

**THE CENTER
CANNOT
HOLD**

02.12.20

-

03.07.20

Equity Gallery



Kristen Schiele, Kites

The Center Cannot Hold

February 12th — March 7th, 2020

Equity Gallery

245 Broome St., New York, NY 10002

www.nyartistsequity.org

Facilitated by: Eric Sutphin

Curated by:

Lexi Axon, Guy de Baere, María Durán Sampedro, Hayley Ferber, Mija Jung, Kelly Olshan

Artists:

Lexi Axon, Guy de Baere, Chellis Baird, Mark Bouthilette, Ellen Hackl Fagan, Erin Gleason, Andrew Hockenberry, Markus Holtby, Mija Jung, Kelly Olshan, Claudia Renfro, Vincent Romaniello, Terry Rosenberg, María Durán Sampedro, Kristen Schiele, Linda Streicher, Deborah Winiarski

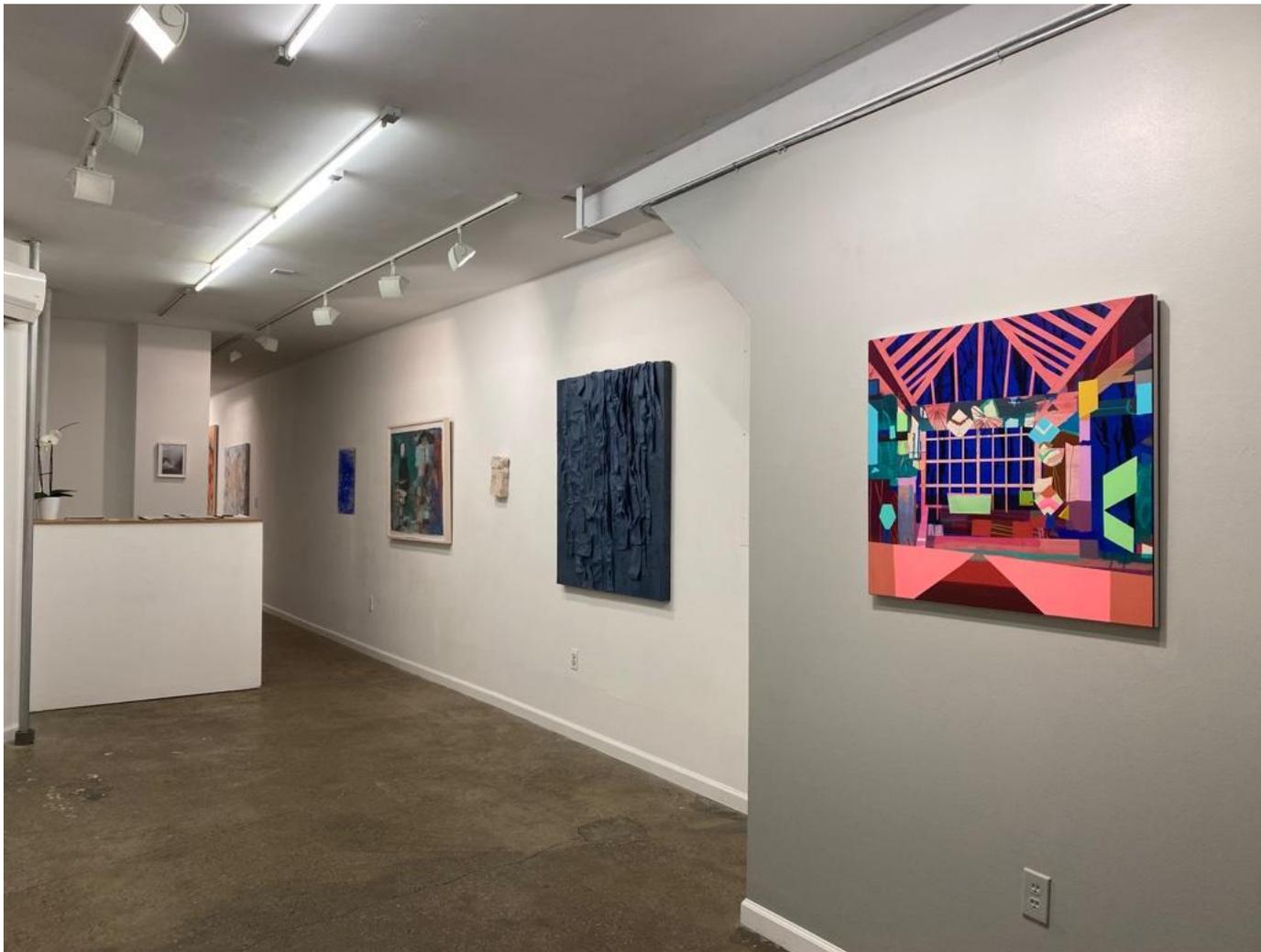
The show is the product of the Equity Gallery Curatorial Workshop Series, a members-only exhibition development program hosted, supported, and sponsored by the New York Artists Equity Association.

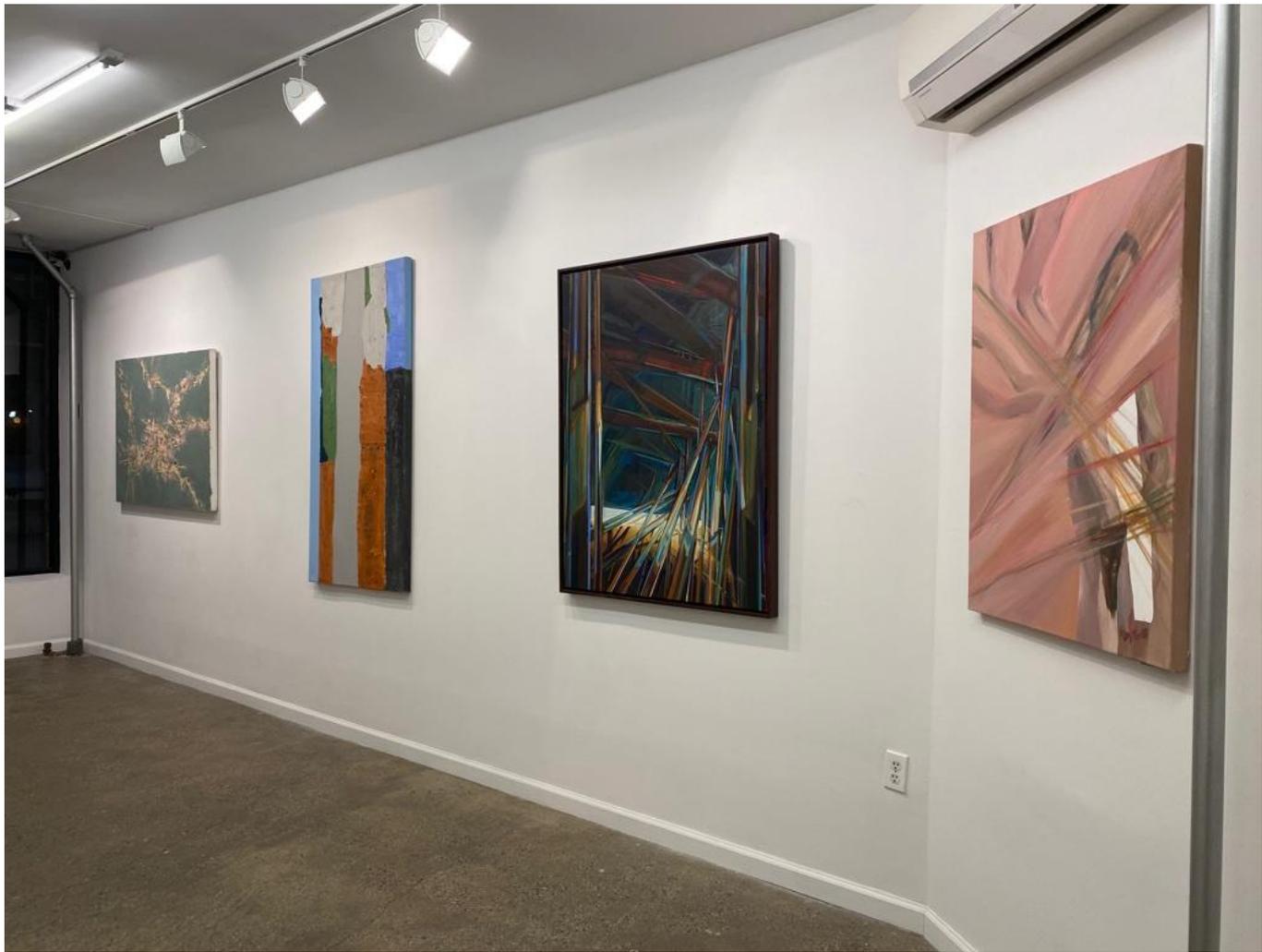
*A special thank you to Michael Gormley, Director, and Gina Mischianti, Associate Manager of Equity Gallery.

The Center Cannot Hold is a collaborative project comprising 6 curators and featuring the work of 17 emerging and established artists working in drawing, painting, photography, and mixed media. Fields of diffuse color and stains appear as proxies for escape or reprieve while geometric abstraction signals a sense of order and structure. These formal strategies trigger associations to the urban landscape as a site fraught with contradictory forces; no blueprints, no site inspections.

The artists in this exhibition depart from the laws of spatial logic, creating works that upend physical and metaphysical conventions. Using diaphanous layers to construct impossible spaces, investigating spatial relationships, the artists make the intangible habitable. The Center Cannot Hold is a meditation on the perpetual sense of expansion and contraction that comprises urban experience.

The pressure of city living, the cacophony and discordant textures that comprise our day-to-day are brought into relation with one another to reflect the richness and tensions present in this environment. Expanses of negative space, nebulous forms and dream-like sequences carry one to another place, beyond the steely confines of the metropolis. As we yearn for spaces of respite, for moments of quiet contemplation, these works allude to the dichotomies between atmosphere and structure: the artists here give form to inner abstractness.





Lexi Axon

I make art because I crave the sensation of surprise. The act of looking and being in motion in crowds stirs something uncensored in the brain. Everything is teeming, burning, under construction. Power and light mesmerizes amid apocalyptic change. I experience distraction, and yet the human mind can summon immense optimism and strength. Using primitive striates and pigments, something restless an unmediated forms, and creates a poetic surface, a body, a symbol, a question, and maybe Thelonius Monk.



LB Missile Danger Con
Hole, Fires, Shelter,
Shadows (2019)
96" x 32" x 15"
Installation, Oil On Can
And Hydrocal
\$1,700



Guy J. de Baere

I strive to express my perceptions of physical structures and environments, internal and external from my imagination. Life, travel and working in New York City for over a half century, I prioritize consistent painting, now going on 15 years, and as always discovering and learning.

I currently apply acrylics, pigments, graphite, pumice, bedrock extracted materials such as marble, slate, Limestone to canvas, thus creating elements of different color and texture which I collage on to more canvas, wood or Masonite.

Opera (2019)
60" x 30"
Canvas, Pigment,
Graphite
\$800



Chellis Baird

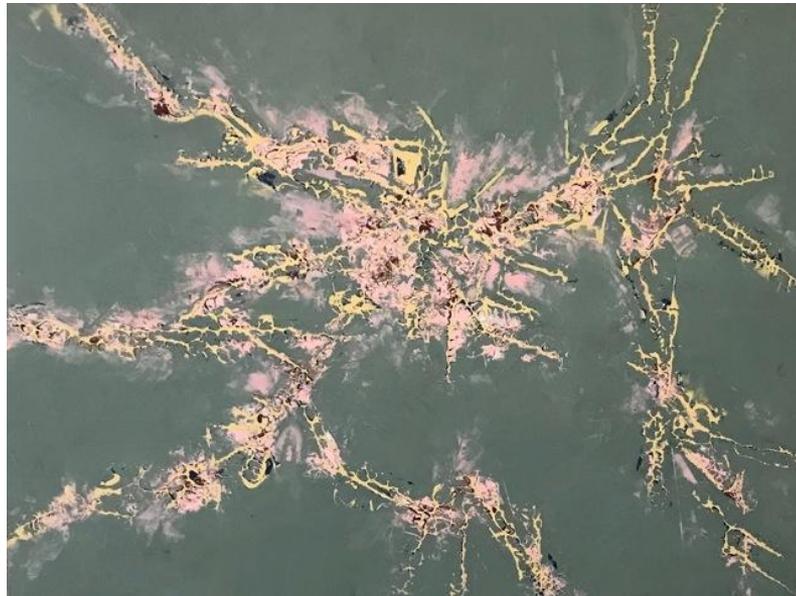
Color is a constant source of inspiration for mixed media artist Chellis Baird. The color looming in Baird's vision acts as a catalyst for each handwoven canvas that is a response to experience. Her work blends elements of both sculpture and painting by using painted materials that become the canvas. The twisted, knotted, pressed and stuffed ropes highlight the tension between the brush stroke and the manufactured surface, at times violating the canvas and bubbling over the two-dimensional surface. The woven structure is her base to launch tangled compositions and emotional explorations of color and form.

Chellis Baird
Wave (2019)
40" x 26" x 12"
Pigmented wax, fabric,
wire, wood, and plaster
\$3,000



Mark Bouthiette

William Blake wrote, “to see the world in a grain of sand, heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand, eternity in an hour”. My work explores the similarities between these inner and outer worlds. As early as 3000 B.C.E. the Indus valley dwellers were exploring the idea of Brahmaidya or the “supreme science”, trying to plot the definitive aspects of thought. What they found is that there’s a web of experience that is in constant flux. Tantric Art was born from this practice. I think of my paintings as tangible relics of that ever-changing experience. By working quickly in wet paint, I take a moment in time and create a snapshot or fossil of that moment. The reductive process of sanding is similar to a common Buddhist meditation on the decomposition of the physical self. Between the two worlds, I explore the similarity between lightning bolts and synapses, rivers and arteries, body heat and topography, vines and veins, and between bones and branches.



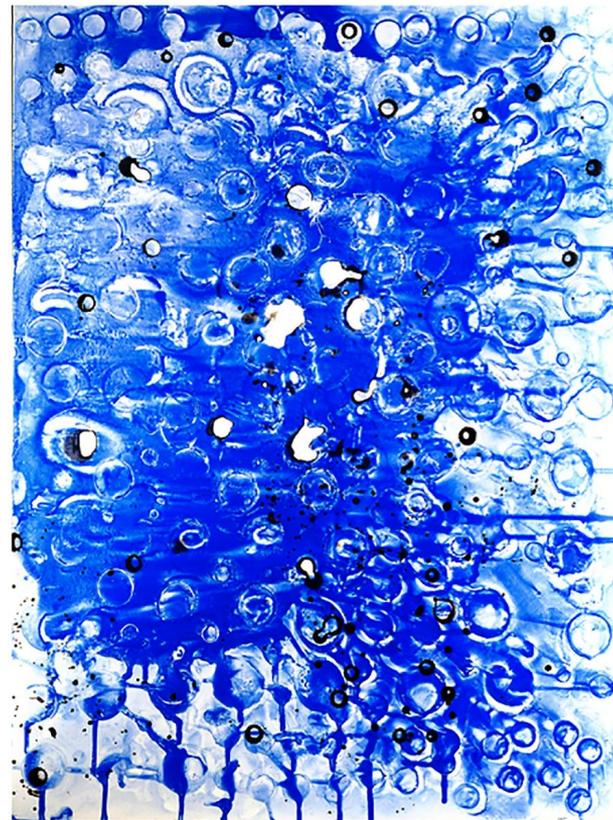
Neurons (2017)
36" x48"
Mixed media
\$3,500

Ellen Hackl Fagan

Ellen Hackl Fagan is on a quest to make sound visible. Working with saturated colors when painting sensitized her to color's communicative nature. Building connections between color and sound through abstract paintings, photography and interactive digital technologies, she seeks to create a synaesthetic language that pairs color to sound. She is developing The Reverse Color Organ and the ColorSoundGrammar Game, two interactive projects that enable viewers to explore the aural potential of color.

Her process walks the balance between randomness and intention, like jazz music, revealing limitless possibilities for improvisation. Fagan exhibits her artwork throughout the greater New York metropolitan area and northeast, and maintains her studio and curatorial practice in Harlem.

Ellen Hackl Fagan
Bottled (2004)
24" x 18"
Acrylic flow improver
NFS

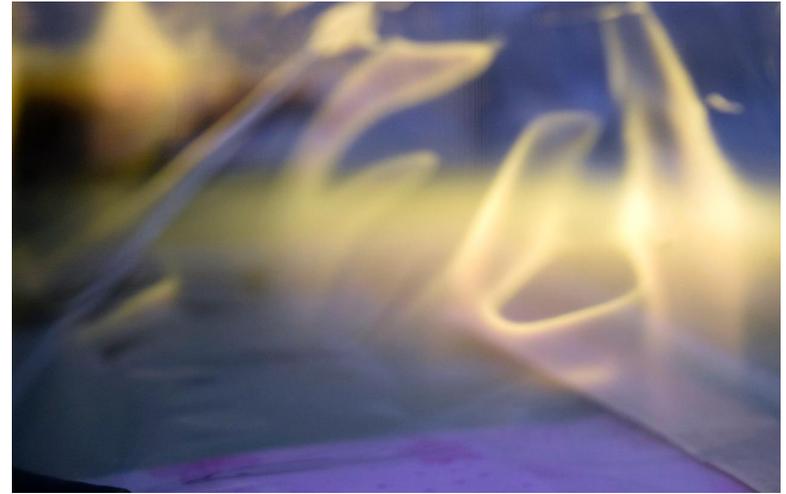


Erin Gleason

As part of The Center Cannot Hold exhibition at Equity Gallery, I am honored to show two pieces from my Homemade Landscape series: For the 18th century philosopher Immanuel Kant, the feeling of the sublime arose from overcoming the fear of one's inability to grasp the magnitude of nature. The Homemade Landscape series offers a more feminine take on the sublime: the feeling of awe that arises when one pauses in the immeasurableness of the intimate. Inspired by the writings of Virginia Woolf, the scenes are of ordinary moments and objects I encounter in the everyday, their macro scale evoking the feeling of the sublime as a time-out-of-time experience. Further distorting our emotional relationship between perceptions of scale and landscape, the artworks are posted on Instagram (@HomemadeLandscape) and geo-tagged as an "other sublime" location, treating the social media platform as both art medium and subject matter.

www.eringleason.com

Homemade Landscape
No. 102: Eisriesenwelt
(Styrofoam, Curtain,
Garbage Bag) (2020)
9" x 11.5"
Chromogenic Print on
Kodak Endura Metallic
(Edition of 5)
\$1,400



Homemade Landscape
No. 131: Lyngenfjord
(Plastic, Sanitary Napkin,
Acrylic Box, Water Bottle,
Air Mattress Cover)(2020)
60" x 40"
UV Print on Cotton Rag
(Edition of 3)
\$3,200

Andrew Hockenberry

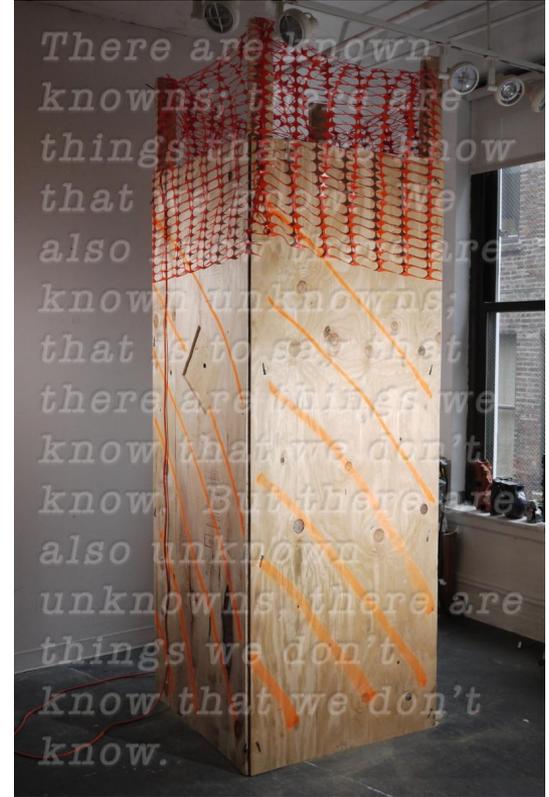
I define my style as subconscious abstract, painting without consideration of the end result. I do not believe in mistakes or editing the way I have manipulated the surface. Using music as a rhythm and flow to my paintings, I make each piece balanced while experimenting with alternative applications and materials. It's as simple as paint on surface, surface being anything to hold paint, paint being anything to make an impression on surface.



Untitled (2019)
36"x48"
Oil paint and rustoleum on
canvas
\$2,500

Marcus Holtby

As an artist Markus works in various mediums including sculpture, installation, photography and performance. His work is driven by a critical reflection of man-made systems and environments and their resultant relationship with humanity. Markus' artistic practice is part of his recorded history. However, rather than being only personal images and ideas they are products of communal, and mostly urban, memory and experience. In reflecting on the social, political, and cultural morality in his work Markus asks of himself and his audience: where and how do we fit within the places we have built up around ourselves, and what does it mean to leave our mark on the earth? The resulting work is both fresh and sentimental.

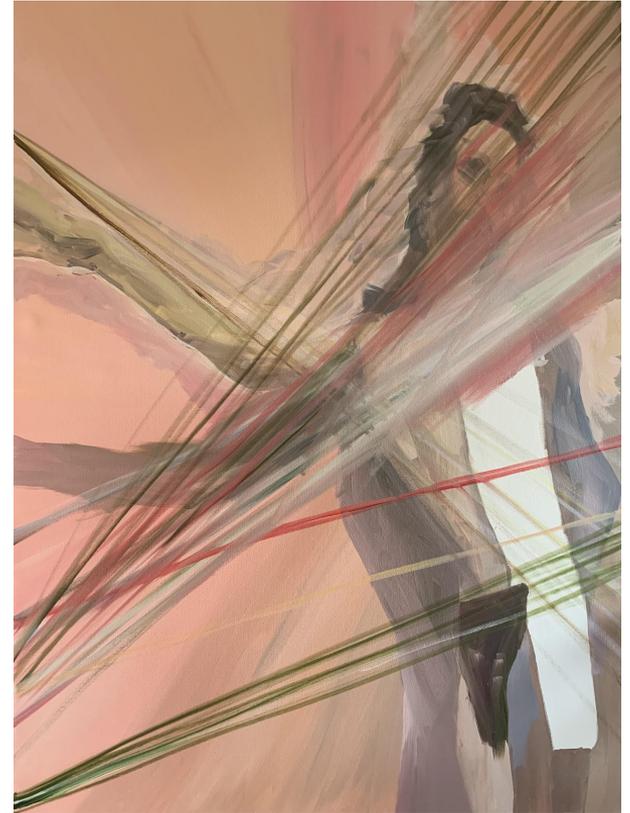


Known knowns and plywood box
(2019)
19" x 22 "
Photocollage
\$650

Mija Jung

I make portrait paintings about gender struggles and femininity. Searching for my identity places me in an awkward situation. My figures express a heroic and climatic response. They stand alone, statuesque. I reimagine and restage them in their environment. I love to interview people and ask their life stories relating to their historical and social backgrounds. I also make videos that deal with gender in a similar way to my paintings. I learn about my subjects by communicating with them. I realize myself through their experiences. Their life influences my future. My eastern patriarchal culture, and growing up under a dictatorship, was something I was trying to get away from. I still feel trapped in these western cities. Artificial Urban spaces makes me feel lost, so I paint people in a way that is not masculine or feminine. I chose queer people because they help me grasp my gender identity. Some of them are professional performers on the stage. I empathize with them. Fluidity in oil paint results in creating fully expressive figures. I master brush strokes and colors. I expect the viewer to better their own reflection.

www.mijajung.com



Mija Jung
Darling (2019)
30" x 40"
Oil on canvas
\$5,000

Kelly Olshan

Olshan's sculptural paintings invite the viewer to navigate towards an unattainable place. Her work utilizes a distinct visual vocabulary to depict the byproducts of ambition: namely, architectural references such as staircases, the color blue, and recycled art materials such as paint scraps. Drawing upon architecture's symbolic connotations, her work utilizes abstract staircases in particular to orient the viewer spatially. Abstracted, incongruous staircases orient and disorient the 2D and 3D planes, defying the possibilities of a physical climb. Yet they invite climbing anyway, directing the viewer skywards towards an elusive place. Reminiscent of skyscapes, waterscapes, and the horizon at a distance, art historian Rebecca Solnit wrote that "blue is the color of longing for the distances you never arrive in." Just as the bluespace ceases to be blue upon arrival, to perpetually pursue is to immediately replace one goal with another upon its accomplishment. As part of her practice, Olshan also collects and repurposes leftover materials from the art-making process. This "artistic waste" serves as artifacts of the creative process, telling the visual story of the artists' pursuit. This practice of repurposing elements from previous paints is a trend in her work—a way of conceiving every hypothetical landscape she creates as one self-referential work. Together, these linked objects create an interconnected, self-reflexive world, alluding to the aspirations and anxiety associated with navigating a nonsensical world.



Staircase in Blue (2015)
Sculpture: 21" x 10" x 12"
Pedestal: 37" x 17.5" x 15.5"
Oil, recycled paint scraps,
mixed media on 3D panel
\$2,500

Claudia Renfro

My work embodies total creative freedom. Art-making means permission to be, without judgment or societal conventions- to laugh at life, the good, the messy, the ugly. I sum up the working process as being out of the closet. If there are rules in art, they are meant to be broken. I work intuitively; there is no plan. The unconscious unfolds and dictates. The images are like a bizarre dream, a carnival pulled from memory and my perverse sense of humor. Detritus is my source both materially and conceptually. Duct tape, hair balls, bits of string and cardboard, gum wrappers, cartoon characters, create a domino effect of chaos and freedom.



Emerald City (2019)
37" x 47"
Mixed media
\$3,000

Vincent Romaniello

The two main things I'm concerned with are magic and mechanics. The magic has to do with working to discover the unknown, the unexpected. Experimentation and observation of the world around me, both in the macro and micro, guide me towards the next project. Mechanics involve the planning and production of individual pieces which often entails new materials and working methods. Political issues have been a recurring theme in my work over the last 10 years including: consumer waste, police corruption, unemployment, discrimination and drone use.

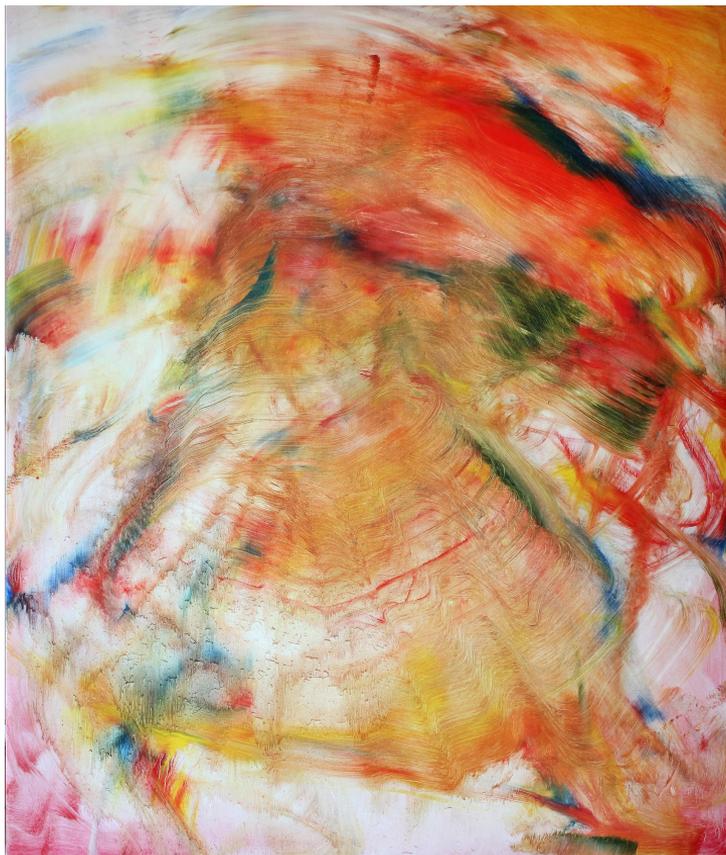


blue poles (2018)
68" x 58"
inches collage and paint
\$4,000

Terry Rosenberg

I explore ideas of being and existence within complex and constantly changing perspectives. I do it by directly engaging with people invested in movement and what they communicate through their body. By immediate response I render sequences of time, space and human characteristics embedded with emotion and energy into painting.

Cavi
64" x 54"
Oil on linen
\$12,000



Maria Duran Sampedro

When words surrounding violence and abuse are heard, it is easy to get caught up in the graphic and salacious aspects of these incidents, remaining fixated on the actions while forgetting about the survivors and what they endure. Compassion, however, is not lost in people if given the opportunity to hear and discuss. Strength and resilience can be acknowledged in survivors, and innocence can be reclaimed by seeing circumstances and not defining characteristics of an individual. Duran delves into the effects of child abuse, sexual harassment, and the catalysts that surround it, questioning the arousability of clothing and the targeting of vulnerable people. Her pieces are charged with symbolism ingrained in folds and gestures in order to land these conversations with tact, being mindful of how triggering these conversations may be. Process is important in the work, as it permits for chance artistic influence to garner individuality and imperfections. References to literature and the testimonials of others often jumpstart imagings of histories of vulnerability different than her own. By creating multiple castings and instances, nuanced differences emerge, providing each piece an independent story to tell in the constraints and pains of a society that is molded from the same mistakes.



Thread no threat, shattered

10" x 8" x 3.5"

Resin

\$1,000

Kristin Schiele

Kristen Schiele creates bold, immersive and semi-abstract paintings, collages and installations. She is inspired by stage sets, cinema, allegory and storytelling that is theatrical and playful. Most comfortable at large-scale, she uses a range of materials which are anchored by architecture or pattern.



Kite (2019)
29" x 32"
Acrylic, oil on canvas
\$4,200

Linda Streicher

My concerns lie with non-rational spaces, with architectural structures free from gravity and reality that unground and destabilize us. I try to create surreal worlds in my paintings and in my installations. By shifting the ground plane and creating a nonsensical structural reality, we are forced to traverse through a conceptual space that is abstractly two-dimensional and representationally three-dimensional. Generated from memories of a childhood treehouse, I construct spaces similarly and metaphorically based on three levels. Below us the "earth" grounds us, nurtures life and supports structures ranging from the hut to the skyscraper. Beyond the tangible, the "metaphysical" exists in our mind and embodies the imaginary, spiritual, future and unknown. In between these two levels, the "environment" is the narrow slice that humanity inhabits visually and physically. It ranges from the grass under our feet to the sky above and represents reality. Unexplored territories, seemingly beyond our reach, draw us in and ask us how we can chart a course from our present viewpoint to a future we choose. Obstacles hinder while also creating paths that guide us toward an unknown. In my paintings, I offer a deep space and consistently undermine it with the use of two-dimensional shapes and the flatness of the canvas. Conversely my installations, built in actual space, utilize perspectival lines and the flatness of the wall. Light sources and shifting shadows constantly change the environment and accentuate the divide between real and false spaces. Travel between reality and the metaphysical then becomes a visual and mental journey.

www.lstreicher.com



Beyond Fallen
Obstructions (2017)
48 x 36 "
Oil on canvas
\$3,000

Deborah Winiarski

Color, form and line expand beyond the painting surface in these recent mixed media paintings. In these works, paper and fabric accrue to create raised and textured surfaces. Strips of fabric, paper and wax weave, twist, mingle, intertwine creating 'visual fugues' that literally break out of the picture plane. The torn and folded strips provide form, dimension and color; their edges, line. My process is two-fold as most color is achieved with pigmented fabrics and papers alone. Color, line and form develop on the fabric via an encaustic monotype process. Pigmented beeswax melts as it is applied to a heated plate. The fabric is laid upon the plate absorbing color and imagery – becoming one with the wax. The fabric is then torn, cut, sewn, crumpled and composed upon the painting surface. Collaged fabrics, papers threads add even more texture. My intent for the composed space is that it be contrapuntal yet harmonious; grounded yet fragile; still but silently in motion.

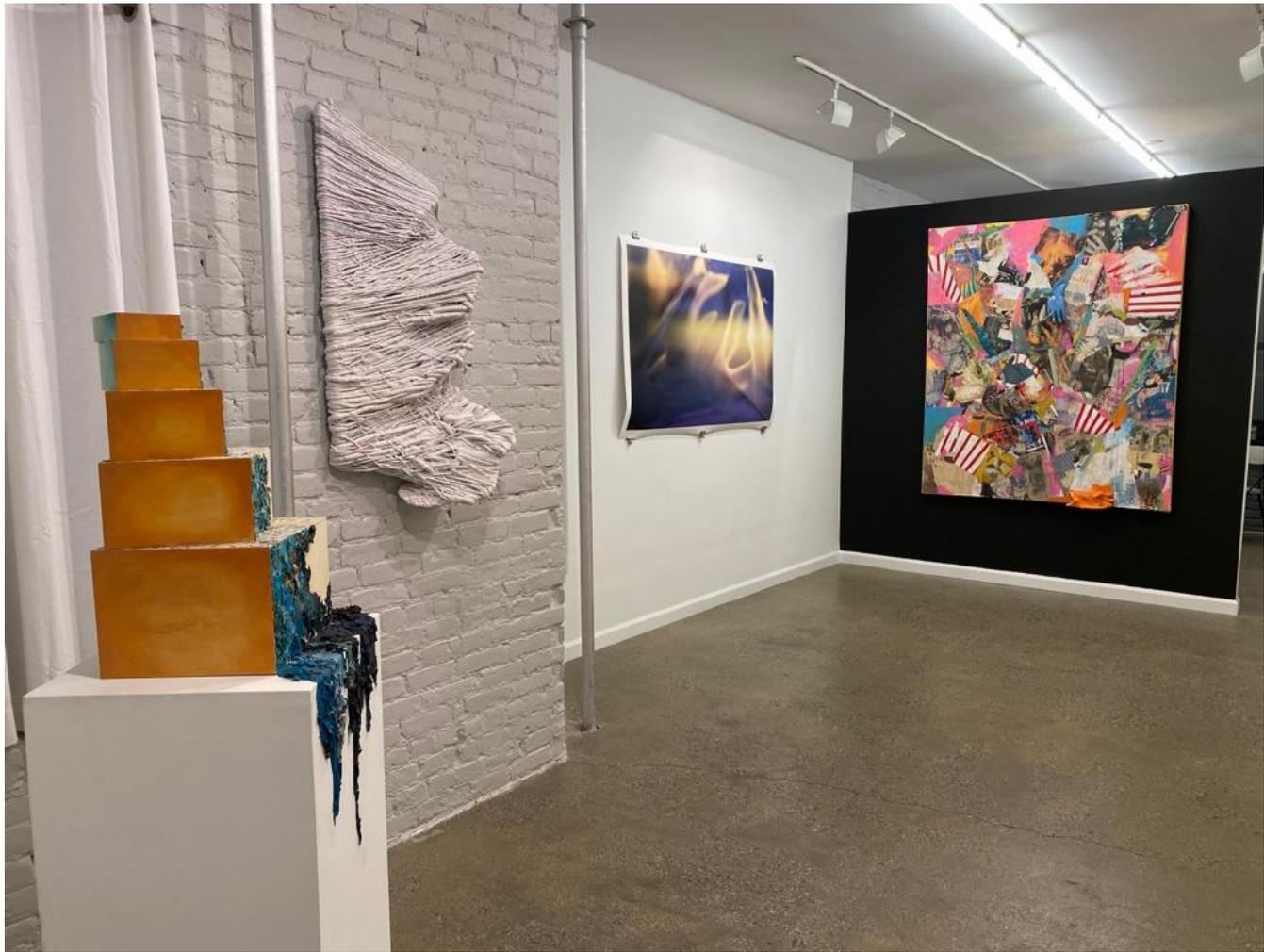


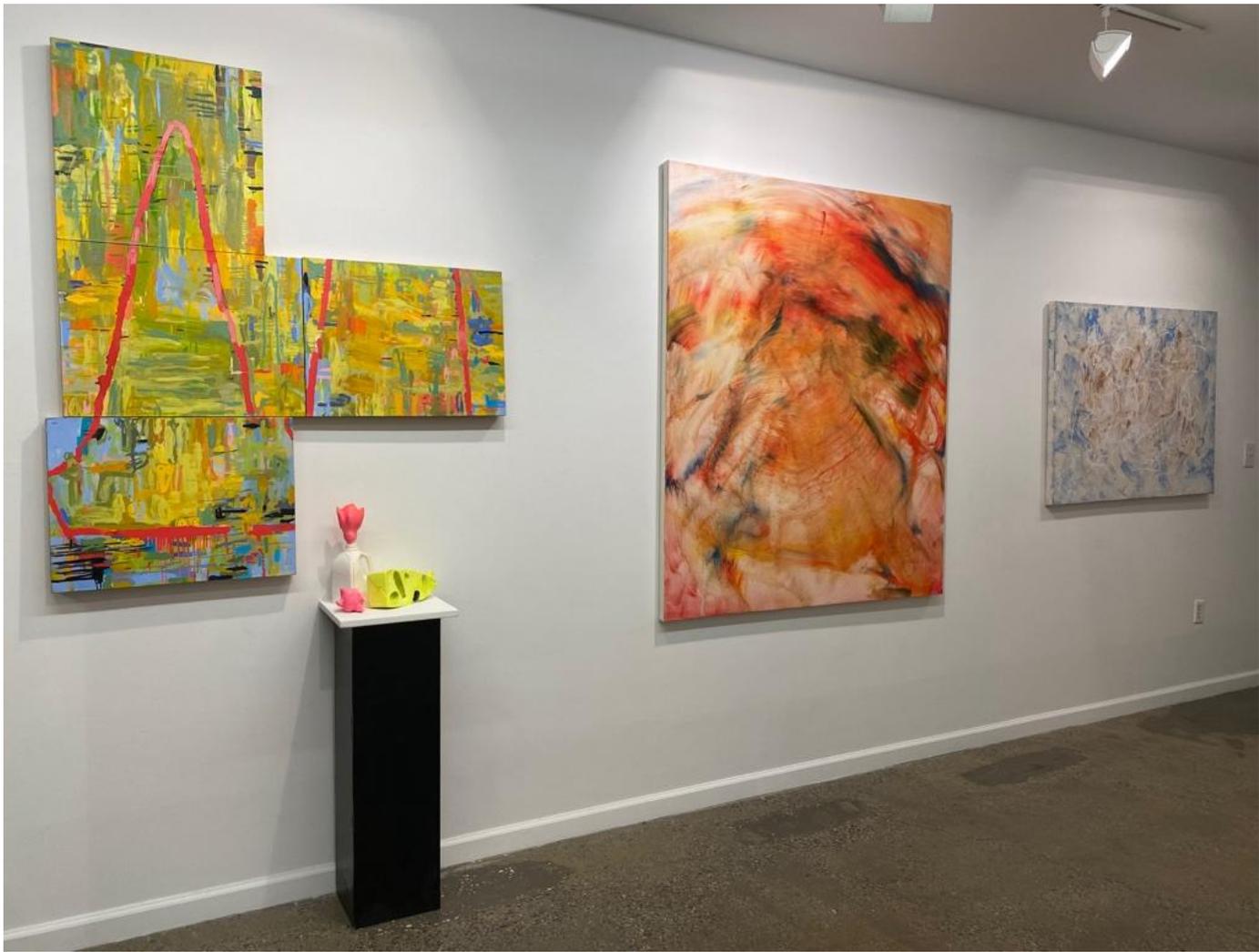
Sic Passim (2018)

48" x 32" x 3"

Fabric, pigment, graphite,
oil, pastel, encaustic on panel
\$7,500







THE CENTER CANNOT HOLD

OPENING RECEPTION:

Wednesday, 02.12.20, 6-8pm

CLOSING RECEPTION:

Sunday, 03.07.20, 4-6pm

A collaboration from 6 curators featuring the work of 17 emerging and established artists working in drawing, painting, photography, and mixed media. The artists in this exhibition depart from the laws of spatial logic, creating works that upend physical and metaphysical conventions.



Equity Gallery

245 Broome St, NYC

www.nyartistsequity.org

info@nyartistsequity.org

[@equitygallery](#), [#equitygallery](#)

931.410.0020

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CURATED BY:

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Guy De Baere

María Durán Sampedro

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