



PRESTON DOUGLAS BOYER
ERIC DEPAN
MARK FLOOD
BRADLEY KERL

TEXAS CON —TEM— PORARY

VIRGINIA L. MONTGOMERY
REYNIER LEYVA NOVO
RICK LOWE
LOVIE OLIVIA

OPERA GALLERY

TEXAS CON —TEM— PORARY

September 18 — October 18, 2026
Houston

OPERA GALLERY

— FOREWORD

What does it mean for an artist to be connected to a place? For the artists brought together in 'Texas Contemporary,' the answer is not found in a single image of Texas, nor in a fixed idea of regional identity. Rather, Texas operates as a point of reference—social, cultural, ecological, and historical—from which distinct forms of artistic imagination emerge. The exhibition— through the work of Rick Lowe, Mark Flood, Preston Douglas Boyer, Bradley Kerl, Virginia L. Montgomery, Lovie Olivia, Eric DePan and Reynier Leyva Novo—considers how a relationship to place can inform an artist's way of seeing without determining it, allowing local experience to become material for broader questions that resonate within a wider contemporary dialogue.

The artists of 'Texas Contemporary' do not share a common aesthetic, medium, or subject. What connects them is a sustained engagement with environments that are themselves complex and changing. Texas is a space in which histories overlap, images circulate, communities evolve, and the physical landscape becomes inseparable from cultural memory. However, their practices cannot be reduced to a Texan identity. Their connections to the state form one part of artistic enquiries that reach beyond the particularities of place.

Mark Flood's *Page From a Wanderer's Scrapbook* (2015) offers a compelling way of thinking about this relationship as the idea of the scrapbook. It becomes a metaphor for place itself: something assembled from disparate experiences, histories, and visual associations rather than experienced as a coherent whole.

A different relationship between place and imagination emerges in the work of Lovie Olivia, whose practice draws on ancestry, folklore, literature, and collective memory as she transforms inherited narratives. Imagination becomes a way of negotiating the distance between personal experience and histories that precede it, creating visual spaces in which identity can be reconsidered and reconstructed.

Virginia L. Montgomery similarly approaches place as something active rather than static. Her engagement with the ecology and mythology of East Texas considers the natural environment as a repository of memory and transformation. *Marble Amoebas in Motion: Arc* (2026) extends this interest in processes of change and interconnection.

These approaches find echoes throughout the exhibition. Preston Douglas Boyer's *Baptized By Light* (2025), Bradley Kerl's *Night of the Hodag* (2024), Eric DePan's *9-Patch Block in Amber* (2026) and Reynier Leyva Novo's *Sacred Dust* paintings each demonstrate different ways in which material, history, and lived experience can be transformed through artistic practice.

The works in 'Texas Contemporary' suggest that place is never merely where art is made. It can shape the questions an artist asks, the materials they choose, the histories they revisit, and the worlds they imagine. By bringing these practices into dialogue, the exhibition presents Texas as a complex and generative context for contemporary art, with an influence that extends beyond its geographical boundaries. It is a point of departure from which these artists engage with questions that extend beyond the state. In this sense, Texas is the starting point for the exhibition, while the practices it brings together belong to a much broader contemporary conversation.

Gilles Dyan Founder and Chairman Opera Gallery Group	Gregory Lahmi Director Opera Gallery Houston	Kara Przybyl McIver Deputy Director Opera Gallery Houston
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PRESTON DOUGLAS BOYER
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EXHIBITED
— ARTISTS —

VIRGINIA L. MONTGOMERY
REYNIER LEYVA NOVO
RICK LOWE
LOVIE OLIVIA



Portrait of Preston Douglas Boyer, 2024 © Zach Gold

— Preston Douglas BOYER

(b. 1995)

Preston Douglas Boyer is an American multidisciplinary artist whose practice spans painting, fashion, performance, and installation. Rooted in an exploration of spirituality and personal transformation, his work investigates how creative acts can function as physical manifestations of an inner journey. Moving between mediums, Boyer creates immersive environments in which painting becomes both an object and an event, reflecting on the intersections of faith, ritual, beauty, and contemporary culture. His work examines the tensions between attraction and unease, proposing art as a site for contemplation, transcendence, and self-discovery.

Boyer developed his practice through an interdisciplinary approach that rejects rigid distinctions between artistic categories. Drawing from religious imagery, fashion culture, mythology, and personal experience, he treats artistic production as a holistic process in which performance, material experimentation, and spiritual inquiry are intertwined. Whether working on canvas, constructing garments, or staging performative actions, Boyer considers each medium part of a larger investigation into belief systems and the ways individuals navigate questions of identity, devotion, and meaning. His work often reflects on the persistence of spiritual longing within contemporary life, even amid rapidly shifting cultural values.

Central to Boyer’s practice is the idea that paintings can serve simultaneously as artifacts and active participants in larger installations or performances. His layered surfaces frequently combine gestural mark-making, symbolic imagery, textile elements, and ornamental references, evoking both sacred iconography and contemporary visual culture. Themes of transformation, vulnerability, desire, and redemption recur throughout his work, while his use of fashion and performance expands painting beyond the confines of the canvas. Through these interconnected forms, Boyer creates works that blur the boundaries between object, ritual, and environment.

Boyer has presented exhibitions in London and Ghent, and has exhibited widely across the United States, including in New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Austin, and The Hamptons. His practice has attracted attention for its distinctive fusion of painting, performance, and fashion, establishing him as a compelling voice among a new generation of interdisciplinary artists.

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

My practice centers on transformation. I take materials, memories, and lived experiences and allow them to become vessels for truth, faith, beauty, love, and hope.

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

Houston shaped me through its openness, grit, and lack of pretense. It gave me room to develop my own language outside a rigid art-world formula as well as a spirit uniquely tied to Texans.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

Community means shared belief, support, and presence. Art has the ability to gather people, create conversation, and remind us that our work is defined by those who have come before us, and what we do in the present will also help shape the future of art history and culture at large.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

I'm exploring how beauty can carry spiritual weight, how brokenness can be redeemed in both a physical and metaphysical sense, and how painting can become both evidence of a process and a place of encounter.

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

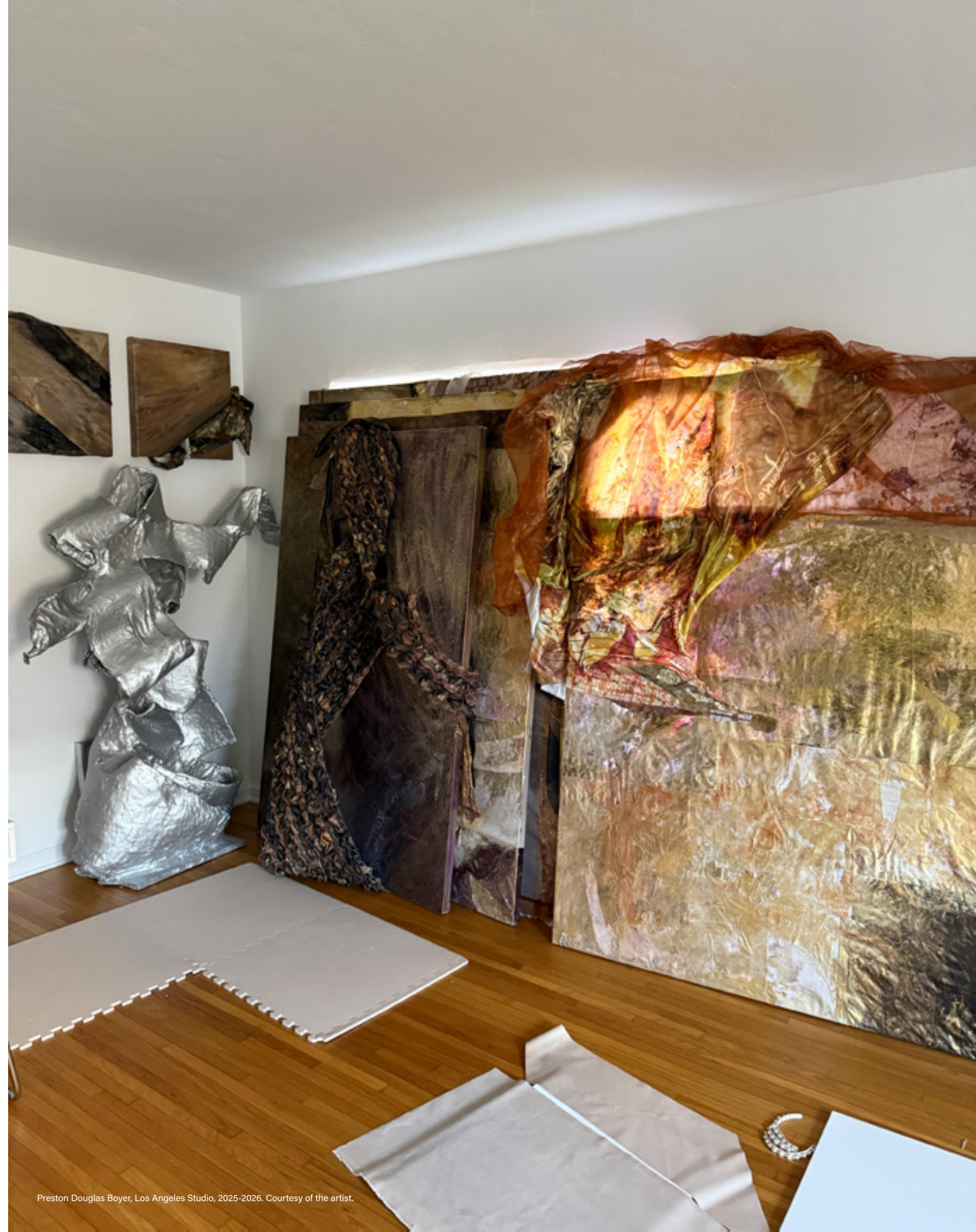
The works in this exhibition are deeply connected to my broader practice through their use of fabric, gesture, and material transformation. They sit between painting, performance, and personal *testimony*. The three smaller works in the exhibition are part of my Testimony series, whereas the larger piece, *Baptized By Light*, is part of my *zipper* painting series. This was the first piece ever produced on linen (and it actually features no zippers).

What continues to motivate you to make work?

The physical art comes out of the spiritual journey I am on. Art is a byproduct of the path. Making work is part of my prayer practice and how I process life, but the quest for beauty and presence has recently been at the forefront of my conscious mind.

What feels most urgent or exciting to you in your work right now?

What feels most exciting right now is pushing the paintings beyond objects. Allowing them to become environments, experiences, and moments of connection.



Preston Douglas Boyer, Los Angeles Studio, 2025-2026. Courtesy of the artist.

Preston Douglas BOYER

(b. 1995)

Baptized By Light

From the *Zipper* series

2025

Acrylic dye on Belgian linen on custom aluminum stretcher

80 x 60 in | 203.2 x 152.4 cm





Preston Douglas BOYER

(b. 1995)

Seek First

From the *Testimony* series

2026

Acrylic, collage, and organza on canvas

16 x 20 in | 40.6 x 50.8 cm

Preston Douglas BOYER
(b. 1995)

Highest Praise
From the *Testimony* series
2026

Acrylic and collage on canvas
18 x 24 in | 45.7 x 61 cm





Preston Douglas BOYER
(b. 1995)

Wasted Worship

From the *Testimony* series

2025

Acrylic, satin, organza and thread on canvas

36 x 48 in | 91.4 x 121.9 cm



Eric DePan in his studio in Houston, 2026. Courtesy of the artist.

— Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Eric DePan is an American glass artist based in Houston, Texas, whose practice explores the expressive possibilities of blown and sculptural glass through investigations of optics, structure, and materiality. Working at the intersection of traditional craftsmanship and contemporary abstraction, he creates works that emphasize the inherent qualities of glass—its transparency, luminosity, and capacity to manipulate light. His recent sculptures reflect an ongoing pursuit of new formal languages while remaining grounded in a deep understanding of the medium's technical demands.

Originally trained as a glassblower, DePan has developed a multifaceted practice that spans functional glassware, commissioned works, and increasingly ambitious sculptural projects. He describes his current work as an exploration of what glass can uniquely express, guided by questions of personal heritage, perception, and an internal standard of beauty. Growing up in a family of fifth-generation quilters has informed his recent body of abstract square sculptures, which translate the repetition and structure of quilting into glass.

DePan's recent work centers on modular compositions assembled from individually fused glass elements, creating patterns that shift with changing light and the viewer's perspective. These quilt-inspired constructions extend his interest in optics and geometry while requiring the development of new fabrication techniques and custom equipment. Rather than treating glass simply as a vessel for form, DePan embraces the material itself as an active participant in the work, allowing its reflective and refractive properties to shape each composition. His practice is driven by experimentation and a desire to discover new possibilities within the medium.

— INTERVIEW

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

My concerns in my practice are to investigate work that answers a pursuit of material and technique, while also asking what I can make in glass that truly manifests my ideas of optics and structure. I'm exploring new things in myself, like my personal heritage, alongside the question: What is my standard of what should exist in the world?

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

Living and working in Houston has given me a diverse clientele to design for. I started my studio four years ago, and it has allowed me to make high-quality glassware on the simple level of barware for locals, statement pieces for collectors, and now sculpture for myself and galleries.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

Community literally is my ability to work. In glass, there are few things you can do by yourself, unassisted. I make most of my work for myself in a way, but ultimately it is made for my eventual client. I make the work to sell it, and without community, I don't think I'd still be making glass.

Within the context of these quilted square sculptures, I'm accessing my personal community through being a fifth-generation quilter. I grew up in a family of quietly productive master quilters, and I am able to access my family and my heritage by maintaining a quilter-like practice in glass.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

The questions I'm currently working on are: What work would I make if I had never taken a class before? What work would I make if I forgot all the practices I've already committed to? My favorite definition of art is: Creative work towards rendering an internal standard of beauty. So my question I often ask myself is: What is my internal standard for what should exist in the world?

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

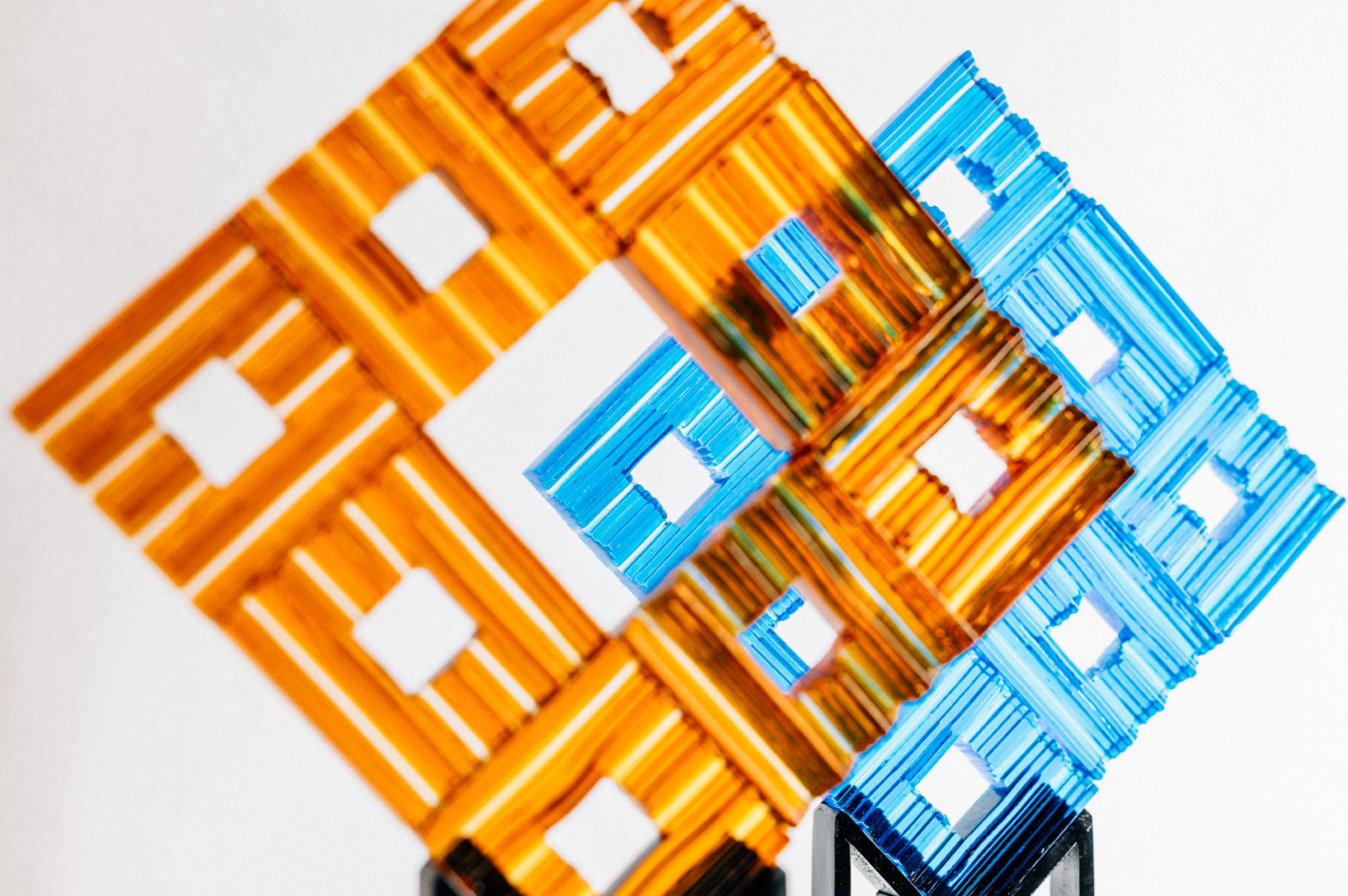
This abstract square work is vastly new to my practice, and I've had to develop techniques and equipment to explore this work that I do not use for anything else I make. But ultimately, it's a continuation of my studies of pattern, optics, and the potential of what I can "get away with" in my chosen material, glass.

What continues to motivate you to make work?

The material itself continues to motivate me. Glass is a truly special material to make objects from. I'm inspired by finding the objects through the process of building blocks and arriving at the final form, and by the way the natural light erupts, mutes, or reveals the material in ways that are unique to glass. I feel like this body of work will allow me to follow it, and for it to follow me, in a way that I'm excited about.



Eric DePan in his studio in Houston, 2026. Courtesy of the artist.

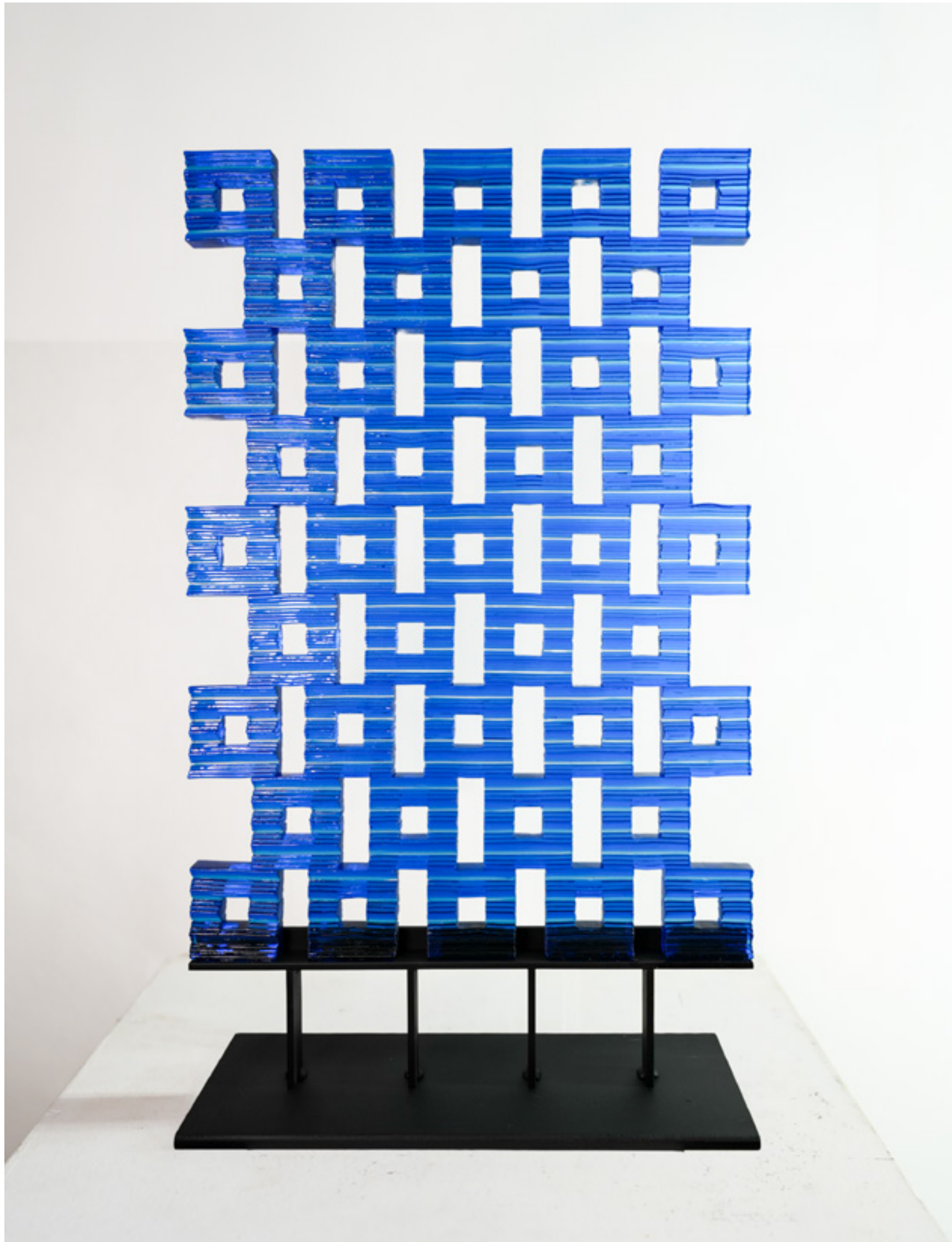


Eric DEPAN
(b. 1990)

Patchwork Fractal in Amber
2026

Laminated glass
33 x 19 x 6 in | 83.8 x 48.2 x 15.2 cm





Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Patchwork Fractal in Blue

2026

Laminated glass

33 x 19 x 6 in | 83.8 x 48.2 x 15.2 cm

Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Patchwork Fractal in Green

2026

Laminated glass

26 x 16 x 6 in | 66 x 40.6 x 15.2 cm





Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

9-Patch Block in Amber

2026

Laminated glass

8 x 8 in | 20.3 x 20.3 cm

Eric DEPAN

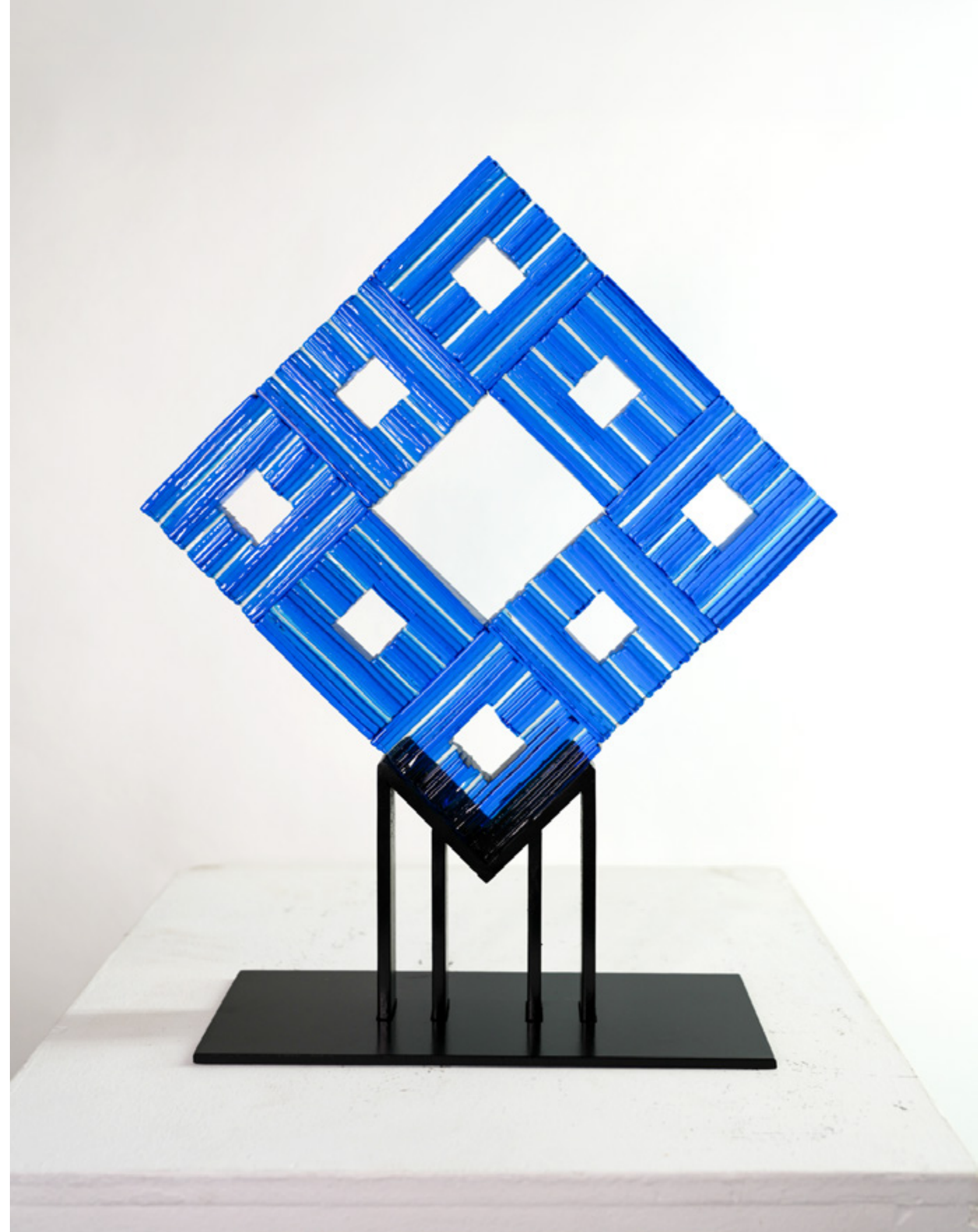
(b. 1990)

9-Patch Block in Blue

2026

Laminated glass

8 x 8 in | 20.3 x 20.3 cm





Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Tondo Cigar in green and ruby

2026

Glass

5 x 5 x 14 in | 12.7 x 12.7 x 35.6 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Tondo Cigar in green and ruby

2026

Glass

6 x 6 x 13 in | 15.2 x 15.2 x 33 in

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio





Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Tondo Cigar in green and ruby

2026

Glass

7 x 7 x 13 in | 17.8 x 17.8 x 33 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Inciso Hopi in pink

2026

Glass

11 x 11 x 9 in | 27.9 x 27.9 x 22.9 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio





Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Inciso Tusk in opal

2026

Glass

6 x 6 x 14 in | 15.2 x 15.2 x 35.6 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

Eric DEPAN

(b. 1990)

Inciso Reef in white

2026

Glass

11 x 11 x 9 in | 27.9 x 27.9 x 22.9 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio





Mark Flood sitting in front of his artwork *The Albino*, 1994. Courtesy of the artist.

— Mark FLOOD

(b. 1957)

Mark Flood is an American interdisciplinary artist whose work combines painting, sculpture, collage, assemblage, and installation with a distinctly punk sensibility. Known for his humor, wit, and resistance to artistic convention, Flood has developed a practice that interrogates the structures of contemporary culture, consumerism, and the art world itself. His work draws upon the visual languages of advertising, mass media, finance, and popular culture, transforming familiar symbols and slogans into provocative reflections on value, authenticity, and power.

Flood's artistic outlook emerged from Houston's underground punk scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s, where he designed concert flyers and performed with the experimental band Culturcide. This formative experience established a lifelong skepticism toward institutional authority and cultural hierarchies. He later worked as a museum assistant at the Menil Collection, deepening his engagement with art history while reinforcing his tendency to challenge its conventions. Throughout his career, Flood has cultivated a reputation as a contrarian figure whose work balances intellectual rigor with subversive humor, often undermining the very systems in which it circulates.

Across multiple decades, Flood has employed appropriation, repetition, and assemblage to expose the absurdities of contemporary visual culture. He creates layered compositions that juxtapose distressed surfaces, altered logos, financial graphics, celebrity imagery, found materials, and declarative text. Recurring phrases such as "ANOTHER PAINTING" and "ART FAIR FEVER!" parody the rhetoric of the art market while simultaneously participating in it. His work embraces contradiction, combining aesthetic refinement with deliberate disruption, and often blurs the line between critique and complicity.

Flood's work has been exhibited extensively in the United States and internationally, including presentations at institutions such as the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; the Menil Collection, as well as gallery exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles, and Europe. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Menil Collection; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; and the Dallas Museum of Art, among other public and private collections.

— INTERVIEW

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

I am a secretive and fugitive person who does not like anyone knowing what I think about myself and my work at any given time.

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

It used to be that people felt they had to live in Paris and then New York to be an artist—to be where the action is. I don't think the action is in those cities anymore. I think being in the provinces has a unique value.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

I think it's a bullshit catchphrase.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

None that I am willing to share.

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

It's a couple of really good paintings I think. Early and late lace paintings.

What continues to motivate you to make work?

Money. I have a horror of not being able to pay my bills.

What feels most urgent or exciting to you in your work right now?

Nothing. I feel like my career is effectively over and I had a great ride. I feel like letting the world deal with my legacy, if I have one. Otherwise, I've pivoted into being a decorator artist because I like making money that way. It's not as easy as it sounds.



Mark FLOOD

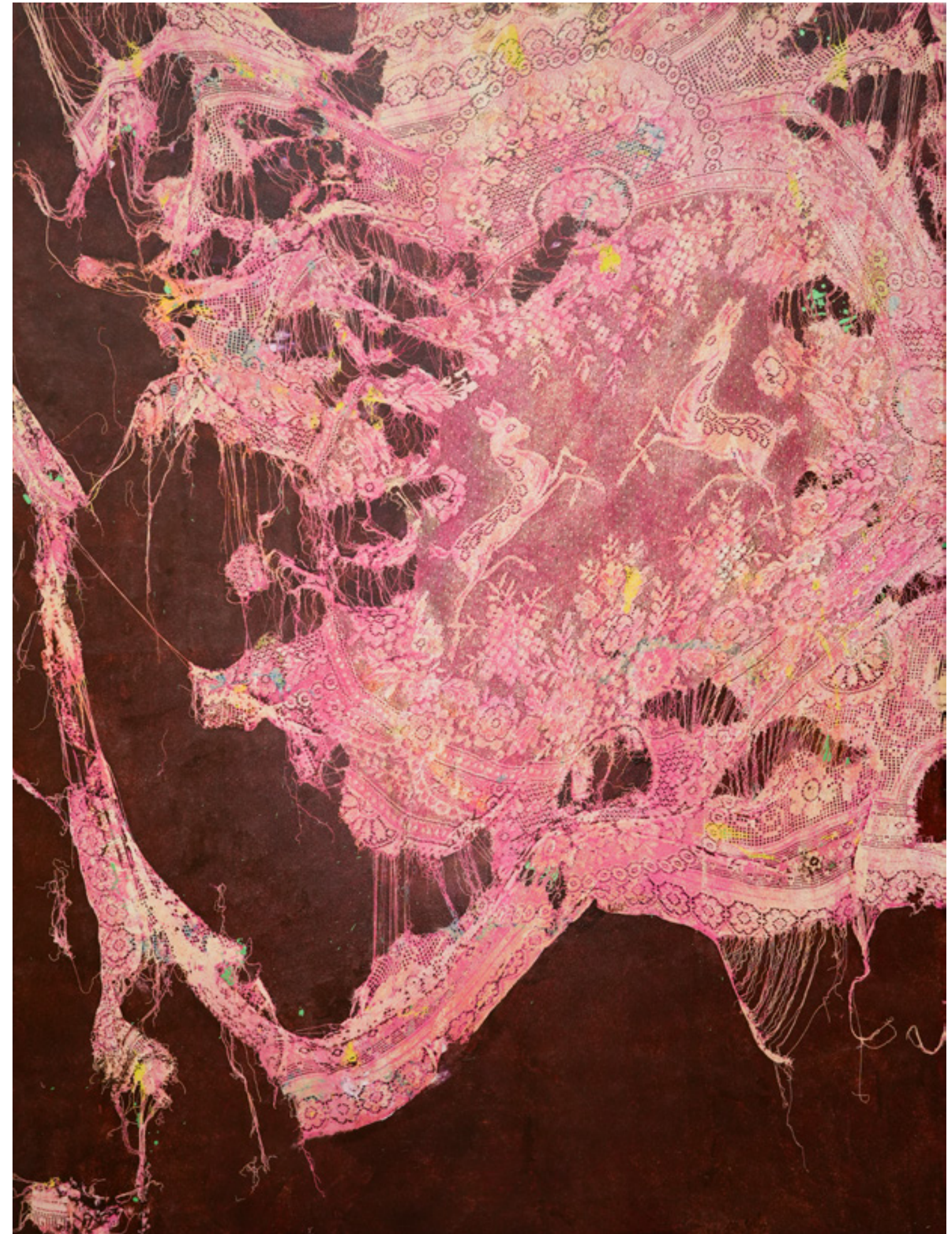
(b. 1957)

Two Fawns

2002

Acrylic on canvas

95 x 72 in | 241.3 x 182.9 cm



Mark FLOOD

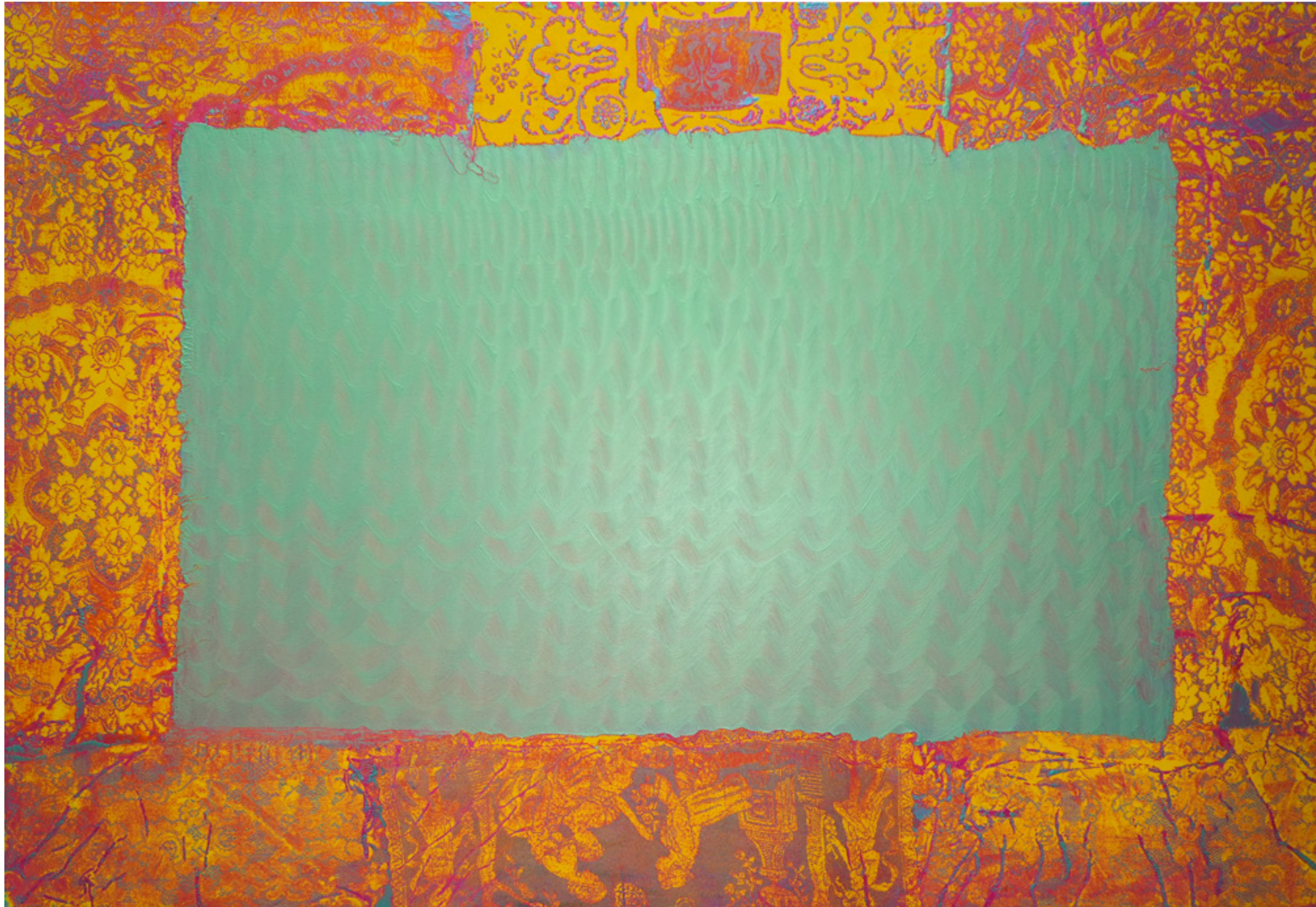
(b. 1957)

Page From A Wanderer's Scrapbook

2015

Acrylic on canvas

70 x 102 in | 177.8 x 259.1 cm



Mark FLOOD
(b. 1957)

Reduced Death Anxiety
2021

Acrylic on canvas
60 x 48 in | 152.4 x 121.9 cm





Mark FLOOD
(b. 1957)

Written Informed Consent
2021

Acrylic on canvas
60 x 48 in | 152.4 x 121.9 cm



— Bradley KERL

(b. 1986)

Bradley Kerl is an American painter from Beaumont, Texas, and educator whose work explores the ways images are framed, interpreted, and transformed through the language of painting. Based in New Orleans, Louisiana, Kerl draws inspiration from the seemingly ordinary moments of everyday life, creating works that balance observation and abstraction, humor and sincerity. Through an iterative studio practice, he investigates how painting can elevate commonplace experiences—from smartphone snapshots and classroom still lifes to children’s drawings and sunsets—into meditations on perception, memory, and visual culture.

Kerl earned a BFA in Drawing and Painting from the University of North Texas and an MFA in Painting from the University of Houston. Alongside his work as an artist, he has maintained an active career as an arts educator, a role that informs his sustained engagement with the history and methodology. His practice reflects a curiosity about how images circulate and acquire meaning, often drawing from personal experiences and familiar visual encounters. Kerl focuses on the overlooked details and moments of daily life, revealing their capacity for wonder and reflection.

Central to Kerl’s work is an interest in painting as a process of translation and response. His compositions frequently evolve through repetition, revision, and the layering of visual references, allowing subjects to shift between representation and abstraction. By reworking found imagery, digital photographs, and observational studies, he creates paintings that question how contemporary experience is mediated through screens, memory, and artistic convention. The resulting works are both playful and contemplative—emphasizing the transformative potential of painting while celebrating the richness of everyday visual experience.

Kerl has presented solo exhibitions at the Galveston Arts Center, Art League Houston, and the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA) Project Space in New York, alongside exhibitions at galleries in Houston, Austin, Los Angeles. His work has appeared in international group exhibitions in London, Amsterdam, Sydney, Oslo, Houston, Dallas, and New Orleans. A recipient of the 2025 Jones Artist Award from the Houston Endowment, Kerl has also participated in notable residencies including Villa Lena in Tuscany and 100 West Corsicana in Texas.

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

At this point in my career, I'm most interested in quality versus quantity. I have reached a point where I have a certain degree of stability, success, and support, so I am in the fortunate position of focusing on what makes the most sense for me regarding opportunities, exhibitions, and the actual work that I get to make. I'm not resting on my laurels, but focusing on strategic projects that feed into and bolster my practice.

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

When I moved to Houston for graduate school in 2011, I was under the impression that it would only be a stopgap. During those three years at the University of Houston, I was introduced to the city's arts ecosystem and found that it was (and still is) an incredibly supportive and tight-knit community. From DIY, artist-run spaces to the big museums, the city offers a certain kind of access into the "art world" for newcomers which was especially important for me as an emerging artist. This, coupled with the city's "lesser" status in the scheme of American art cities, gave me a lot of room to explore without certain pressures and the need to perform the act of being an artist. I could simply show up and focus on the work, and I've been fortunate that people have taken notice from the very beginning. Houston is also a very blue-collar, get-shit-done kind of city, and I found that sort of work-centric ethos very informative as I laid the groundwork for a rigorous studio practice.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

I think about community in a holistic sense. I've always tried to and been fortunate enough to have the opportunity to contribute to my community through my multiple roles as an artist, educator and peer. As an artist, my community is who I, in large part, make my work to be seen by. As an educator, it's important for me to pass along knowledge and to encourage my students to be brave enough to release their vision into the world. As a peer, I have been able to lend an ear, plug people into exhibitions, galleries, etc. and to be a cheerleader. Without a healthy community that supports and reinvests in itself through education, camaraderie, and financial support, there are just empty gestures.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

The questions that are driving my studio practice at the moment are mostly technical in nature. I want to create paintings that are derived from my personal experience which also allow broader entry points for viewers from diverse backgrounds. I'm interested in the way that the meaning of everyday occurrences, objects and symbols can shift depending upon context and in the way in which they are layered and/or juxtaposed with one another. These ideas present technical challenges to overcome regarding composition, focus, and rhythm. Often, it simply boils down to being mindful and present when applying paint to canvas to arrive at the feeling I am seeking. Having recently moved to New Orleans for a teaching position at Louisiana State University, I feel that my goals and the city's mixed/layered history, culture, and ethos gel especially well together. As I settle into a new city and culture, I'm excited to push my ideas further within this particular context.

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

The works in this exhibition come from three distinct periods and offer unique insights into my thinking, how I source imagery and ideas for my paintings and practice more broadly.

San Gimignano comes from my time as artist-in-residence at Villa Lena in the Tuscan hills, autumn 2018. This was my first experience working in a location other than Texas, and it marked a distinct shift in my thinking about light and color in my work. I owe most of the sensitivity to such concerns in my work to this experience.

Sunspots comes from a larger group of similar paintings focused on the parallels between fatherhood, the studio, and greenhouses as the sites of abundant nurturing and growth. At the time, I was a relatively new father and I was thinking a lot about such things.

Night of the Hodag is a much more recent painting and is exemplary of the ways in which I have begun to layer lived experience with memory, imagined scenarios and/or history.

What continues to motivate you to make work?

My continued motivation to make work lies in the fact that I simply must. I must continue to make paintings. I must continue to keep asking questions. I must continue to keep honing my skills. I must continue to try to push my ideas further and more clearly articulate them. I am proud of the work I have made and the life I have created, but there is still room to improve and I love to challenge myself.

What feels most urgent or exciting to you in your work right now?

The idea of layered imagery, thoughts, memories, histories, etc.





Bradley KERL
(b. 1986)

San Gimignano
2019

Oil on canvas
66 × 48 in | 167.6 x 121.9 cm





Bradley KERL
(b. 1986)

Sunspots
2022

Oil on canvas
84 x 72 in | 213.4 x 182.9 cm

Bradley KERL
(b. 1986)

Night of the Hodag
2024

Oil on canvas
80 x 60 in | 203.2 x 152.4 cm





Portrait of Virginia L. Montgomery by Britt Moseley, 2026. Courtesy of the artist.

— Virginia L. MONTGOMERY

(b. 1986)

Virginia L. Montgomery is an American interdisciplinary artist whose practice spans video, sound, sculpture, installation, and drawing. Working between Austin and Houston, Texas, Montgomery creates immersive, sensorial environments that merge elements of mysticism, ecology, neuroscience, and personal mythology. Known for her richly symbolic visual language, she explores the boundaries between the physical and psychic worlds through narratives of transformation, perception, and rebirth. Her work often evokes dream states and altered modes of consciousness, inviting viewers into complex ecosystems of images, sounds, and forms that reflect both natural processes and inner psychological landscapes.

Montgomery received a BFA from the University of Texas at Austin and an MFA from Yale University. Alongside her studio practice, she maintains an international career as a graphic facilitator, visually mapping ideas and conversations at conferences and events around the world. This process of "mind map scribing" informs her artistic approach, which seeks to diagram the structures of thought, memory, and subconscious experience. Drawing from her own neurodivergent perspective, Montgomery creates works that challenge linear narratives and instead embrace associative thinking, interconnectedness, and sensory complexity.

Central to Montgomery's practice is an evolving symbolic vocabulary that includes moths, butterflies, moons, telescopes, spheres, holes, and cyclical forms. Her installations frequently combine sculpture, moving image, sound, and organic materials into immersive environments that emphasize metamorphosis and ecological interdependence. Material experimentation plays a vital role in her work, as does her practice of hand-raising the moths and butterflies that appear throughout her projects. Through recurring themes of destruction, regeneration, and transformation, Montgomery investigates how bodies and systems of knowledge continually reshape one another across time and space.

Montgomery's work has been exhibited internationally at institutions including the New Museum, New York; the SculptureCenter, New York; the Ballroom Marfa, Marfa; the Blaffer Art Museum, Houston; and the Moody Center for the Arts, Houston. Her public commissions and permanent installations include projects for Yale University's Wright Laboratory; the James Baldwin Library at MacDowell; and Times Square Arts in New York. Her work is included in the collections of the Blanton Museum of Art and Landmarks at the University of Texas at Austin.

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

In my art, I am interested in exploring connections between the microscopic and the cosmic. My work often moves between vastly different scales, from observing the movement of stars across the night sky to studying the simple, primordial forms of single-celled organisms such as protozoa.

These two areas of interest inform much of my work. My suspended mobile sculptures are inspired by astronomical movement, including the slow rotation of celestial bodies. In contrast, my hand-carved marble sculptures are inspired by the elegant organic shapes found in microscopic life forms. I love that these tiny organisms possess forms that feel simultaneously ancient, futuristic, and sculptural.

My interest in astronomical movement comes from time spent creating astrophotography and time-lapse recordings of the night sky. In 2024, I was invited to serve as an artist-in-residence at The University of Texas' McDonald Observatory in remote West Texas. Watching stars slowly trace arcs across the sky has profoundly influenced how I think about motion, time, and sculptural form.

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

Houston has had an enormous influence on my artistic perspective. It is a city where science and culture intersect in remarkable ways. As someone who was born and raised in Houston, institutions like NASA and the Texas Medical Center were part of the cultural landscape. I also have family members connected to both NASA and MD Anderson, so I was exposed from an early age to contemporary conversations about Houston and its role in science, research, and exploration.

Artistically, Houston's unique plethora of surrealist holdings, specifically artworks at The Menil Collection and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, modeled for me the joy of creative experimentation and interdisciplinary thinking. I never felt pressure to separate science from art, or research from imagination.

Houston helped shape the way I make art today. And so, many of my creative projects emerge from collaborations with scientists, astronomers, naturalists, and researchers. Houston taught me that art can be a space where different forms of knowledge come together in meaningful ways.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

For me, community is built through shared curiosity. Some of the most meaningful relationships in my career have developed through conversations with people who work outside of the art world, including astronomers, biologists, and educators.

I often approach my projects as opportunities for dialogue. Whether I am documenting star trails at an observatory, studying insects alongside researchers, or discussing public art with community members, these exchanges frequently become an important part of the creative process and inform my artwork's design.

Community, to me, is less about belonging to a single field and more about creating connections between different perspectives. Art has a unique ability to bring people together around a shared sense of wonder, especially via themes related to the microscopic and the cosmic.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

One question that continually fascinates me is why similar visual patterns appear throughout nature despite existing at radically different scales. Why is there an omnipresence of forms like circles, holes, and spheres?

When I observe the movement of stars across the night sky, I often find myself thinking about movement, rhythm, and cycles. When I study protozoa and other microscopic organisms, I am struck by the elegance and intelligence of their forms. I am interested in the possibility that similar underlying principles shape both the cosmic and microscopic realms.

I am also curious about how experiences of awe affect our perception. Can encountering something beautiful, mysterious, or unfamiliar encourage us to look more carefully at the world? Can art help us feel connected to systems and forms of life that are larger or smaller than ourselves?

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

The works in this exhibition reflect two ongoing areas of investigation within my practice: movement and form. The marble sculptures draw inspiration from ancient,



Portrait of Virginia L. Montgomery, 2026. Courtesy of the artist.



Portrait of Virginia L. Montgomery, 2026. Courtesy of the artist.

foundational, microscopic organisms such as protozoa. I am fascinated by these primordial life forms because their shapes feel both biologically specific and abstract. Through hand-carving stone, I explore how these delicate and often overlooked organisms can be transformed into permanent, monumental objects.

The suspended sculptures relate to my ongoing interest in astronomy and celestial movement. I often think about mobile sculptures as three-dimensional drawings in space. Their slow movement references the motion of planets, moons, stars, and other celestial bodies.

The visual language of the mobile sculptures is also informed by a series of collaborative "Exquisite Corpse" drawings that I created together with Yale's dark matter particle physicists while pursuing my MFA in Sculpture at Yale University. During these drawing exercises, each participant would contribute marks and forms without seeing the entire composition. I was fascinated by the unexpected visual relationships that emerged from this process. Many years later, I still draw inspiration from those collaborative experiments. The suspended lines, abstract forms, and interconnected structures within my mobile sculptures can be traced back to those early conversations between art, science, and collective imagination.

Although these bodies of work emerge from different sources, they share a common interest in exploring how natural systems generate beauty, complexity, and transformation.

What continues to motivate you to make work?

Curiosity moves me. Whether I am observing a luna moth emerging from a cocoon, photographing star trails in a remote landscape, or looking at magnified images of microscopic organisms, I am continually amazed by the creativity of the natural world.

Making art allows me to spend time with that sense of wonder. It gives me a way to investigate questions that do not necessarily have answers and to share those investigations with others.

I also enjoy the intellectual and sensorial processes of art-making. I love engaging the ancient process of carving stone by hand, and the contemporary agility needed to construct immersive multimedia video art installations. There

is something incredibly rewarding using one's own hands to transform an intellectual idea into a tangible, embodied experience.

What feels most urgent or exciting to you in your work right now?

I am increasingly interested in how art can draw attention to forms of life, systems, and movements that often go unnoticed, from microscopic organisms to celestial events unfolding above us every night.

At a time when many people feel disconnected from nature, I hope my work can offer moments of reconnection and wonder. Whether through a hand-carved marble sculpture inspired by protozoa or a mobile sculpture inspired by surrealist collaborations and celestial movement, I am interested in creating experiences that remind us that we are part of a much larger and more interconnected universe.

I am also excited by the possibility of continuing to collaborate with scientists, researchers, and other curious minds. Some of the most meaningful projects in my career have emerged from those interdisciplinary exchanges, and I look forward to seeing where those conversations lead next.



Virginia L. MONTGOMERY
(b. 1986)

Eye Sees Eye
2026

4K Digital Video, Silent, 40 seconds
MP4 file on a USB drive in a small wooden box
Edition of 5 + 2 AP



Virginia L. MONTGOMERY
(b. 1986)

Marble Amoebas in Motion: Petite
2026

Hand-carved marble with 8 x 8 in steel base
Unique piece
8 x 8 x 22 in | 20.3 x 20.3 x 55.9 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





Virginia L. MONTGOMERY
(b. 1986)

Marble Amoebas in Motion: Allonge
2026

Hand-carved marble with 8 x 8 in steel base
Unique piece
8 x 8 x 30 in | 20.3 x 20.3 x 76.2 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio

Virginia L. MONTGOMERY
(b. 1986)

Marble Amoebas in Motion: Entwine
2026

Hand-carved marble with 8 x 8 in steel base
Unique piece
8 x 8 x 27.5 in | 20.3 x 20.3 x 69.9 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





Virginia L. MONTGOMERY
(b. 1986)

Marble Amoebas in Motion: Arc
2026

Hand-carved marble with steel base
Unique piece
8 x 8 x 31.5 in | 20.3 x 20.3 x 80 cm

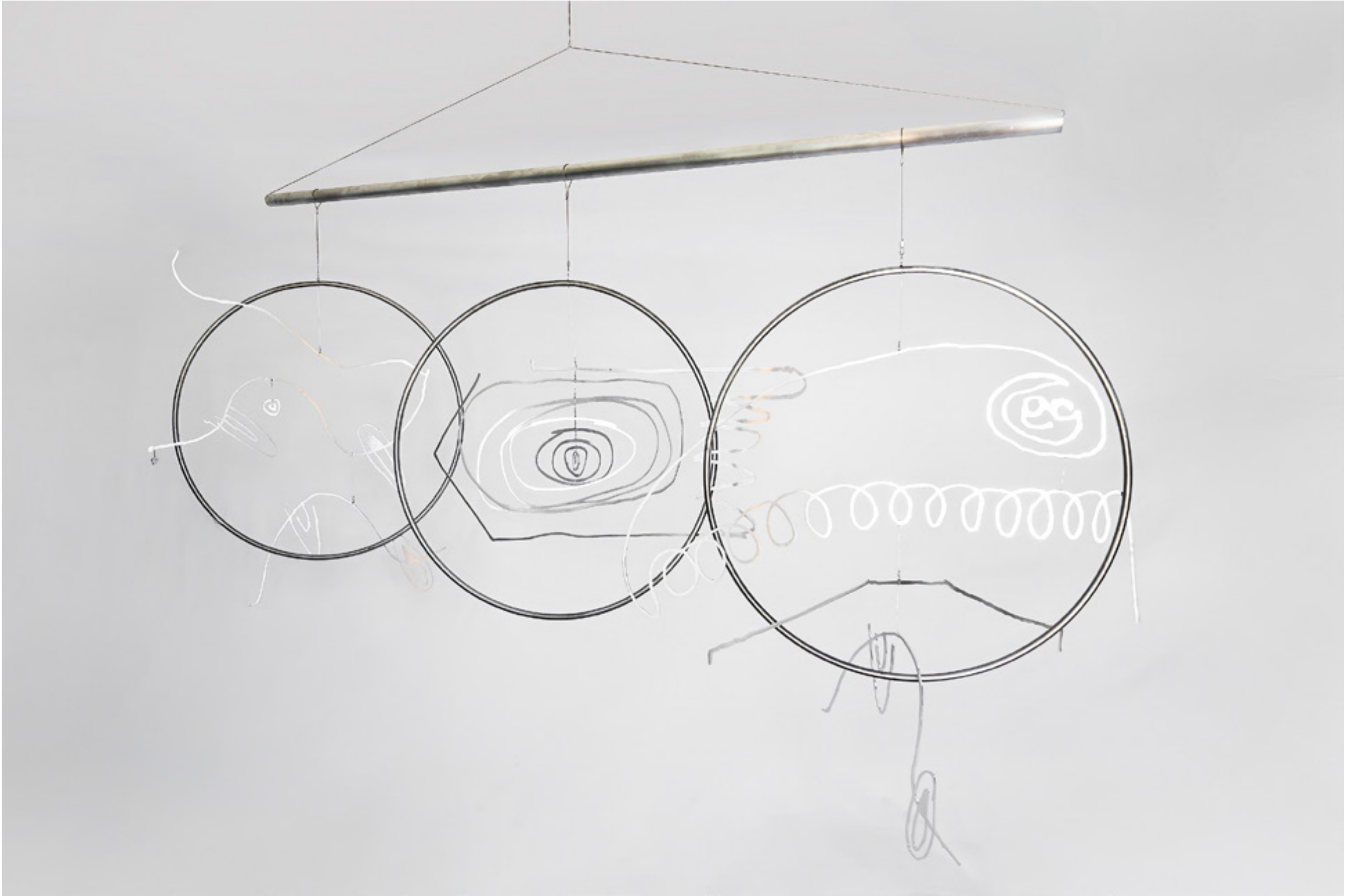
PROVENANCE
Artist's studio

Virginia L. MONTGOMERY
(b. 1986)

Memory Mobile in Metal
2026

Laser-cut aluminum, fabricated steel, aluminum tubing
Approx. 78 x 36 x 60 in | 198.1 x 91.4 x 152.4 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





— Reynier LEYVA NOVO

(b. 1983)

Reynier Leyva Novo is a conceptual artist whose multidisciplinary practice examines the mechanisms of power, memory, ideology, and historical representation. Working across sculpture, installation, photography, video, data visualization, and digital media, Novo transforms historical records, political documents, and archival materials into visually rigorous works that reveal the hidden structures underlying collective narratives. Widely recognized as one of the leading voices in contemporary Cuban art, he combines conceptual precision with poetic restraint to investigate the ways history is remembered and contested.

Educated at the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts and later at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana, Novo emerged within a generation of Cuban artists deeply engaged with questions of political authority and social change. His work often draws upon anthropological and historical research, using data, and state documents as raw material. Following his departure from Cuba in 2021, he relocated to Houston, Texas, where themes of migration, exile, and displacement have become increasingly significant within his practice.

Novo is best known for projects that translate historical information into minimalist visual forms. In his acclaimed series *The Weight of History* (2014–15), he developed software to calculate the physical mass of ink used to print foundational ideological texts from twentieth-century totalitarian regimes, transforming political doctrine into sculptural objects. Other major bodies of work, including *Revolution is an Abstraction*, *Changing Memories*, *Methuselah*, and *Former Present Today*, employ subtraction, replication, and digital technologies to interrogate monuments, propaganda, censorship, migration, and collective memory. Through these methods, Novo exposes the fragility of political narratives while revealing the enduring influence of historical power structures.

Novo has exhibited internationally in major biennials and museums, including El Museo del Barrio; Pérez Art Museum Miami; and the Blaffer Art Museum. His work is held in public collections such as the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; the Walker Art Center; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Pérez Art Museum Miami; the Art Gallery of Ontario; and KADIST; among others.

— INTERVIEW

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

I think about death much more than I used to. Not because I'm pessimistic. Quite the opposite. The more I work, the more I realize that history, memory, archives, and art are all technologies that societies have invented to negotiate with death. My practice knew it long before I did.

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

Houston changed my work because it changed my life. I used to think of Houston as a destination. Now I think of it as a crossing. North meets the South. Texas meets Latin America. Scale meets intimacy. Changing the way I lived eventually changed the way I worked.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

Community has become one of the ways I understand belonging. We all need to feel connected to the ground we stand on—not only physically, but emotionally and politically. Art is one of the ways we make that sense of belonging visible. Maybe community is simply the plural form of individuality.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

People often think my work is about many different things. History. Memory. Images. Power. Value. I don't really think of them as different subjects. I'm interested in the lifespan of ideas. Those are different entrances to the same question.

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

The works in this exhibition belong to two larger bodies of work I've been developing over the past two years: *Global Active Dust Collection* and *Invisible Houston*, from the *Blind Paintings* series. Rather than isolated works, I think of them as part of larger, evolving bodies of work. They continue to grow, connect, and occasionally open entirely new paths. The works presented here are just a few moments from that ongoing process.

What continues to motivate you to make work?

My children. They're expensive. It's a very practical motivation.

What feels most urgent or exciting to you in your work right now?

I'm excited by unlikely connections. Museums, churches, government archives, historians, scientists, neighborhoods... I like creating situations where people and institutions that would probably never meet end up working together. Sometimes I think those new social bodies are the artwork.





Reynier LEYVA NOVO
(b. 1983)

Blind Painting #04

From the *Mnemosyne's Whisper* series
2023

Acrylic paint and graphite on canvas,
infrared photograph printed on EPSON
Cold Press acid free paper, 340 gsm
25.8 x 38.3 in | 65.4 x 97.2 cm



Reynier LEYVA NOVO

(b. 1983)

Blind Painting #10

From the *Mnemosyne's Whisper* series

2023

Acrylic paint and graphite on canvas, infrared photograph printed
on EPSON Cold Press acid free paper, 340 gsm

74.3 x 61.8 in | 189.2 x 156.8 cm





Reynier LEYVA NOVO

(b. 1983)

Alyosha Monument

2023

Concrete, digital print on translucent paper

Sculpture: 14 x 9 x 9.3 in | 35.6 x 22.9 x 23.5 cm

Print: 36 x 24 in | 91.4 x 61 cm

Base: 34 x 24 x 24 in | 86.4 x 61 x 61 cm

Reynier LEYVA NOVO

(b. 1983)

False Calm (House Sparrow and Cardinal)

2026

Charred wooden domestic object, life-size 3D-printed house
sparrow and cardinal

74.3 x 16 x 9.8 in | 189 x 40.5 x 24 cm



Reynier LEYVA NOVO
(b. 1983)

Sacred Dust (Antioch Missionary Baptist Church)
From the *Global Active Dust Collection* series
2026

Dust on adhesive paper, framed
34.3 x 45.7 in | 87.1 x 116.1 cm



Reynier LEYVA NOVO
(b. 1983)

Astrodome

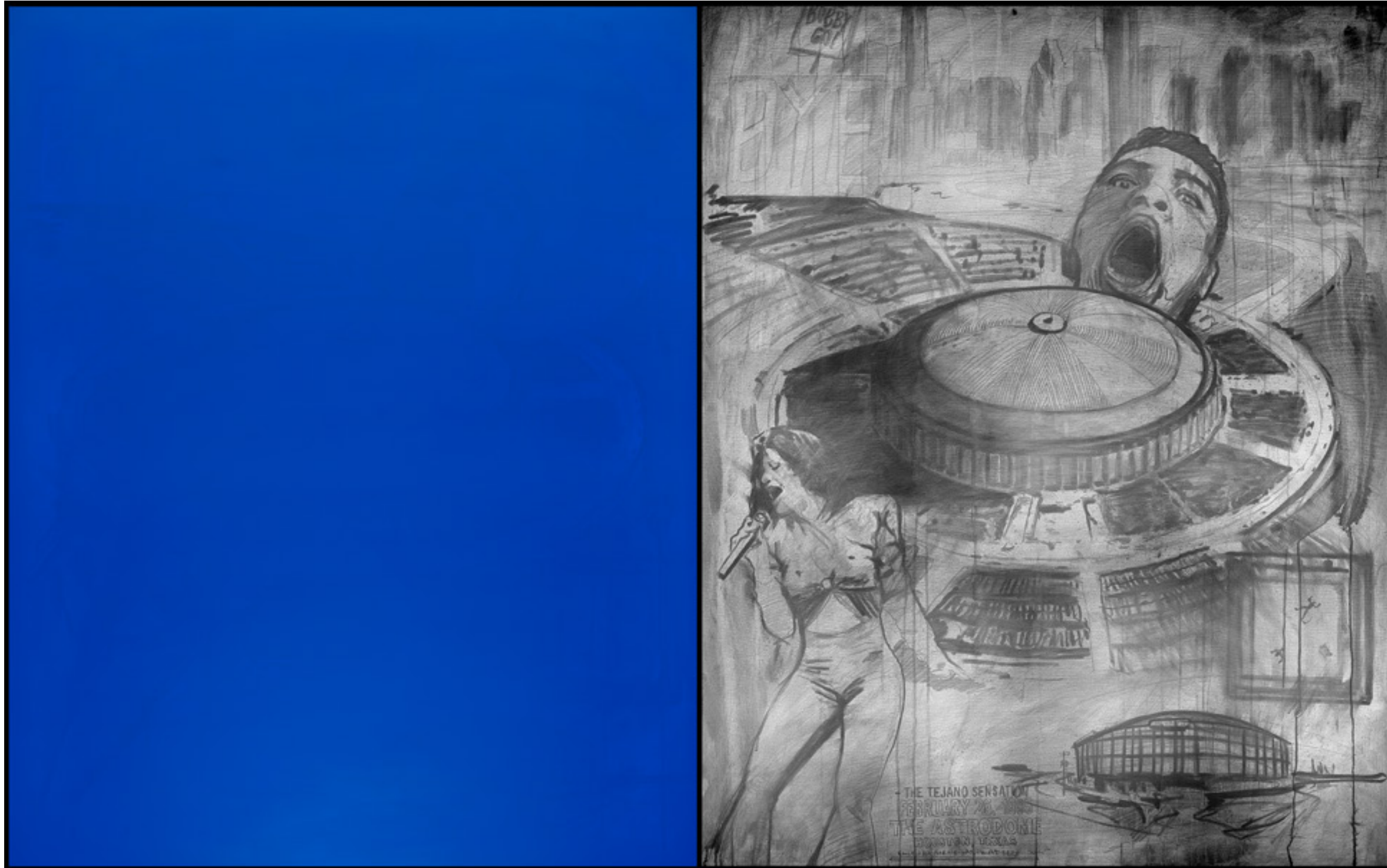
From the *Blind Paintings* series
2026

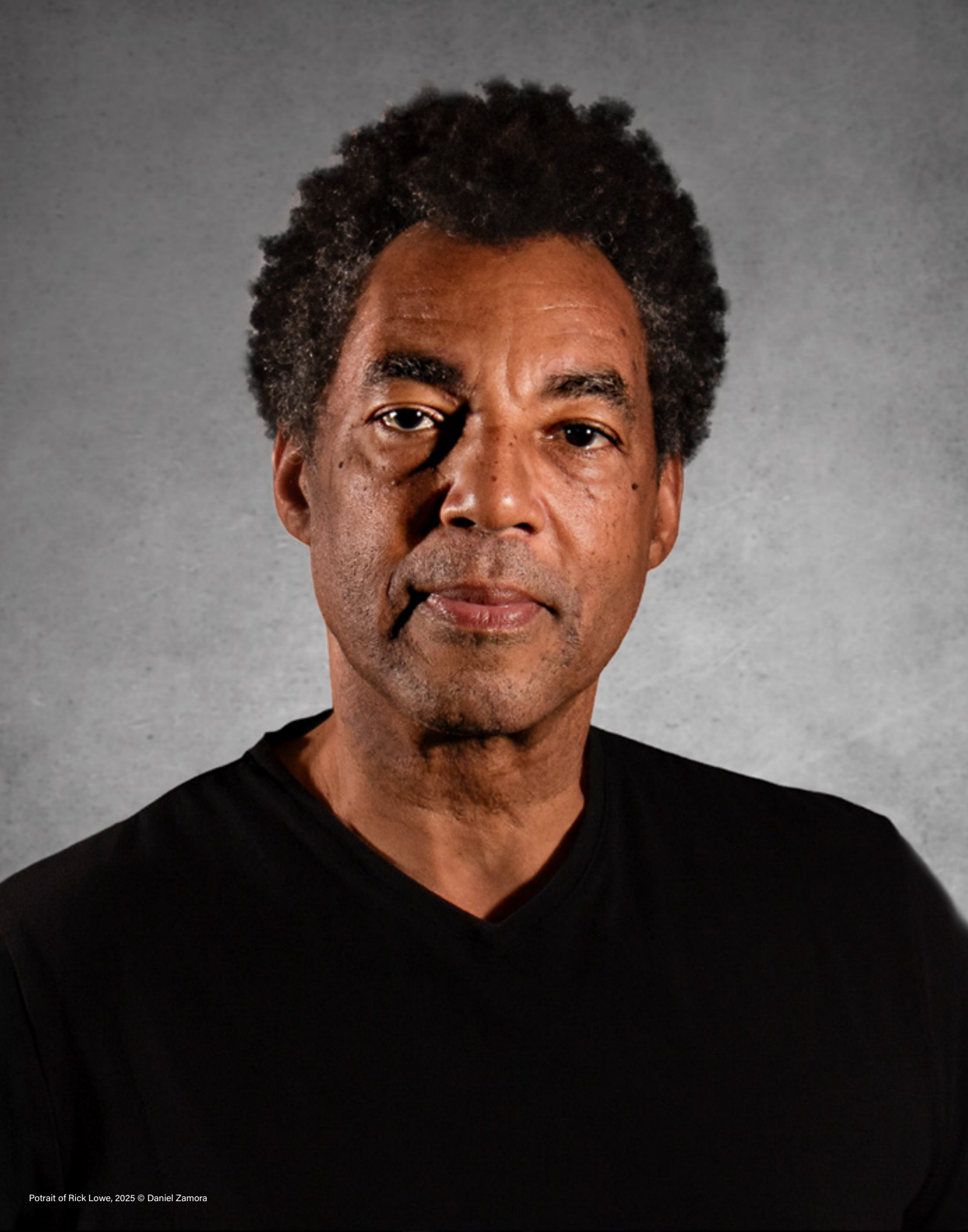
Left panel: acrylic and charcoal on canvas

Right panel: infrared photograph printed
on 320 gsm Hot Press paper, mounted
on Dibond

Both panels framed

97.1 x 60.7 in | 246.4 x 152.4 cm





— Rick LOWE

(b. 1961)

Rick Lowe is an American artist whose pioneering practice has redefined the relationship between art, community engagement, and social transformation. Based in Houston, Texas, Lowe is internationally recognized for developing socially engaged projects that operate both within and beyond traditional art-world contexts. Trained as a painter, he has spent more than three decades expanding the definition of artistic practice through collaborative initiatives that address issues of housing, education, economic opportunity, and cultural preservation.

A pivotal figure in contemporary social practice, Lowe co-founded Project Row Houses in Houston's Third Ward in 1993. Established in a historically significant African American neighborhood, the project transformed a cluster of shotgun houses into a vibrant arts and cultural community, becoming one of the most influential models for socially engaged art internationally. Since then, Lowe has developed numerous community-based initiatives, including the *Watts House Project* in Los Angeles, *Victoria Square Project* in Athens, Greece, in Anyang, South Korea, and *Trans.lation: Vickery Meadow* in Dallas. Throughout his career, he has sought to create frameworks that foster dialogue, empowerment, and long-term social investment through creative collaboration.

Lowe has also maintained an active studio practice. His paintings often draw inspiration from maps, urban planning systems, game structures, and patterns of social interaction, translating complex networks into layered abstract compositions. These works reflect many of the same concerns that animate his community projects, including movement, connectivity, improvisation, and collective agency. Across mediums, Lowe investigates how individuals and communities navigate systems of exchange and power, emphasizing participation as an essential artistic tool.

Lowe's work has been presented at institutions such as the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Phoenix Art Museum; the Nasher Sculpture Center; and Cittadellarte in Italy, among others. Lowe was a recipient of the 2014 MacArthur Fellowship, and in 2013, President Barack Obama appointed him to the National Council on the Arts, recognizing his profound impact on contemporary culture and civic life. His work is held in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; the National Gallery of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Menil Collection; the Brooklyn Museum; and the Tate Modern, among other public and private collections.



Rick LOWE
(b. 1961)

Fire #3
2021

Acrylic and paper collage on canvas
48 x 36 x 2.5 in | 121.9 x 91.4 x 6.4 cm



Rick LOWE
(b. 1961)

The Harbor Fragment Series: Fragment 8
2025

Acrylic and paper collage on canvas
50.6 x 50.6 x 3.5 in | 128.5 x 128.5 x 8.9 cm





Portrait of Lovie Olivia © Azia Ellis-Singleton

— Lovie OLIVIA

(b. 1975)

Lovie Olivia is a Houston-based transdisciplinary artist whose practice spans collage, painting, sculpture, installation, and comestibles. Drawing from histories of material culture, archival practices, and social systems, Olivia investigates the intersections of memory, identity, and cultural resilience. Her work centers Black, Womanist, and Queer narratives, creating layered works that examine how personal and collective histories are preserved, concealed, and reimagined.

Olivia's multidisciplinary practice is informed by an ongoing interest in creative sustainability while challenging conventional ideas about value, waste, and artistic production. She is recognized for her distinctive collages, constructed from consciously sourced, previously used manila folders bearing traces of personal, private, and medical information. By repurposing these discarded materials, Olivia explores ideas of visibility and vulnerability while transforming everyday remnants into poetic records of lived experience. Across media, her work reflects an engagement with cultural resistance and the ways archives shape our understanding of history and identity.

Alongside her collage practice, Olivia creates paintings inspired by the tradition of fresco, using earth-based materials such as natural pigments, plaster, marble dust, and gypsum to build richly textured, wall-like surfaces. These layered compositions evoke both architectural memory and historical excavation, serving as sites where fragmented narratives emerge through material process. Whether working in painting, sculpture, installation, or edible forms, Olivia emphasizes the physical and symbolic potential of materials to hold memory and foster connection.

Olivia has exhibited at institutions including the Frist Art Museum; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; The Phillips Collection; Project Row Houses; and Artpace San Antonio. Her work is held in public and private collections, including the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and The University of Texas at Austin's Art Galleries at Black Studies. She is the recipient of honors including the Artadia Award and the Radicle Residency & Fellowship (RadLow 3.0), and has completed residencies at Project Row Houses, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston x Freedmen's Town Conservancy, ACRE, and Galveston Artist Residency.

How would you describe the central concerns of your practice at this moment in your career?

Time and attention. Currently, I am interested in challenging my practices — pushing beyond the boundaries of my mediums to make more work that evokes curiosity, beauty and engagement that simultaneously informs and celebrates. Furthermore, I'm interested in creating an effortless connection between my multiple modalities. For the collage works this looks like scaling up, giving more surface attention to the "manila folders" before cutting away, incorporating more texture and draughtsmanship — bringing the subjects and stories into an au courant discussion that centers pleasure and joy. For my painting practice — more excavation and surface play, scaled-up compositions and time to nurse the details that give my paintings their luster, vibrance and monumental presence. All of this takes more time and resources. Thankfully this year, I have been awarded two national grants, moved my studio back home and built trusting relationships with galleries that I am currently working with. Taking TIME is what I will spend the remainder of 2026 doing — slowing down and taking advantage of the resources awarded to me.

How has living and working in Houston shaped your perspective as an artist?

Houston, and more generally the Gulf Coast region, informs much of my work. Being a Houston native with paternal roots in Louisiana, the Gulf has been my playground. I'm guided by the pulse of the city, the historical neighborhoods made up of diverse communities, the cuisines — important to my practice as well and the flourishing creative communities that I have been a part of for 30 years. Houston is the archive that I am constantly probing for personal and creative expression.

What does community mean to you within an artistic context?

Community to me is coexisting, cross-cultural sustainability where we believe in the creative ethos that leads the collective; encouraging tenable safety, mutual respect, cultural exchange, and fruitful dialogue that leads to change.

What questions are you currently exploring through your work?

Black – Southern – Queer – Woman – Memory – History – Culture – Jubilee – Wonder

How does the work presented in this exhibition relate to your broader practice?

The work that I am showing for this exhibition is larger yet fragmented into multiple frames to form one cohesive image. The idea of making larger paper-based work that varies in scale and arrangement is a present interest of mine.

What continues to motivate you to make work?

My work at its core is autobiographical. It asks questions of me and offers answers to me during and long after the process. The evolution from concept to completion is addictive and inspiring and allows me as an artist to be constantly available to growth and change. I make because I'm addicted to everything that art-making has offered me.

What feels most urgent or exciting to you in your work right now?

Studio time.



Lovie Olivia in her studio, Houston, August 2026 © Arturo Olmos

Lovie OLIVIA

(b. 1975)

Still Can't Be Washed Away

2026

Marble plaster, gypsum, acrylic, squid ink,
wax on gypsum panel with artist frame

48 x 101 in | 121.9 x 256.5 cm



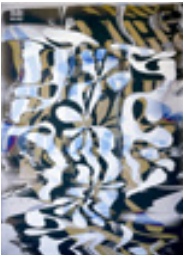
Lovie OLIVIA
(b. 1975)

Not Even with That Florida Water
2026

Paper folders, collage, vellum, pencil, ink,
and other mixed media
16 x 60 in | 40.6 x 152.4 cm



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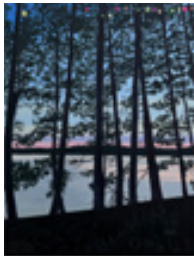
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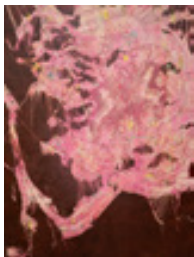
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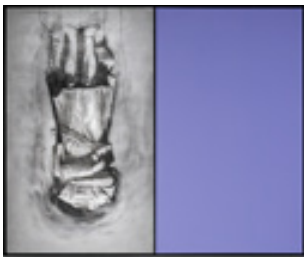
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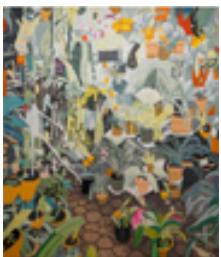
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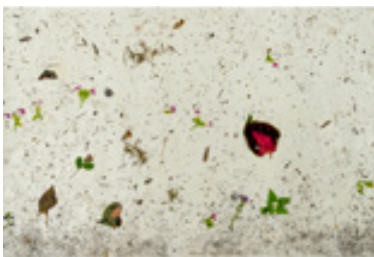
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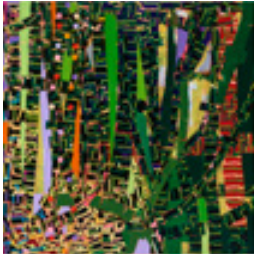
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CURATOR
Gregory Lahmi
Kara Przybyl Mclver
Andi Valentine

AUTHORS
Louise Bassou
Gregory Lahmi
Kara Przybyl Mclver

COORDINATION
Anne Pampin

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Willie Kaminski

RESEARCH
Louise Bassou
Valentina Facchinetti
Eve Grinstead
Anne Pampin
Andi Valentine

PROOFREADING
Valentina Facchinetti
Eve Grinstead
Anne Pampin
Andi Valentine

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OPERA GALLERY

4444 Westheimer Rd, Suite A115, Houston, TX 77027, USA
houston@operagallery.com
T +1 713 489 0932
operagallery.com

OPERA GALLERY