

a clearing

Carlota Rodriguez / Debra Ramsay / James Heartsill / Jeremy Burleson / Melissa Staiger

Michele Foyer / Prajakti Jayavant / Scott Malbourn / Shantae Robinson

Opening Saturday, 1-4pm, April 1, 2023

Show runs April 1-May 22, 2023

a clearing

Walking down a narrow path, you're surprised as you reach *a clearing*. This sudden openness makes you stop short and catch your breath as you begin to absorb the change in landscape.

Works in *a clearing* beckon, inviting you to enter. Each artist composes forms evolving from intuitive, rather than predetermined, thinking. In these works, the initial pattern elements break down and fall away, creating an opportunity for something unknown to arise. Overlapping and unpredictable shapes and colors create conversations, inviting viewers to come closer, soften their gaze, release expectations. Through a variety of materials, these artworks attain a color energy using vibrant hues and textures. Optical vibrations and textures rumble as deeper looking opens to *a clearing*.

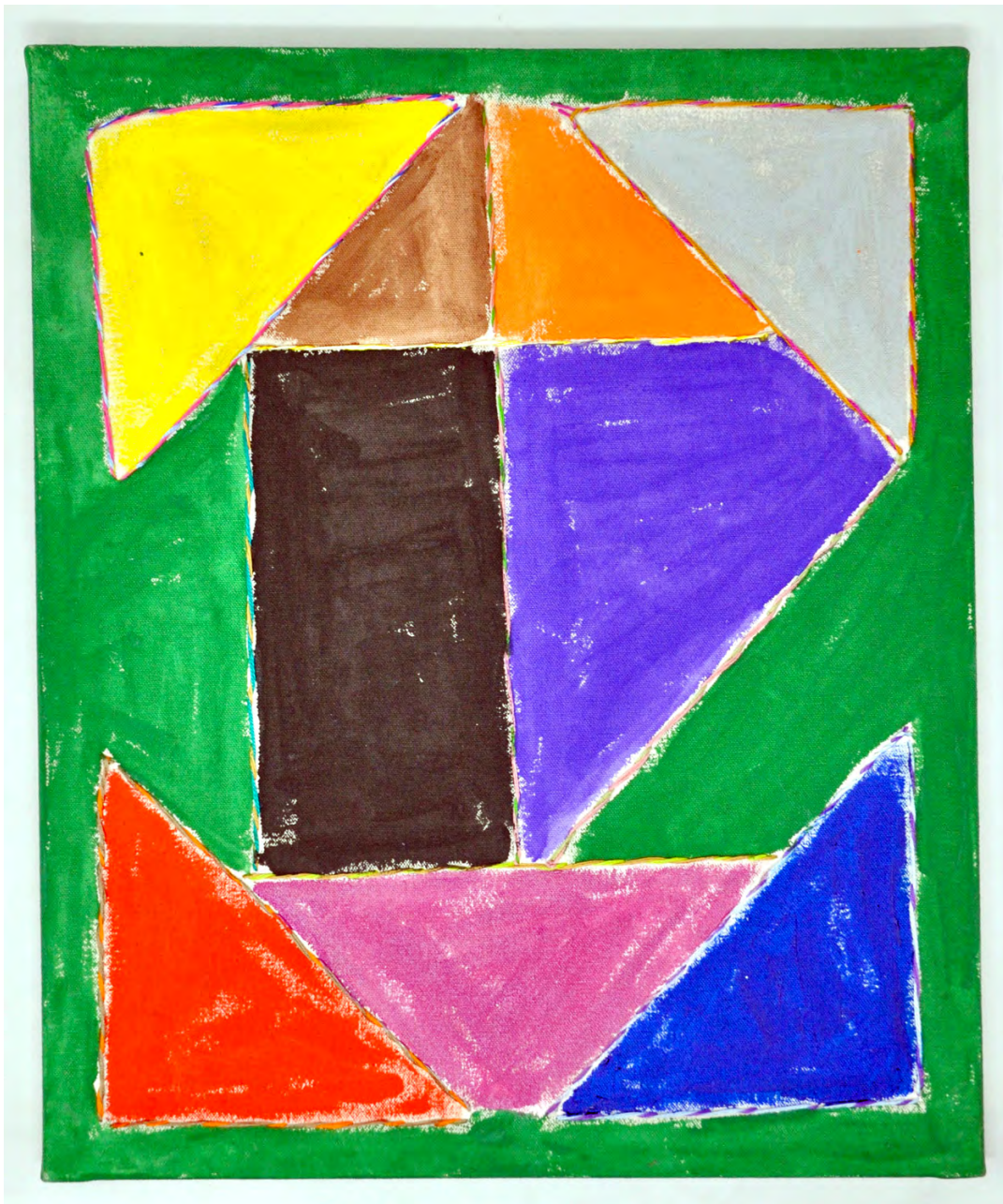
<https://tinyurl.com/2p8enxby>

Carlota Rodriguez

While embracing a strong sense of the handmade, Carlota Rodriguez's paintings, drawings and textile works pull from the history of geometric abstraction.

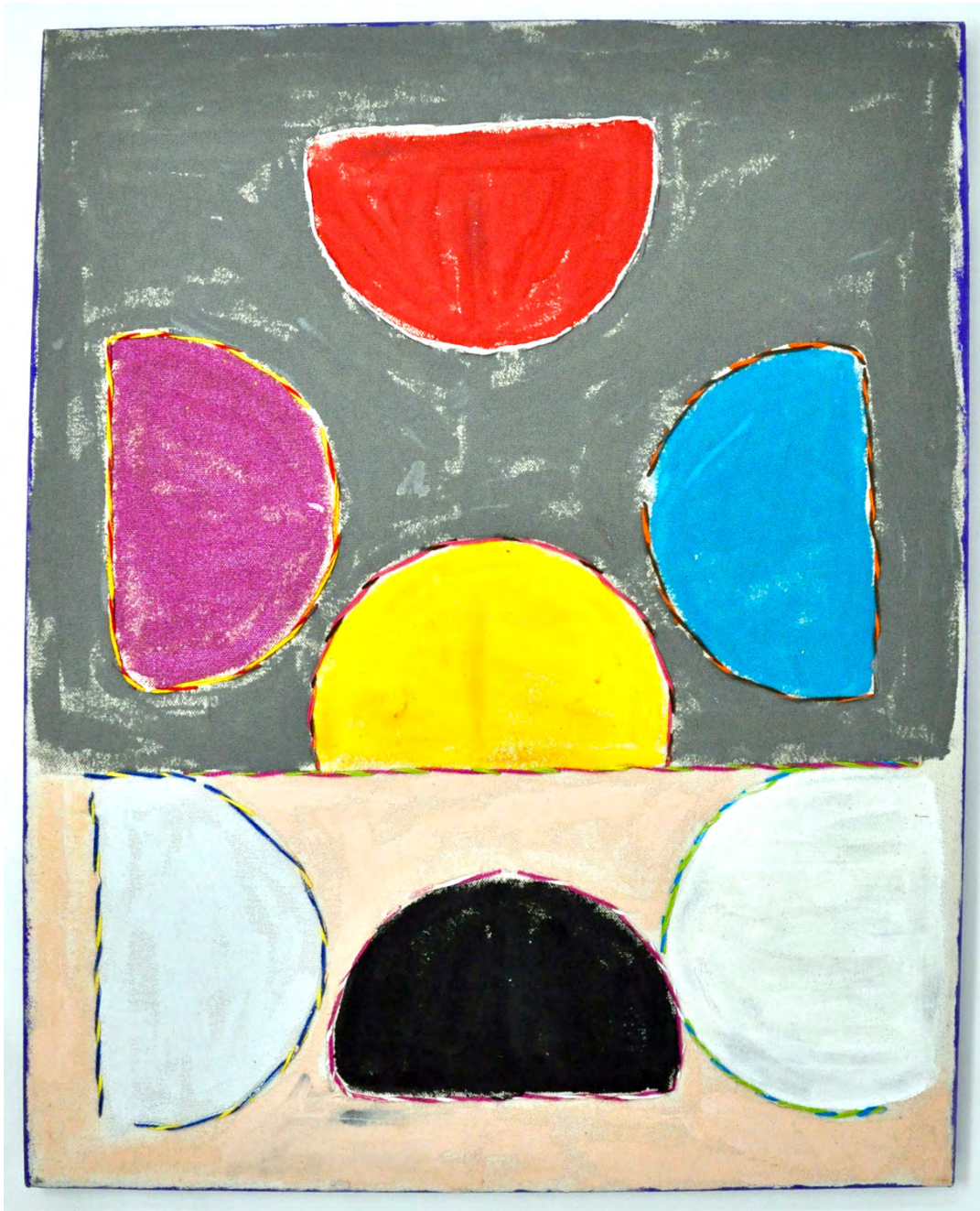
"When I paint, I like to focus my mind on it. I like to focus on my favorite shapes, like flowers and faces. When I'm working the colors come to me naturally and I just go with the flow."

Carlota is an active member of the NIAD studio, fronting NIAD's house band "Group Text" as a singer and guitar player. Carlota is a lifelong Richmond resident with a large family from El Salvador who have supported her art practice.



Carlota Rodriguez, *Untitled (P0221)*, 2022, acrylic and embroidered yarn on canvas, 15 x 18 inches

Carlota Rodriguez



Carlota Rodriguez, *Untitled (P0223)*, 2022, acrylic and embroidered yarn on canvas, 16 x 20 inches

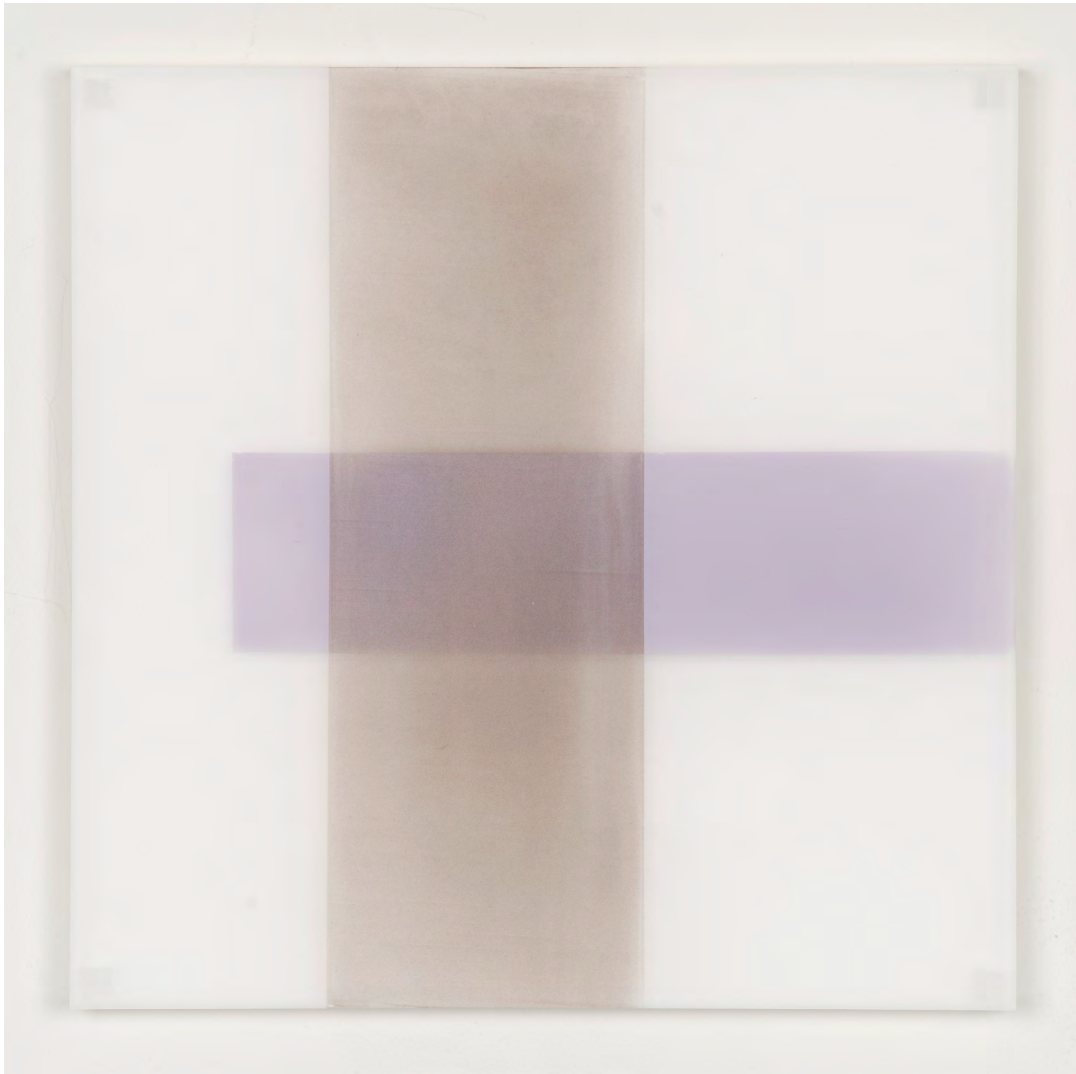


Carlota Rodriguez, *Untitled (P0236)*, 2022, acrylic and yarn on canvas, 18 x 24 inches

Debra Ramsay

For this series, Where I Find Myself, Twilight & Dawn, I observed colors in the sky at dawn and twilight, as seen from my home studio window. Then, using paint mixing software, I recreated the sky colors as paint. Blue is purposely left out of this inquiry. The series was started during the pandemic when I was limiting my travels; thus, the title for the series. The artworks are on translucent supports, allowing each painting to shift in appearance as the light in the room changes. The paint layers cast shadows. Colors move from intense to muted as light decreases. Ever-changing.

Debra Ramsay is an abstract artist working in the disciplines of painting and installation. She maintains a full-time studio practice in New York City. Ramsay has exhibited her work internationally for the past three decades. She has a solo exhibition scheduled at the Hunterdon Museum of Art, Clinton, NJ in 2024. Other solos include the Brattleboro Museum in Brattleboro, VT, 2017; Odetta Gallery, Brooklyn; and 57 W 57th Arts, NY, 2016. She was awarded residencies at the Golden Foundation, the Albers Foundation, and at BAU Institute. The Hofstra University Museum of Art and Brooklyn College acquired her work in 2021.



Debra Ramsay, *Twilight & Dawn 6_17 H*, 2021, acrylic on cast acrylic, 12x12 inches

Debra Ramsay



Debra Ramsay, *Twilight & Dawn_9_3_1_H*, 2021, acrylic on cast acrylic, 12x12 inches



Debra Ramsay, *Twilight and Dawn 4_9 3_1 _H*, 2021, acrylic on cast acrylic, 12x12 inches

Debra Ramsay



Debra Ramsay, *Twilight & Dawn_2_3_H*, 2021, acrylic on cast acrylic, 12x12 inches

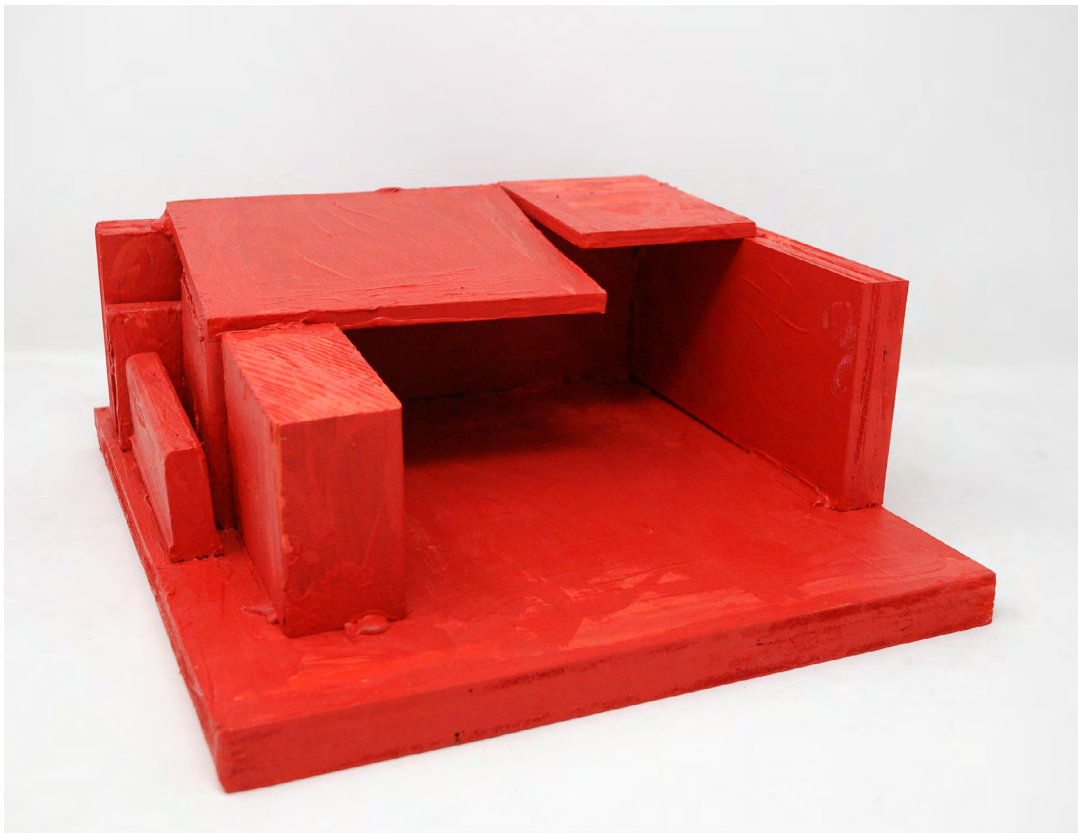
James Heartsill

James Heartsill has been working at NIAD since the summer of 1989.

James's work has expanded over the years to incorporate the NIAD studio space itself, unfolding his practice of maintenance and care to include each studio participant. The shelves nearest his usual workspace receive regular fresh coats of paint, sometimes calling for an entirely new color.

The same care and attention is paid to his miniature home constructions: new additions sprout, shift, change color, receive guests and connect to other constructions or living spaces.

James also draws. His drawing practice feels like a respite from his construction, social sculpture and space-making. Drawing gives him time to reflect, to sit and change focus.



James Heartsill, *Untitled (S0335)*, 2023, acrylic on wood sculpture, 12 x 5 x 11 inches

James Heartsill

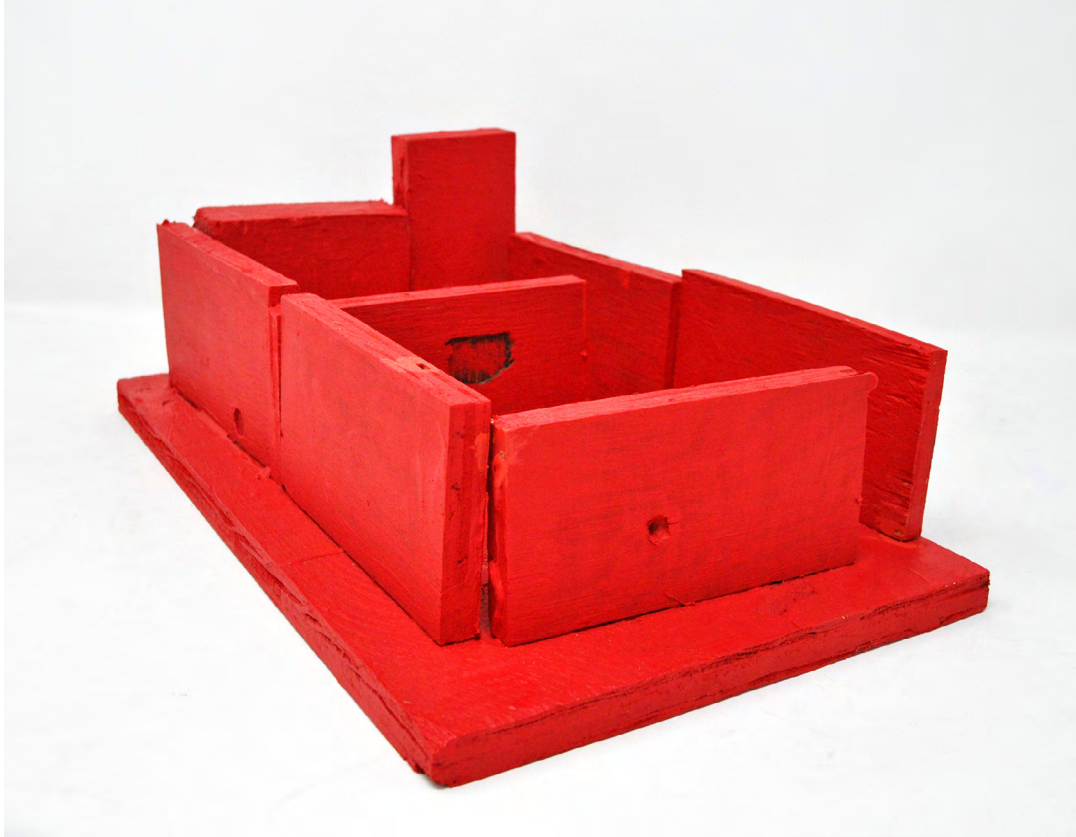


James Heartsill, *Untitled (S0334)*, 2023, acrylic on wood sculpture, 11 x 7 x 9 inches



James Heartsill, *Untitled (S0333)*, 2023, acrylic on wood sculpture, 12 x 4 x 12 inches

James Heartsill



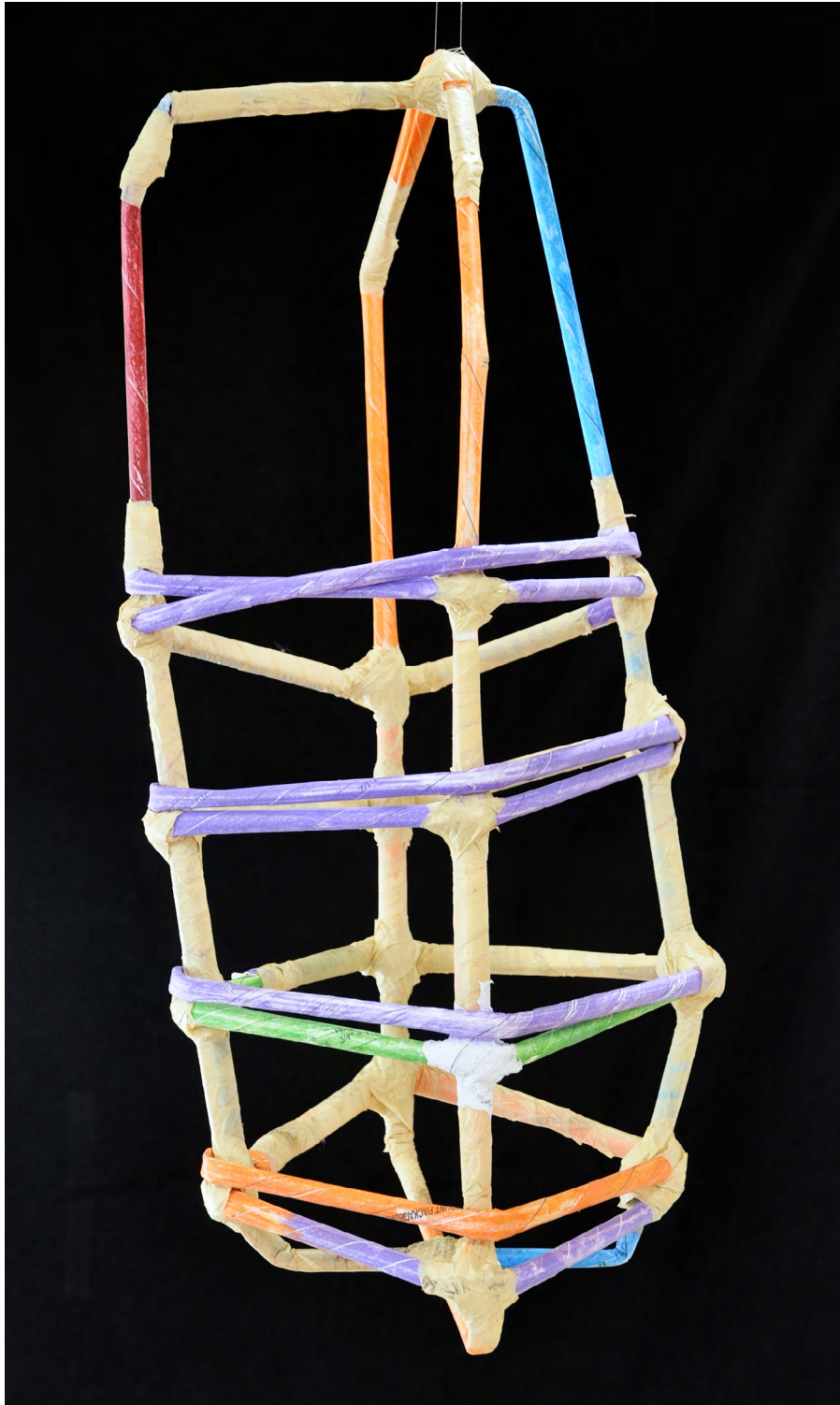
James Heartsill, *Untitled (S0332)*, 2021, acrylic on wood sculpture, 12.5 x 8 x 5 inches

Jeremy Burleson

With masking tape and paper, Jeremy Burleson has built a flood of highly detailed medical instruments – hyper-realistic and quasi-workable versions of stethoscopes, ventilators, and syringes. Burleson also works out his interest in all things medical on paper, often combining figures with rows of bottles, syringes, and balloons. It's unclear where his obsession stems from, but it's obvious that his focus on medically related subject matter walks a fine line between fascination and repulsion.

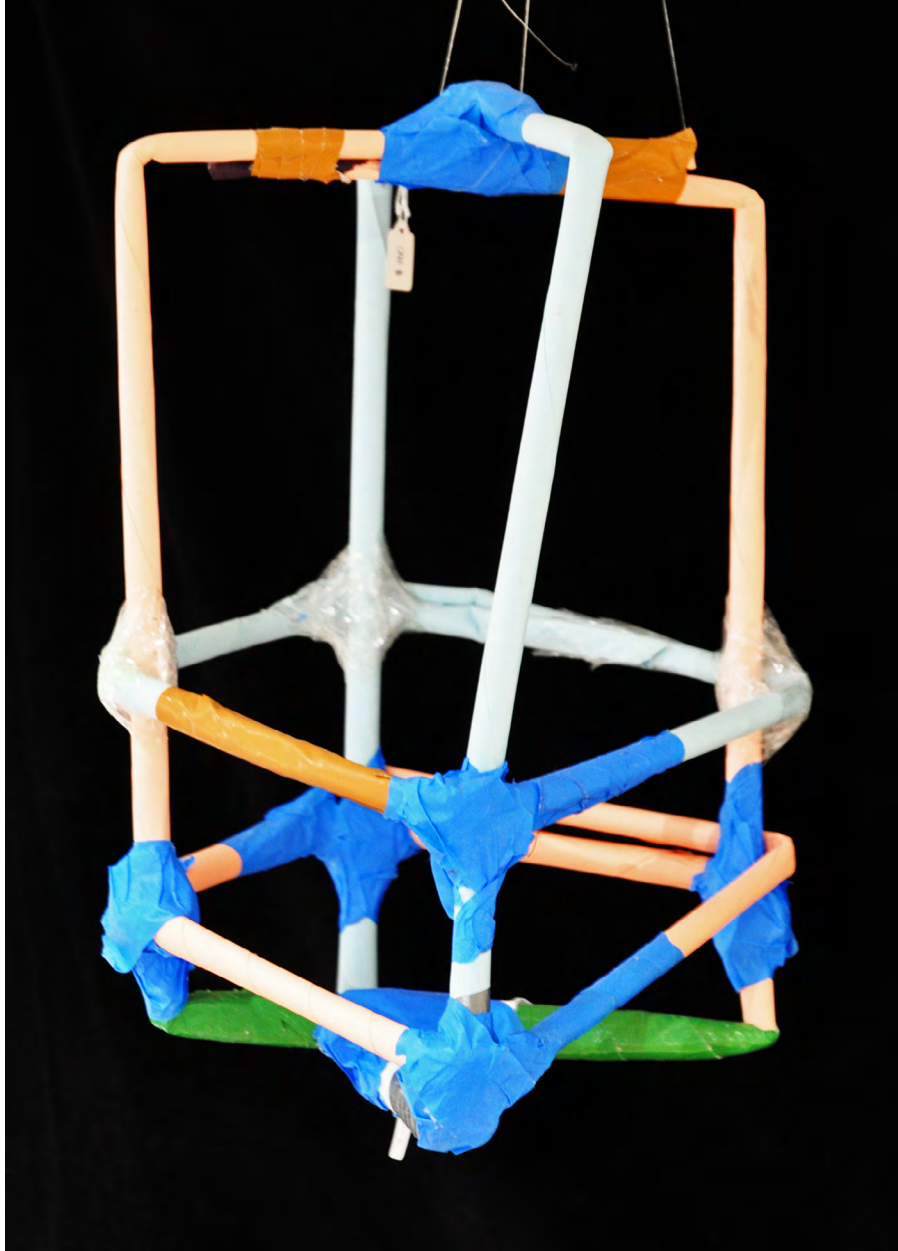
Also, using paper, but rolling it tightly to create a tube of sorts, Burleson crafts lyrical lamp shapes. Vaguely allegorical, the structures are designed to hang from the ceiling, but some are large enough to be placed on the floor. This interest in lamps may have originated during an accident while on a shopping trip to a local warehouse store.

Throughout all of Burleson's work runs the thread of strange theatricality created by early pop artists like Claes Oldenburg and Red Grooms.

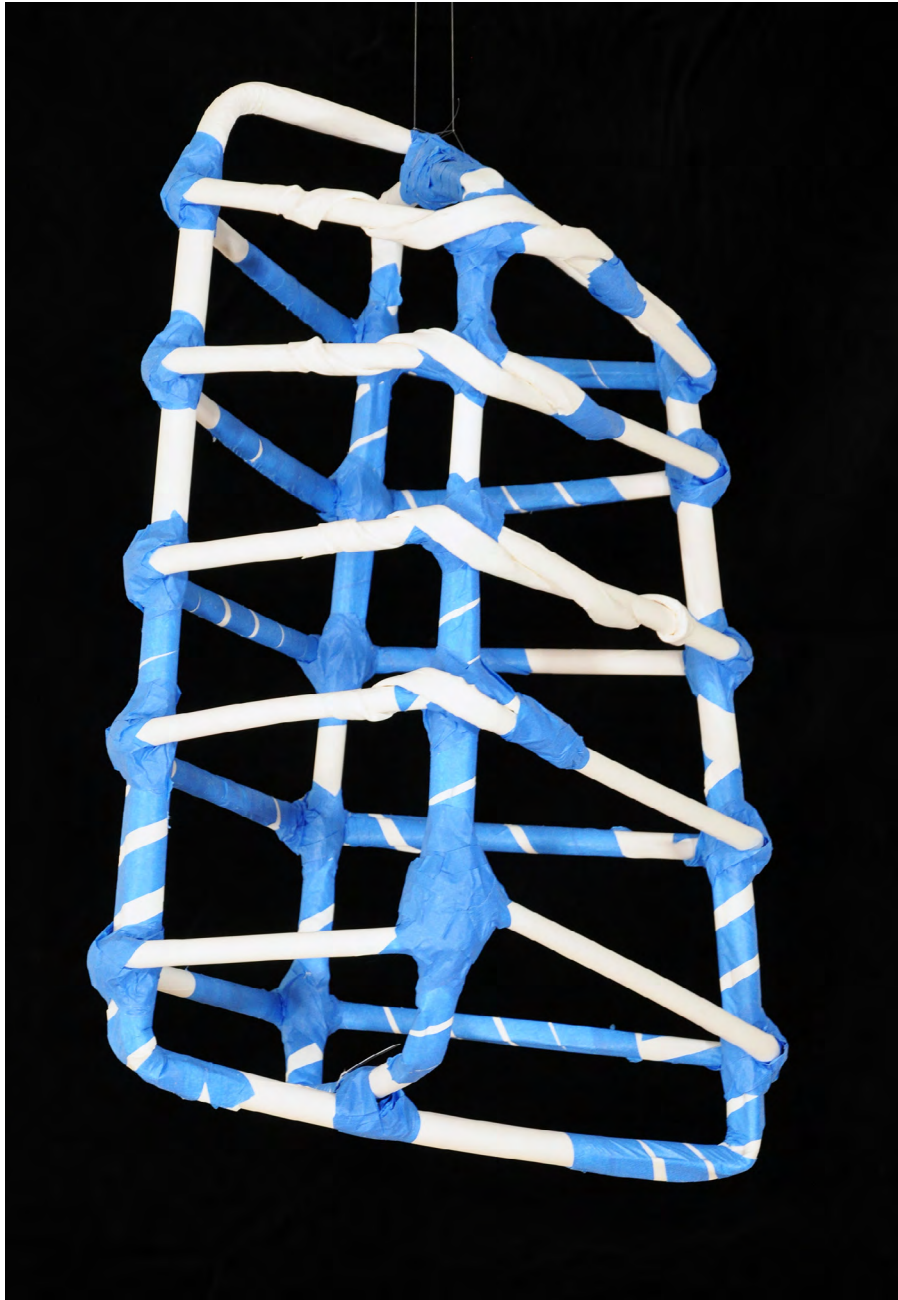


Jeremy Burleson, *Untitled (S0331)*, 2021, marker on rolled paper and tape, 36 x 15 x 17 inches

Jeremy Burleson

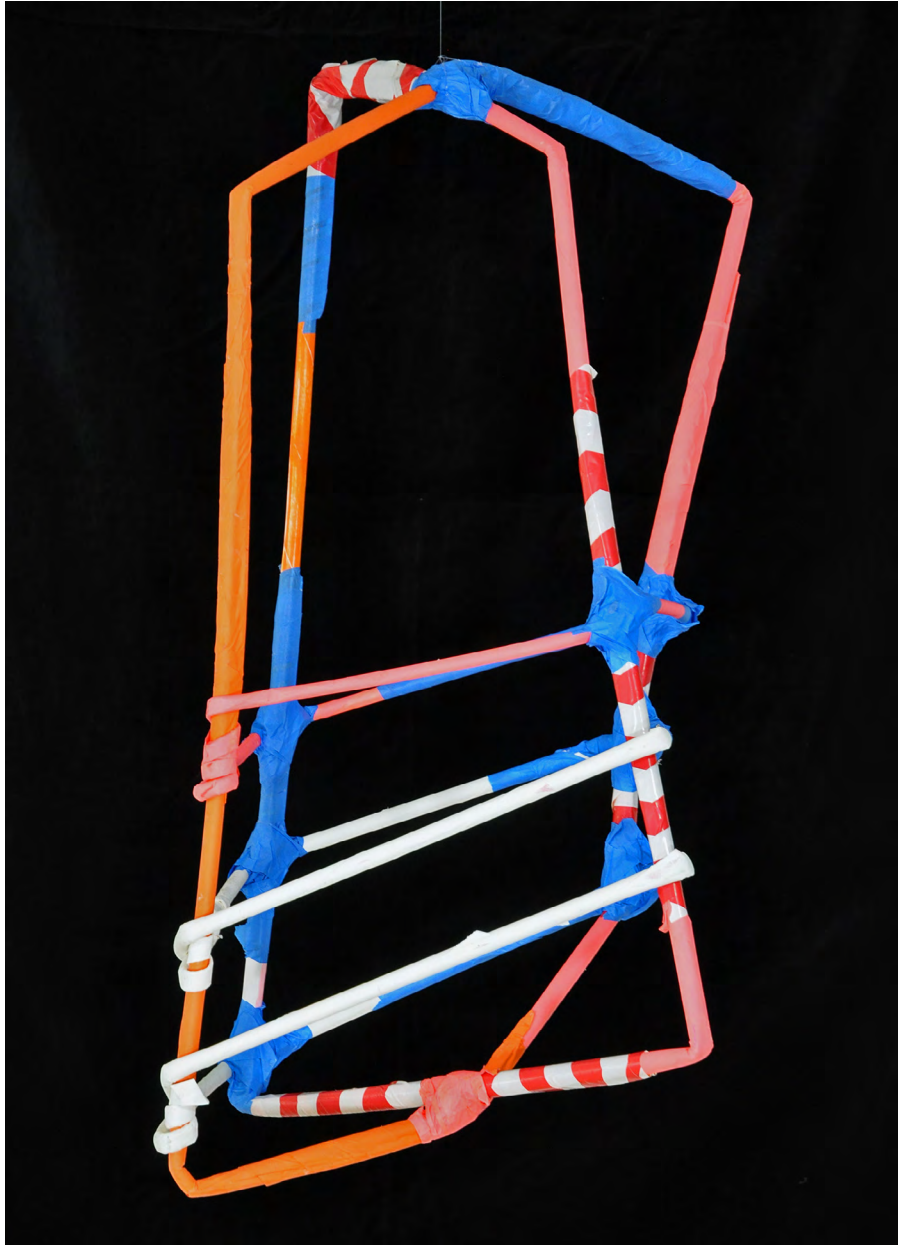


Jeremy Burleson, *Untitled (S0330)*, 2022, rolled paper and tape,
20 x 14 x 15 inches

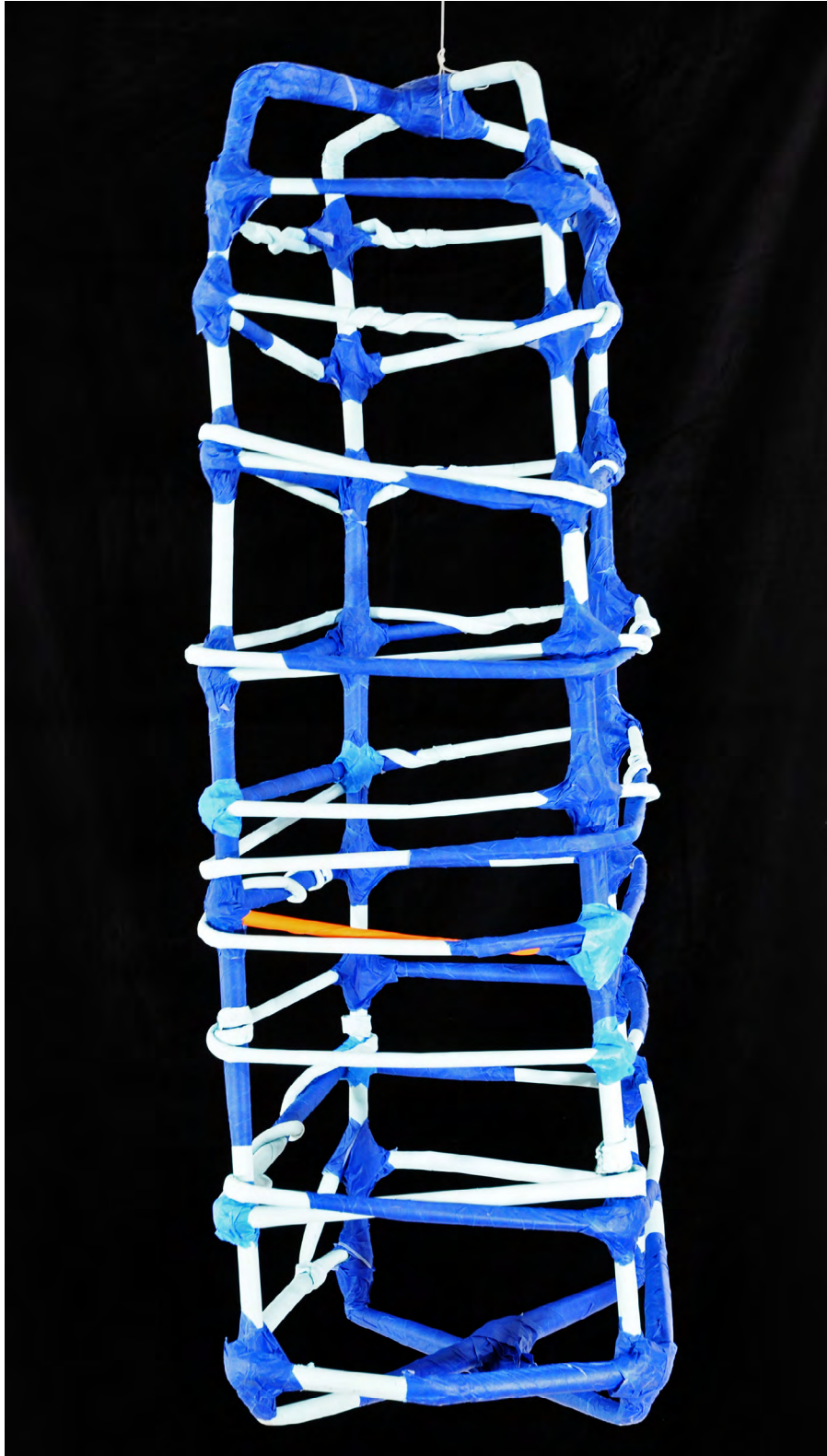


Jeremy Burleson, *Untitled (S0329)*, 2023, rolled paper and tape, 21 x 15 x 12 inches

Jeremy Burleson



Jeremy Burleson, *Untitled (S0328)*, 2023, rolled paper and tape
34 x 19 x 21 inches



Jeremy Burleson, *Untitled (S5638)*, 2021, rolled paper and tape,
43 x 13 x 15 inches

Melissa Staiger

In the Belly of the Empress is an ongoing series, started in the winter of 2021. It is influenced by the memories of works created outdoors. These small works allow me to move and experiment freely through the drawing and painting process. I've used caran d'Ache and watercolor pencil for drawing structure and gouache and acrylic paint for the bright solid painted colors. The forms are organic, and sometimes have a sense of a figure present. They feel like botany in an internal space. The colors are lush, rich and regal - with shiny silver color, fitting for an Empress. Many of the paintings have a central composition with forms that grow and radiate outwardly in wave-like patterns.

Melissa Staiger (b.1978, Louisville, KY) earned a BFA from Maryland Institute, College of Art in Baltimore, MD; an MFA from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. Staiger is a non-objective visual artist who works in gouache, acrylic paint, collage and assemblage. Her works are rhythmic and explore the prismatic palette. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York and a member of the American Abstract Artists.



Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress No.73*, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches

Melissa Staiger



Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress 22*, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches



Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress* 26, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches

Melissa Staiger

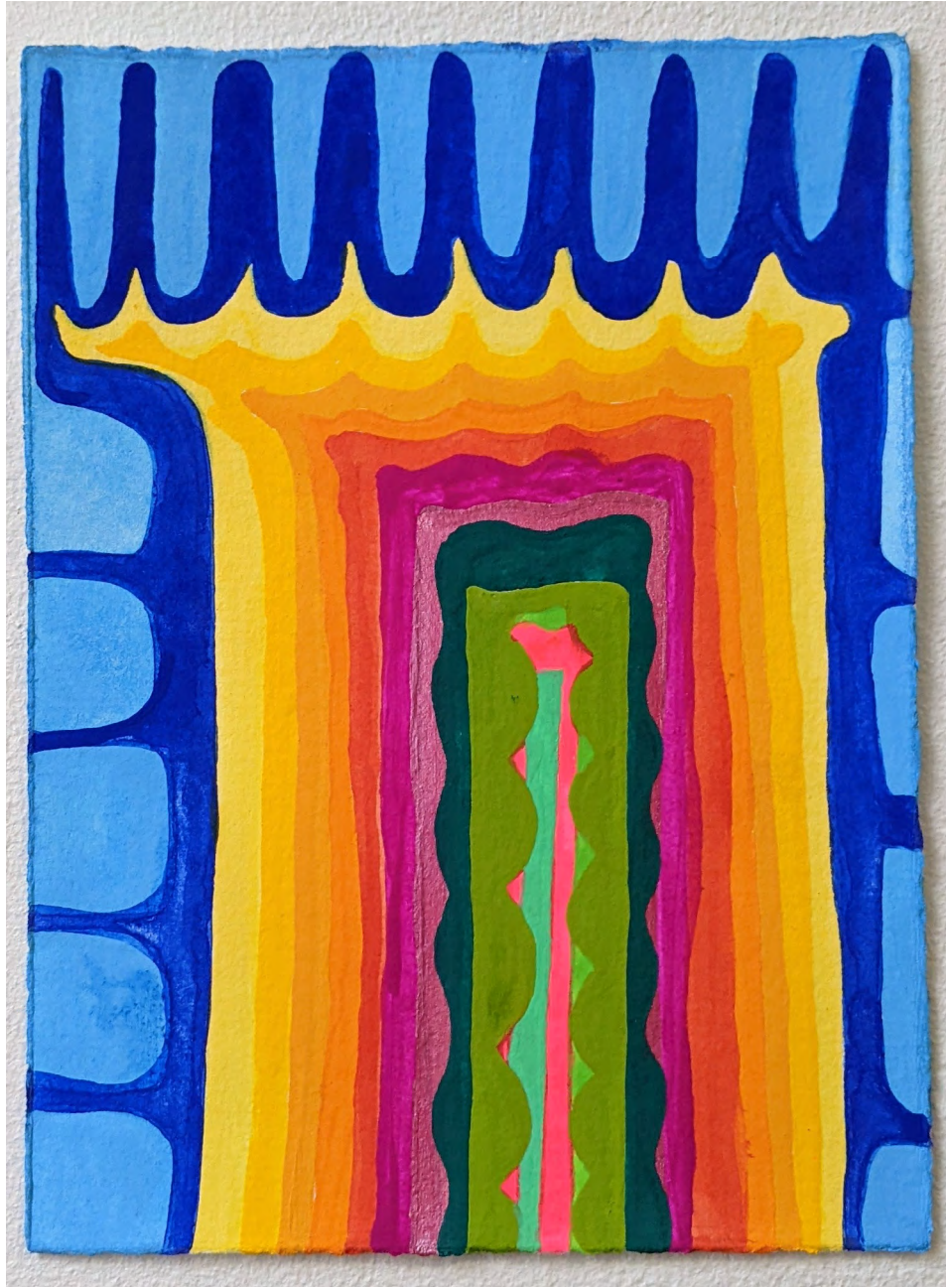


Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress 48*, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches



Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress no.50*, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches

Melissa Staiger



Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress no.57*, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches

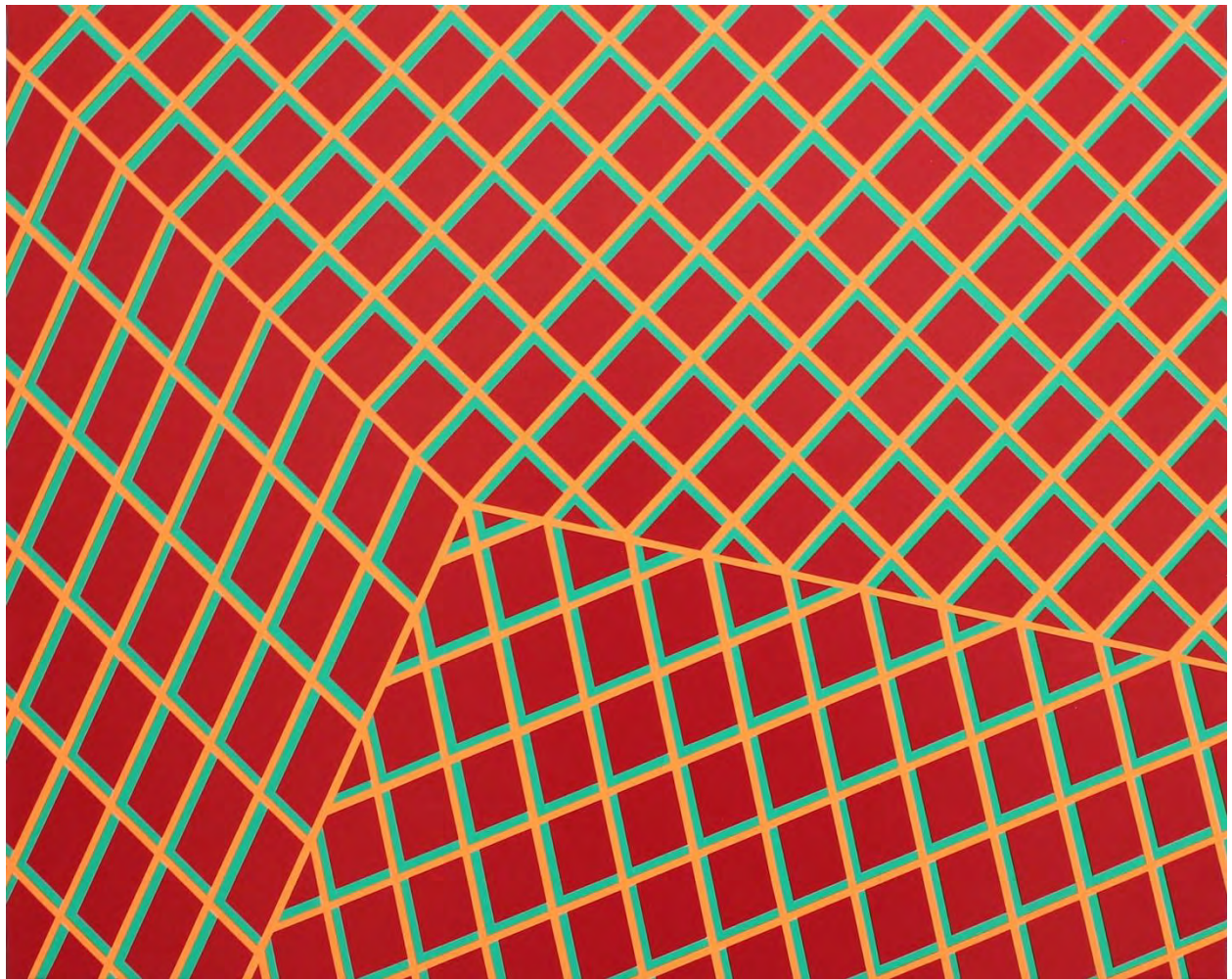


Melissa Staiger, *In the Belly of the Empress no.57*, 2023, gouache on paper, 7.5 x 5.5 inches

Scott Malbaurn

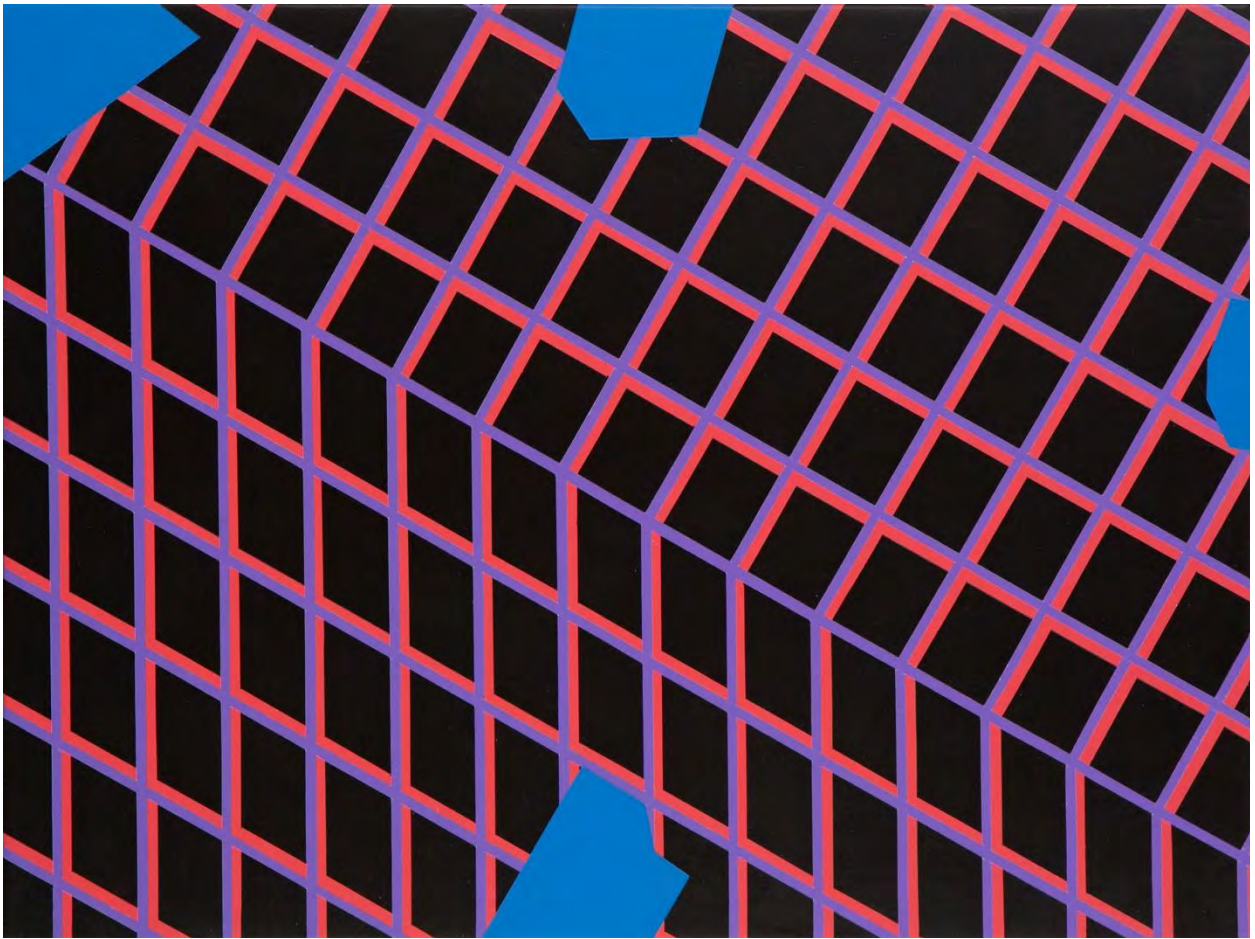
Malbaurn is an abstract, geometric artist who employs synthetic water-based mediums such as silica, urethane, and acrylic resin along with pigments to make his own paint. He works on canvas or linen that is stretched over panel. The paintings are abstract compositions ranging from poetic to dynamic. Abstract clarity may be found in some pieces and mystery in others. Through all of this, Malbaurn tries to reveal logic as well as an intuition for solutions that interplay into a contingent expansion of the work. Here, Malbaurn searches for a balance between contrived and arbitrary.

Malbaurn received his BFA from The Maryland Institute College of Art in and MFA from Pratt Institute. His work has been exhibited nationally and he has curated exhibitions nationally. Malbaurn has taught Fine Art at Pratt Institute and Southern Oregon University. Malbaurn has served as the Acting Assistant Chair Person of Fine Arts at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY and currently serves as the Executive Director of the Schneider Museum of Art in Ashland, OR. Malbaurn is a descendant of the Narragansett Indian Tribe and the Nipmuc Tribe.



Scott Malbaurn, *untitled*, 2019, acrylic on canvas over panel, 16 x 20 inches

Scott Malbourn



Scott Malbourn, *Gift*, 2019, acrylic on canvas over panel, 12 x 16 inches

Michele Foyer

My hybrid sculptural paintings of paper celebrate color and how its moves outside of linear language. In an intuitive and idiosyncratic collage process I paint, tape, layer and cut individual pieces of paper in ricocheting repetitions of no fixed order. Gradually, an aggregate emerges. This process mirrors how objects, people and our thoughts congregate disparate times and spaces. The works float off the wall in a chromatic glow of light reflected from the painted back. Paradoxically, this immaterial glow which shifts in differing light conditions forms the true “ground” for the work.

Michele Foyer is a visual artist who lives and works in San Francisco. She received her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and BA from UC Berkeley. Recent exhibitions include a solo show at Fourth Wall Gallery, Oakland, a 4-person show at Millersville University, PA, a 2-person show at Gearbox Gallery, Oakland and an installation at Root Division, SF. White Columns Artist Registry includes her work. Foyer will be a resident artist at UCROSS Foundation this spring and was previously at Morris Graves Foundation, Lucid Arts Foundation, Virginia Center for Creative Arts and the Vermont Studio Center. Friends of the Artist and Lucid Arts Foundation will feature her art in upcoming book publications. Art Practical, SOMArts and SF Artful Living have also covered her work. She has curated 10 exhibitions of contemporary art.

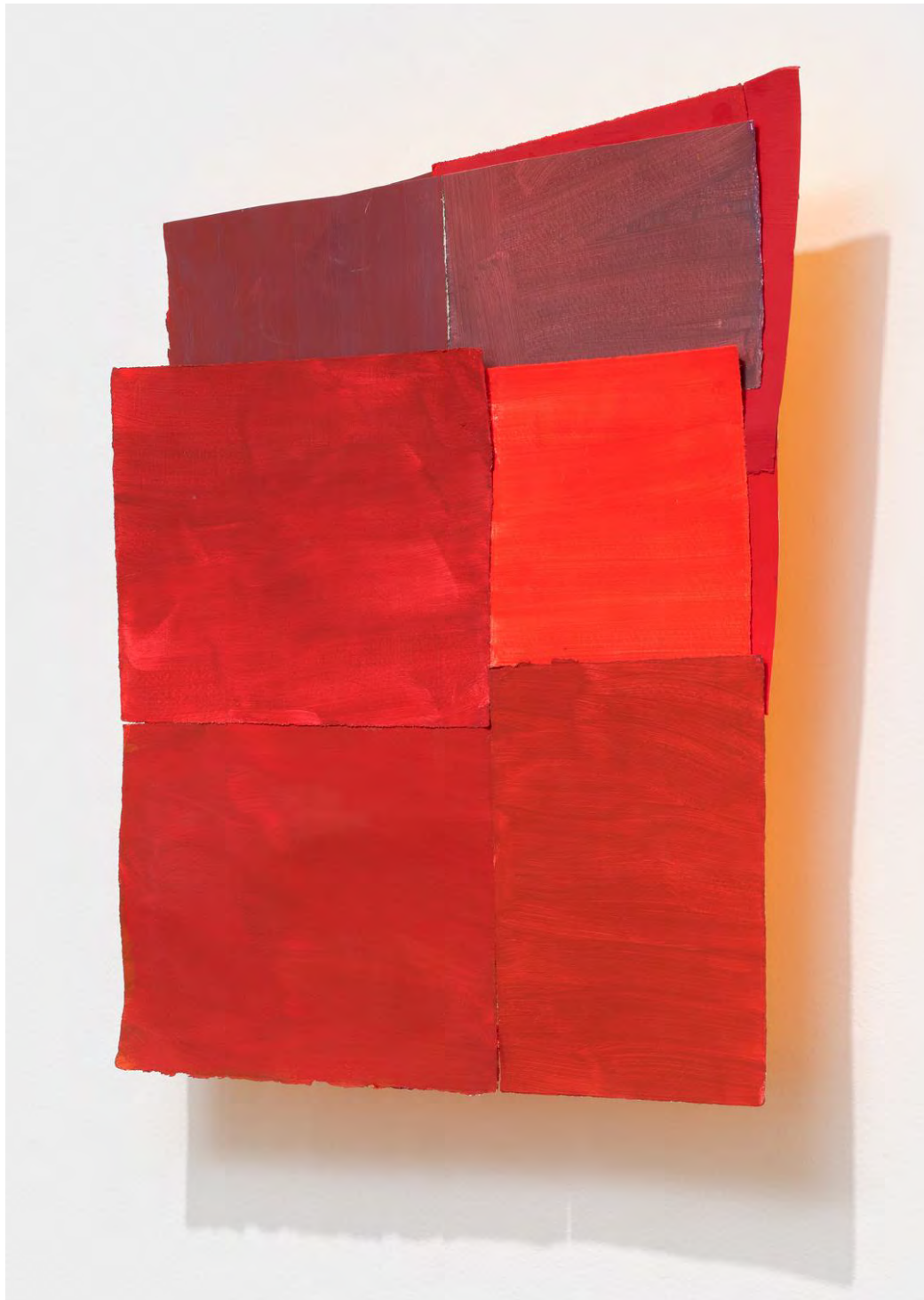


Michele Foyer, *My Name is Weather, Too*, 2022, acrylic, flashe, linen tape on paper, reflected light from reverse side painted chartreuse, 57 x 76 x 3 inches

Michele Foyer



Michele Foyer, *Passport*, 2023, acrylic, flashe on paper, reflected light from reverse side painted hot pink, 19.5 x 16.5 x 2 inches



Michele Foyer, *Still at Sea*, 2021, acrylic, flashe on paper, reflected light from reverse side painted orange, 14 x 13.5 x 2 inches

Prajakti Jayavant

Prajakti Jayavant's artwork questions and expands the paradigms of reductive abstract painting and sculpture by focusing on the development of perceptual complexity from the basic elements of color, shape, and form. She paints, subtly, with oil or acrylic onto single sheets of paper that are then cut, folded, ripped, and bound during a continually evolving process. Jayavant's interests involve the reflexive ideas of the physical and conceptual bending of: dimension, space, emotion, history, hue and the trove of content that restriction can conjure.

Prajakti Jayavant holds a BFA from Ohio State University and an MFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts. She has exhibited at the Drawing Center, New York, curated by Luis Camnitzer and at Meridian Gallery, San Francisco in shows separately curated by Lawrence Rinder and John Zarobell which were both reviewed by Kenneth Baker in the San Francisco Chronicle. She was a recipient for the Visions from the New California award and for artist in residence fellowships at Djerassi Residence Artists Program and at Headlands Center for the Arts. Jayavant has been involved with NIAD as a curator and as an exhibitor. Her curatorial projects at NIAD include: "Chameleon with a Kaleidoscope"; "Travelogue"; and "Menagerie on 23rd Street."



Prajakti Jayavant, *untitled no. 127*, 2018, oil and colored pencil on paper board 22 x 7 inches

Prajakti Jayavant



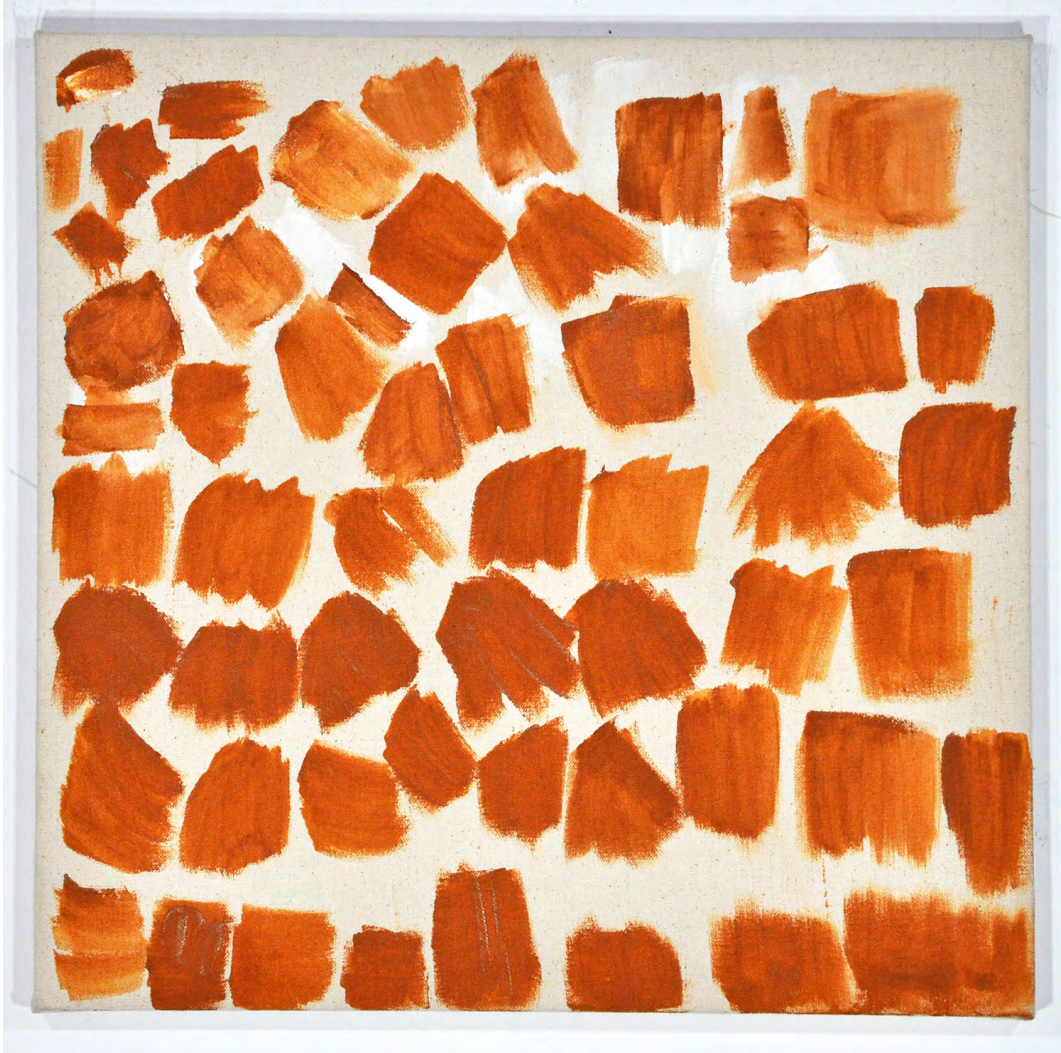
Prajakti Jayavant, *untitled no. 129*, 2019, oil on paper, 37 x 28 inches



Prajakti Jayavant, *untitled no. 125*, 2018, oil on paper board, 18 x 24 x 8 inches

Shantae Robinson

Wow, does Shantae Robinson know how to use color! Her abstract paintings and drawings – sometimes based on a grid structure – come alive with color, seeming to emit some sort of life vibrations. While generally abstract, in any discussion of her work Shantae will vigorously draw the viewer's attention to meaningful symbols (curves that represent "S" for "Shantae", for example) and figures gleaned from her surroundings. She describes their significance with her signature refrain, "I made that!"



Shantae Robinson, *Untitled (P0336)*, 2023, acrylic on raw canvas, 20 x 20 inches

Shantae Robinson



Shantae Robinson, *Untitled (D5195)*, 2019, watercolor on paper, 30 x 22 inches



Shantae Robinson, *Untitled (D5197)*, 2019, mixed media on paper, 30 x 22 inches

