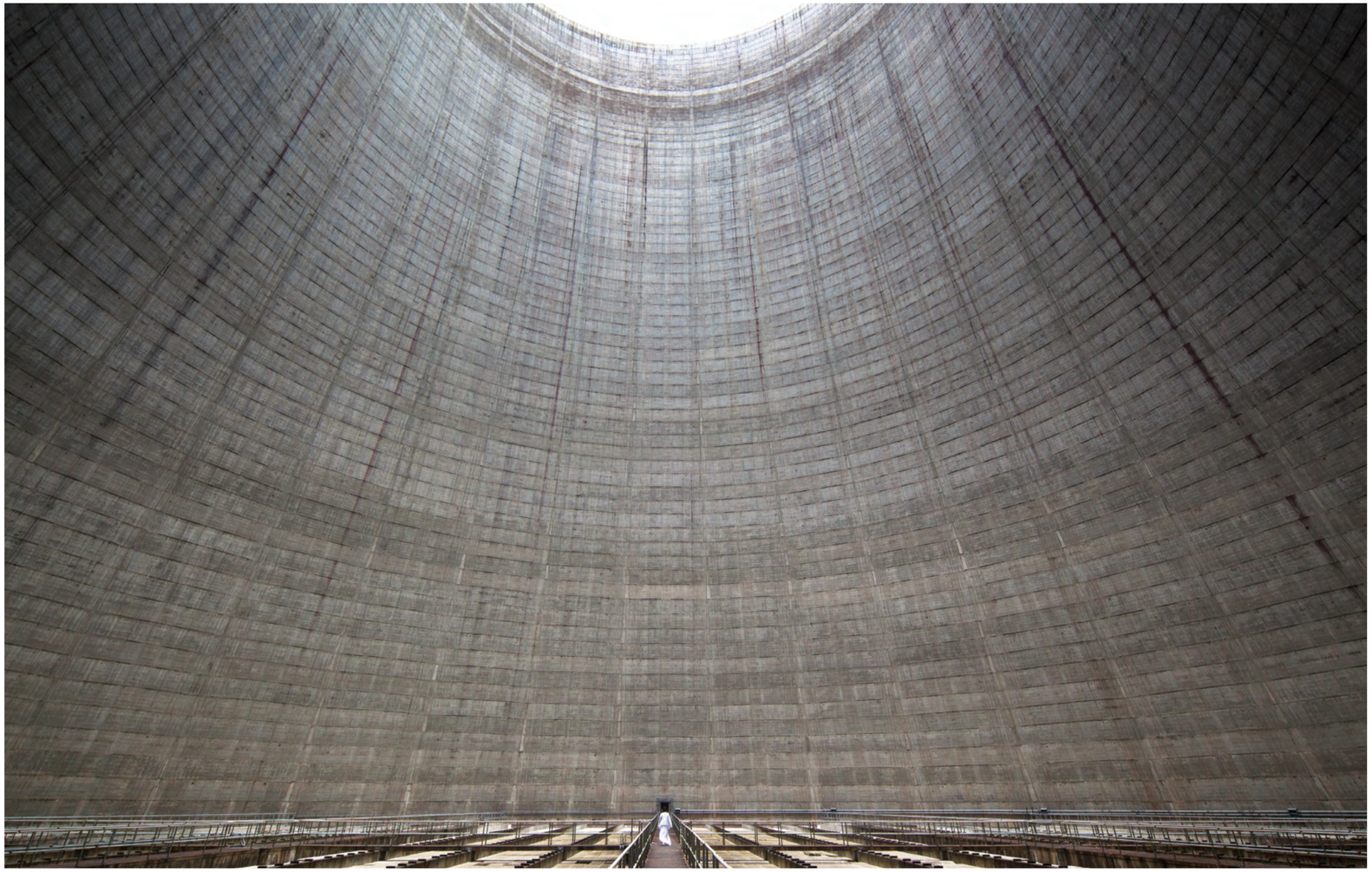
I was puzzled by the juxtaposition that I felt between fear and sacredness. This experience became my primary motivation to go back to the cooling tower to create the film.

The words of prayer and purification kept coming back to me through the process of making of the film. They are the core concept of the film, and I used the element of water to emphasize the message.

Another crucial element in this film is sound, in particular, reverberation. This cooling tower is known for its amazing acoustic properties as an echo chamber due to its unique concrete structure and the cistern below. The sound created by clapping hands or dropping a stone becomes an enhanced physical experience within the tower. It suggests the cause and effect of nuclear production, and in a much broader sense, it is the realization that a simple act can affect the surrounding environment and all living things on Earth.



Echo at Satsop, 2013



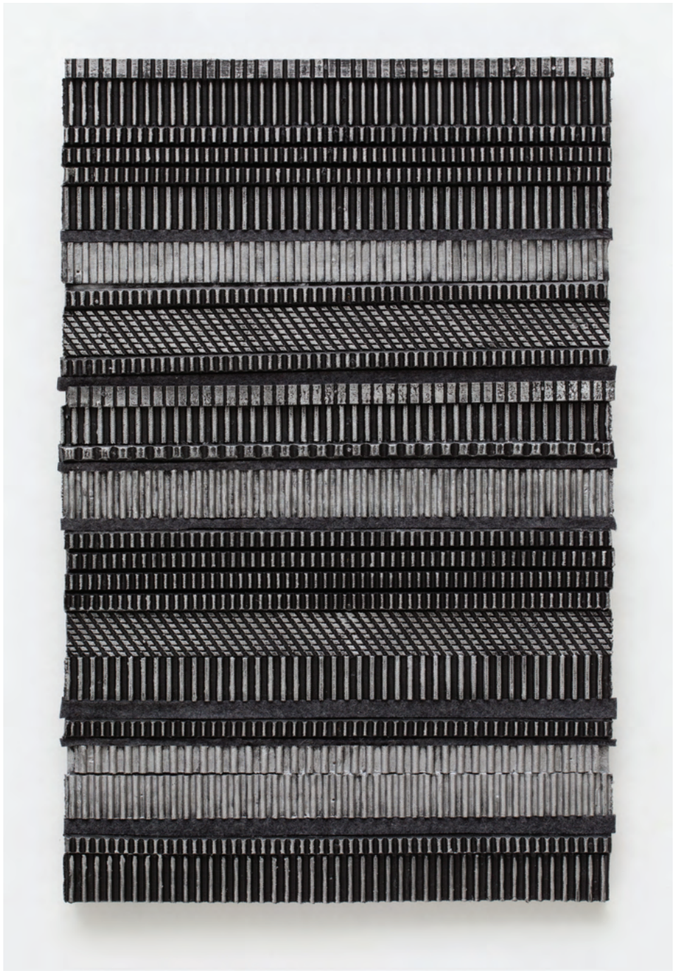
Echo at Satsop, 2013

Echo at Satsop began with Etsuko Ichikawa's response to the disaster that occurred in her home country of Japan on March 11, 2011. The magnitude 9.0 Tohoku earthquake caused a massive tsunami that led to the collapse of the Fukushima nuclear power plant. Its devastating impact on the people and environment around it will continue for years to come.

For this project, Ichikawa and her crew captured visuals and sounds entirely in the abandoned Satsop nuclear facility in Elma, Washington. The sound created by simply clapping hands becomes an almost emotional experience within the tower where Ichikawa's act of prayer and purification are captured. *Echo at Satsop* is Ichikawa's first film of series of four that she created in response to the Fukushima nuclear disasters.

BRENDA MALLORY

I often use found or reclaimed materials in my work to convey the concept of “making do” with what you have or have found as a form of survival. This work uses discarded drivebelts I found while participating in an artist residency called GLEAN, in which artists get to spend several months collecting materials from the dump.



Drivebelt #3, 2017

EMILY GHERARD

In 2020, I developed a series of plaster wall forms installed to resemble boats sinking into the floor. In this series, I combine printmaking, plaster and wood to produce large, imposing, off-center works. The largest in this body of work, *Precious and Vulnerable*, is assembled out of thirty carved plaster blocks made by constructing a mold out of inked printmaking plates and pouring wet plaster into the molds. The ink transfers to the plaster as it hardens, creating a delicate grid on its surface. The result is a contradictory form presenting the delicate marks of a print but with the weight and solidity of stone. In addition to the thin lines, the tannins from this interior frame permeate through the plaster, staining the smooth surface with an irregular, ghostly grid. These, alongside sloping cutaways, expose the hidden structures that support the fragile façade.

Precious and Vulnerable, 2020

ANN GARDNER

Light and time are constants in my work. Using glass allows me to explore them—to explore the changes of light throughout a day, from night until dawn, repeated and repeated to make a life. The *Moon* is my response to the color and feel of light from the early evening to the early morning. I make this work using organic, slightly colored glass shapes that are encrusted with texture, adding a softness to the thin color. The transparency of the glass allows the colors to interact with each other. The shadows are an added benefit to the overall piece—expanding the visual effect, allowing the viewer to reflect back on the color and light.

Moon, 2023

DRIE CHAPEK

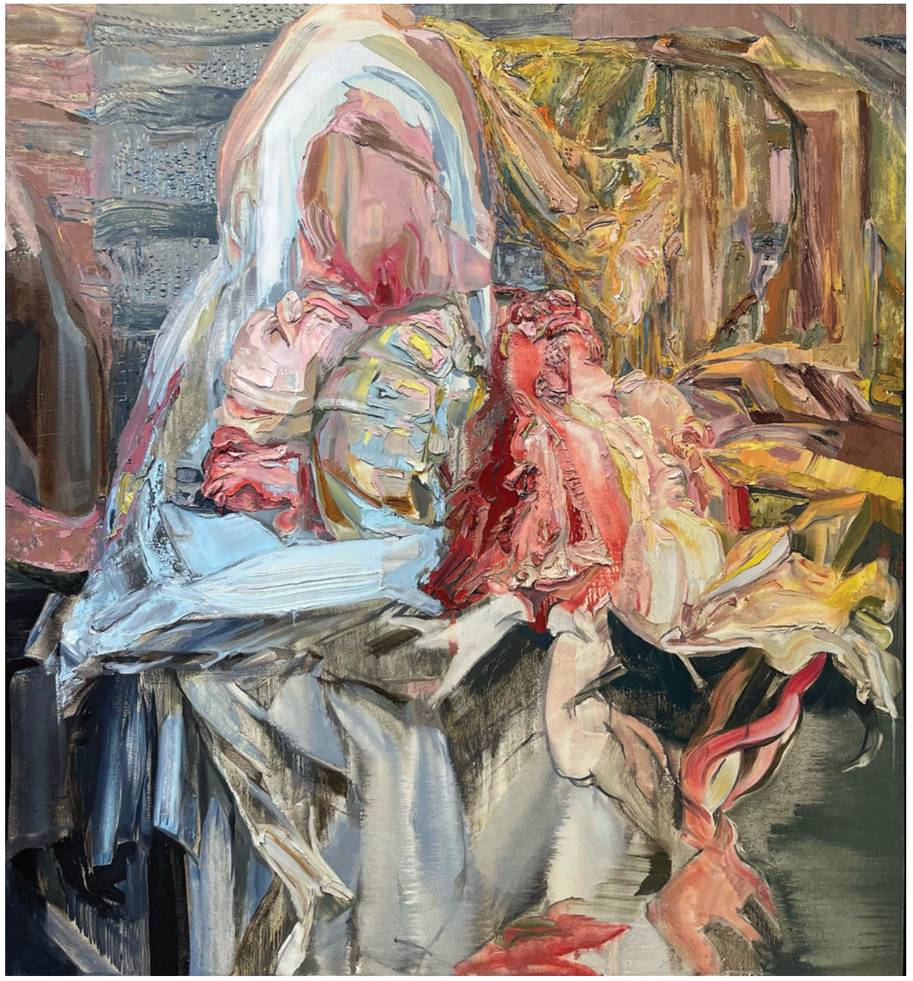
In my work, I create visual space to explore my inner world through imagery from the exterior world. I construct my painted environments with personal reminders of complexity, pain, pleasure and delight discovered within these worlds.

Through breath work and somatic experiencing, I am able to hold the variables of life so that I can stay in my body as an active participant of my human experience. Composing collisions of energies gives me a visual field in which to explore and connect my life's joy and grief experiences. My brushwork and paint application have come from psychological movement throughout my life. The result is physical movement within the frame of the canvas.

I traveled with long views through the air and across land to several homes spread across five states during each year of my childhood. I experienced different caretakers, environments and cultures. I searched for solid ground in that motion and found common threads in the earth we inhabit and the humanity we share. Our differences are vast, but our connections and similarities are as well.

While backpacking in the wild, I take comfort in observing the presence of erosion on the land. It is a reminder of the vast time that the landscape has been transforming. This brings my body and mind to awareness of my experience in the present moment. I am aware of my place in time, and that I am only a breath in time compared to the ages of the mountains. I am given permission to enjoy my brief life and, with ease, make what I can of it.

INSIDE OUT, 2020



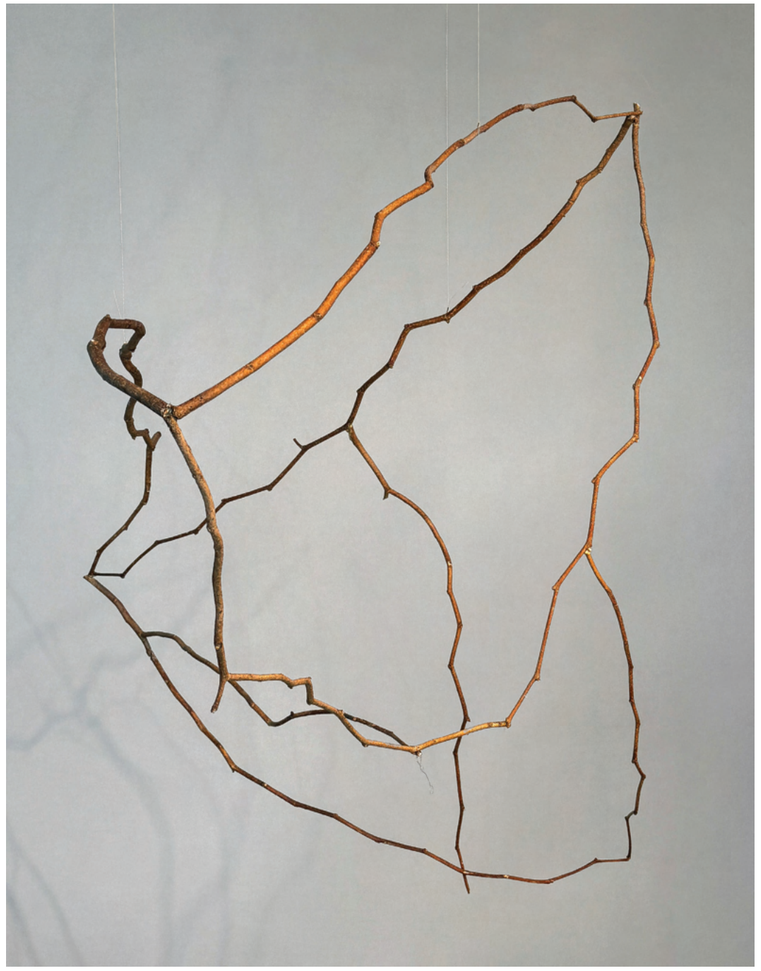
GROUNDED, 2019

SUSAN ZOCCOLA

As an artist, I hope to create work which exists at the junction between physical and interior worlds, to build forms which store delicate memories of their own. My experimental attitude toward materials gives rise to an aesthetic strategy which highlights the inherent transience and fragility of life, and thus art. This can be seen in my studio sculptures, installations and photographic projects over the past 30 years.

My process is based on the idea that visual art exists as a laboratory for knowledge, both physical and philosophical, with my work serving as both a record of observation and a portal for contemplation. I am fascinated by the physical resemblance and functional complexity of living systems, big and small. These patterns limn the innumerable divisions by which living things survive, demonstrating how the endless branching that we can see becomes an endless branching of what we cannot.

Inspired by the human body, plant life, and other natural forms, I try to invest my work with intuition and emotion, at the same time revealing my keen curiosity about the tangible processes of organic forms and transformation. I am moved by the beautiful similarities between patterns in nature. Using an integrative approach, I have created work from a wide variety of materials, including steel, plaster, glass, gut, wax, salt, photography, video etc. New materials direct and inspire my artistic impulses. Challenged and motivated by a particular medium, I find myself compelled to investigate new processes and to uncover the surprises which are invariably hidden within.



CAMPERDOWN 1, 2024

VICTORIA ADAMS

My work explores our human emotional response to panoramic views of actual landscape. A large painted landscape seen within the framed canvas on an interior wall seems to concentrate those emotions. I want my paintings to provide an interface between how nature is experienced and how a painting is experienced.

I paint grand views with sweeping horizons, dramatic skies, and reflective bodies of water. The vistas and skies in each painting are fictional places, of indeterminate scale, conjured from my imagination. I feel a strong kinship with 17th-century Dutch, 19th-century British, French, and German landscape traditions, as well as with the American Luminist and Hudson River School traditions. I draw on the visual vocabulary from all these sources with details of sky, water and horizon. My love of grand vistas and turbulent skies has its roots in the pastoral landscapes of my Midwest childhood and in my adulthood experience of the ever-changing "big" skies of the American West and the Pacific Northwest.

Clear Blue, 2016

Long Tide, 2016

All my landscape or waterscape paintings depict wide-open spaces and clear views of the sky. Weather systems, long horizons, expanses of water and the atmospheres of light together make up the imagined views. My paintings focus on the experience of viewing the sky and horizon. My light-filled skies extend infinitely back into space and merge with a horizon in the far distance. My horizons, low in the composition, place the viewer in an elevated position—the better to take in the view and survey the horizon and the distance. The horizon, so predominant in my work, is a powerful symbol in the Western landscape tradition. It beacons with an invitation to be entranced by everything, real or imagined, that lies beyond the point where sky and water meet.

What lies beyond, in the "faraway," is out of reach in the here and now (the present) and merges with what is to be anticipated (the future). How each viewer will speculate on what lies behind a horizon naturally will vary. My own response as I paint skies and horizons is to feel ambiguity: on the one hand, a feeling of participation and inextricable belonging in the larger matrix of sky, distance and earth as our habitat, and on the other hand, a feeling of uncertainty about our future in a starkly different and warmer world.

SUSAN DORY

Through painting, I explore the psychology of color, Eastern metaphysics, and the nuances of memory and recollection.

I am completely beholden to color, and I quote Bridget Riley, who sums it up well,

“Color turns out to be a perfect vehicle for me, because it is made up of harmonies as well as contrasts and though unstable and fugitive, it also comes through a powerful presence in its own right.”

In my painting, I investigate the dichotomy between what is visible and what is concealed or unseen, and I embrace the idea that everything that “makes” us and our world cannot be understood completely in our current state. This brings a strange sense of grace and paradox to my approach to painting, allowing for the possibility of revelation through perceived opacity.

Studying Eastern metaphysics has provided a sense of optimism and a glimpse of the possibility of interconnectedness, transcendence and liberation. I am interested in the interwoven nature of existence. I attempt to visually represent the interconnected threads.

Memory, and the elusive nature of how we remember, forms another layer of my inquiry.

I engage with the concept of the painting as temporal landscape, a repository of collected moments.

Field Study, 2024

Soul Arch, 2023

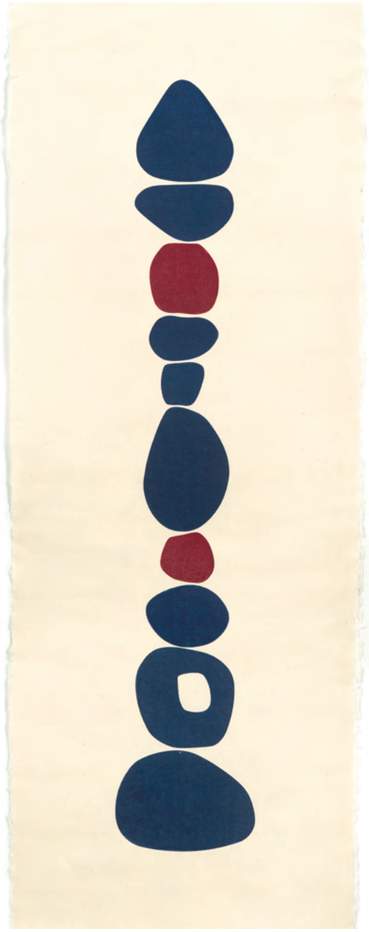
JULIE SPEIDEL

Time spent traveling through Japan in the 1980's marked the beginning of Speidel's love of the Japanese aesthetic and its origins in simple, subtle, unobtrusive forms. Culminating more than three decades of work with Japanese Paper, these pieces in hand-rubbed oil celebrate Speidel's appreciation for how the simplicity of two-dimensional art can convey the complex story of a centuries-old mystery.

Speidel always drew timeless artistic vision from Ireland's ancient megalithic sites through the pure marvel of their architectural structure and seemingly impossible creation. The stone sites' enduring presence come through in her work as shape, form and balance are central to this series, all while two distinct ancient cultures are intertwined.

After forty years working with her hands as a sculptor of pieces at a substantial and often grand scale, Speidel's artistic vision evolved metaphorically with the ever-present passage of time. Entering this stage of life with limited visual acuity, inspiration for her work transitioned from physically touching the large sculptures before her to an introspective and mindful practice of "seeing" that is meditative, internal and very personal. The use of large, vibrantly colored solid shapes eases the mind and creates a freeing experience of "sight" without a struggle to focus.

Raheen, 2020



Dromod, 2020

Udleire, 2014

"Shikaku" is the Japanese translation for the "sense of sight" and provided inspiration for these pieces created in 2020. Discussion surrounding the transformation of Speidel's vision brought back vivid memories of a trip to Kyoto, Japan with her daughter Lauren in 2009. An unplanned and serendipitous excursion to the island of Naoshima yielded an unforgettable experience of visiting a Shinto shrine. Led by light into the complete inky black darkness of the shrine, visitors are challenged to trust their physical presence and sense of touch to navigate their way.

With patience, trust and time, eventually sight returns in the darkness and reveals an inner "seeing" that is equally transformative and unforgettable. Emerging back into the light is reminiscent of the very reason for visiting the shrine – to pay respect, pray for good fortune and embrace a new way of seeing. Speidel's work speaks to this transcendence of time and space, welcoming light in the darkness, and being grateful for an abundance of good fortune.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Victoria Adams

***Clear Blue*, 2016, Oil on linen, 38 x 45 in**

***Long Tide*, 2016, Oil and wax on linen, 36 x 36 in**

Portrait by Ric Peterson
Courtesy of the artist and Gail Severn Gallery, Ketchum, ID

Drie Chapek

***GROUNDED*, 2019, Oil on canvas, 52 x 48 in**

***INSIDE OUT*, 2020, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 65 in**

Portrait Brandon Bondehagen
Courtesy of the artist and Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle, WA

Jaq Chartier

***SunTest #11 (Day 2, 14, 17, 74), 2023,* Time-based image capture, dye sublimation on aluminum, 74 x 74 in**

Courtesy of the artist and J. Rinehart Gallery, Seattle, WA

Susan Dory

***Soul Arch*, 2023, Acrylic on canvas over panel, 50 x 42 in**

***Field Study*, 2024, Acrylic on canvas over panel 60 x 52 in**

Courtesy of the artist and Winston Wächter Fine Art, Seattle, WA

Betsy Eby

***Astral*, 2024, Hot wax and oil on panel, 60 x 60 in**

***Quantum*, 2024, Hot wax and oil on panel, 60 x 60 in**

Courtesy of the artist and Winston Wächter Fine Art, New York, NY
and Winston Wächter Fine Art, Seattle, WA

Ann Gardner

***Moon,* 2023, Blown glass, 96 x 44 x 30 in**

Courtesy of the artist and Winston Wächter Fine Art, Seattle, WA

Emily Gherard

***Precious and Vulnerable*, 2020, Intaglio and monoprint on plaster with cedar wood frame, 72 x 132 x 4.5 in**

Photos of artwork by Zocalo Studios, Portrait Meggan Joy
Courtesy of the artist and J. Rinehart Gallery, Seattle, WA

Etsuko Ichikawa

***Echo at Satsop*, 2013, video**

Photos of artwork by Sean Frego, Portrait by Lisa Kuhnlein
Courtesy of the artist and Winston Wächter Fine Art, Seattle, WA

Lisa Jarrett

***Migration Studies (No. 14, prototype)*, 2020, Mixed media, hair nets, acrylics, insect pins, plexi, and tracing paper, 84 x 120 in**

Portrait by Sam Gehrke
Courtesy of the artist and Russo Lee Gallery, Portland, OR

Brenda Mallory

***Drivebelt #3*, 2017, Rubber drivebelts, felt, paint on wood panel, 21 x 14 in**

Photos of artwork by Dan Kvitka
Courtesy of the artist and Russo Lee Gallery, Portland, OR

Julie Speidel

Raheen, 2020, Hand rubbed oil on Japanese paper, 78.5 x 35.2 x 2 in

***Dromod*, 2020, Hand rubbed oil on Japanese paper, 78.5 x 35.2 x 2 in**

***Udleire*, 2014, Bronze, 20 x 20 x 6 in**

Courtesy of the artist, private collector and Winston Wächter Fine Art, Seattle, WA

Katy Stone

***Ray*, 2016, Acrylic on Duralar, thread, and pins, 144 x 312 x 36 in**

Courtesy of the artist and J. Rinehart Gallery, Seattle, WA

Marie Watt

***Sky Dances Light (Forest) XVII*, 2023-24, Tin jingles, polyester twill tape, polyester mesh, and steel (MWAT.009.2024), 132 x 60 x 48 in**

***Sky Dances Light (Chorus) XX*, 2023-24, Tin jingles, polyester twill tape, polyester mesh, and steel (MWAT.012.2024), 60 x 48 x 48 in**

Photos of artwork by Kevin McConnell, Portrait by Kevin McConnell
Courtesy of the artist and Marc Straus Gallery, New York, NY

Susan Zoccola

***CAMPERDOWN 1*, 2024, Camperdown elm and stainless steel cable, 48 x 48 x 48 in**

Courtesy of the artist

ABOUT THE BO BARTLETT CENTER

The Bo Bartlett Center is a multidisciplinary art space located on the Columbus State University campus in downtown Columbus, Georgia. Spanning 18,425 square feet, this former textile warehouse was transformed into a gallery space by AIA award-winning architect Tom Kundig and opened to the public in 2018. The center functions as both a gallery and an experimental arts incubator. Based on the belief that art can change lives, the center embraces a dual mission: to reach students and community through art programs that encourage participation from diverse voices, and to engage in collaboration with other institutions to present innovative exhibitions, publications, and interdisciplinary events.

At the heart of the center is the Scarborough Collection, featuring 14 monumental paintings by Columbus native Bo Bartlett. Along with these paintings, the center maintains Bartlett's comprehensive archive of records, writings, photographs, and sketchbooks that document his artistic process.

The Bo Bartlett Center is a unique cultural arts institution that serves both the students of Columbus State University and the surrounding communities.

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ISBN 979-8-9920175-0-2

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