



PearlLam  
Galleries

*Still  
Lives* 此生

2024.11.22 - 2025.02.08

Pearl Lam Galleries 藝術門  
203, 2/F, 117 Xianggang Road, Shanghai, China  
中国上海市黄浦区香港路117号2楼203室

Bella Foster  
贝拉·福斯特



Blair Saxon-Hill  
布莱尔·萨克森-希尔









# Still Lives

Pearl Lam Galleries is delighted to present the duo exhibition *Still Lives*, featuring works by Bella Foster and Blair Saxon-Hill. Still Lives highlights the evolving nature of still life painting, emphasising individual expression and emotional depth. The two California-based female artists bring new perspectives to these traditional genres, using everyday fragments and serendipity as their subjects to celebrate what our lives have to offer. By embracing the everyday, their direct painting approaches allow them to create intimate visual realities. Influenced by modernism, their revisionist approaches towards colour and surface treatment are personal yet independent of the objects they depict. The subdued style of their paintings creates a sense of stillness or a reverse gaze to entice beholders to form psychological attachments with the artwork on view. This reciprocal approach resonates with late Italian painter and printmaker Giorgio Morandi's idea of valuing moods above all else, merging shapes into abstract images to evoke tranquillity and privacy.

Bella Foster's artistic practice centres on still lifes that intimately depict the spaces of her friends and her own,

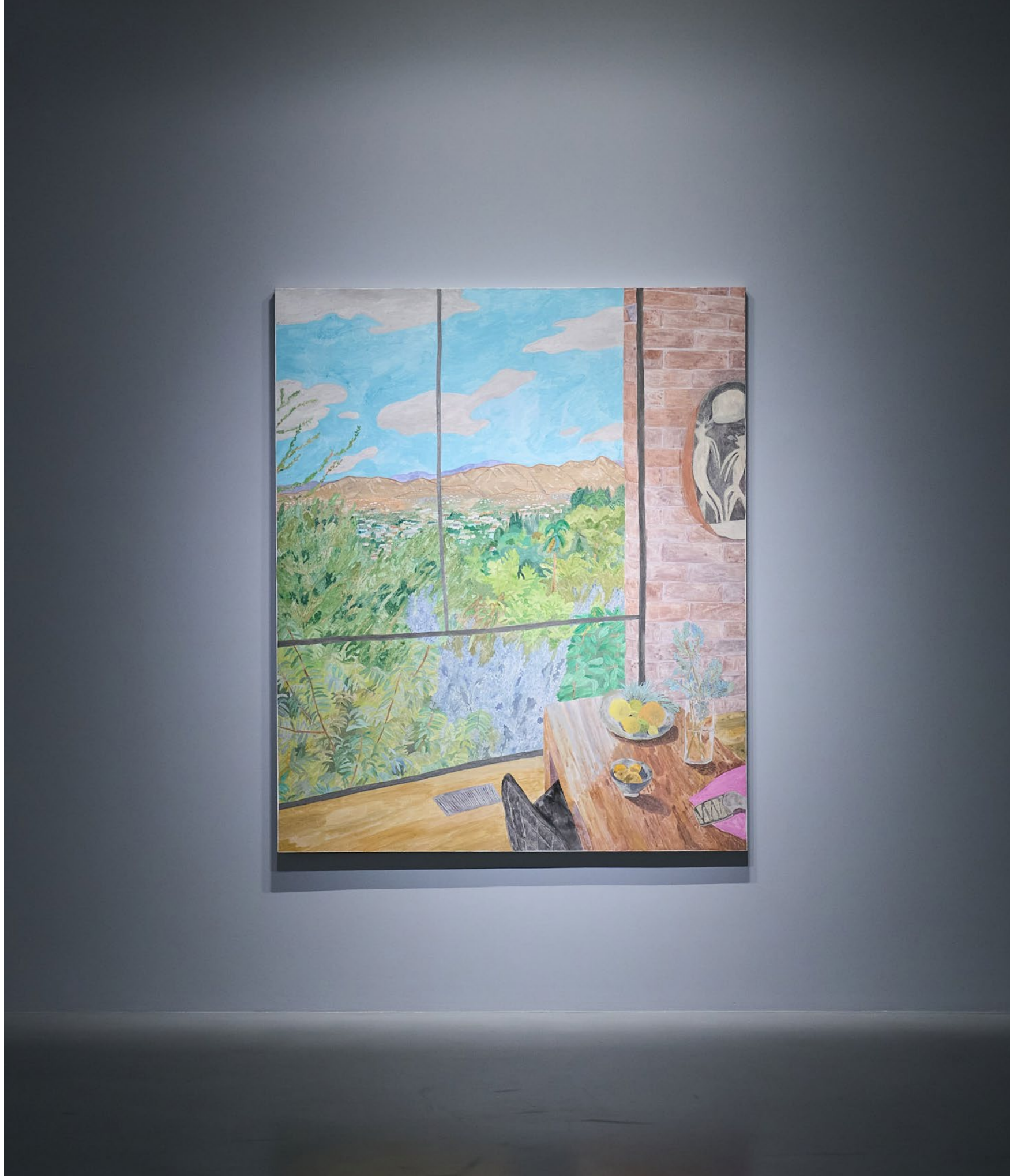
blending real and imagined domestic environments. Her paintings transcend mere representation, engaging in a psychological inquiry into the intersubjective experiences that shape our connection to the objects within these spaces. Through her lens, the seemingly mundane transforms into a poignant exploration of solitude and desolation, revealing a world beyond material objects where we find meaning and spiritual sustenance. Drawing inspiration from artists like Pierre Bonnard and Georgia O'Keeffe, Foster employs a distinctive economy of colour hues that conveys a flat picture plane, foreshortening our reading of the artworks with rhythm and repetition. Far from mere depictions of ordinary scenes, Foster's works are not meant to reflect on spaces or objects we desire to own, but rather the deeper meaning embodied by them, presenting unexpected juxtapositions that challenge conventional notions of the still life genre. Ultimately, her paintings animate stillness, transforming quotidian objects into profound inquiries of human psychology and materiality.



Blair Saxon-Hill is a multidisciplinary artist now working primarily in oil painting. She states, “I have created a series of flower still life paintings; at times, an imaginary scene is drawn around the still life and at others, the flowers take centre stage. I am interested in a notational approach to mark making.” Taking advantage of her downtown Los Angeles studio, which is near the flower market, Saxon-Hill has an observational still life practice. After gathering flowers from the market, she returns to the studio to compose bouquets and paint them from life. Sometimes, these same still life bouquets are inserted into her paintings of imagined scenes, thereby combining her two working methods: observational painting and relaying images from her imagination. Less interested in capturing the exactitudes of the specific flower types or light, the artist prefers to emphasise the overall composition and relationships of shapes and lines, aiming for a kind of descriptive whimsy. Given the scale of her paintings in relation to the human body, the flowers signify different forms of figuration and moods. Her works engage in complex colour games reminiscent of Matisse that challenge conventional expectations, creating a

vibrant palette steeped with emotional nuances. In some of her paintings, flowers become moody, consciously reflecting back to viewers their own experiences and emotions. Saxon-Hill choreographs her characters into psychological engagements that express a longing for connection. Influenced by the CoBrA art movement, she melds figuration and abstraction to create an ever-expanding cast of imagined characters. In short, Saxon-Hill’s paintings celebrate love, sincerity, and the beauty found in everyday life.











# Bella Foster

Bella Foster is known for her intimate paintings of interiors, objects and people rendered primarily in watercolour and gouache. Her works create a moment of ethereal reflection on the artist's life and surroundings. She collects images from books and magazines as well as draws from the places she inhabits and the everyday things around her to create intimately scaled gestural interiors and still life paintings. Elements from historical paintings are grouped with depictions of the common studio items around her, and a surreal narrative imbued with symbolism emerges. A brushstroke from a colour field painting is emulated and transformed into a lamp, a tablecloth becomes a surreal oceanic landscape, and a rock becomes a confused figure on a table. She returns to certain themes and objects frequently. Pencils from her studio, and even her tape dispenser, become heroes in the painted world.

In *Last Time Around* (2023), we see an assortment of objects on a bookshelf we're assuming is the artist's own. Each object has clear personal meaning, and references pop culture and art historical inspirations. Such connections are funny or serendipitous or profound, depending on one's point of view, but they consistently spring from Foster's magnetism towards her subjects, all of which makes each painting a Transformational Object, in the words of psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas; in other words, an environment that enables the self to be the subject of the artwork too.



BELLA FOSTER b. 1975, *Last Time Around*, 2023, Acrylic on canvas, 121.9 x 91.4 cm ; 48 x 36 in.











BELLA FOSTER b. 1975, *The Silverlake Owl*, 2024, Acrylic on canvas, 152.4 x 121.9 cm ; 60 x 48 in.









# Blair Saxon-Hill

While adept in many art mediums including collage, assemblage, and sculpture, Blair Saxon-Hill is primarily an oil painter at this time. Her works are vibrant and playful; they are filled with an overarching sense of empathy and love for the world and people around her. In her 2024 New York Times review of Saxon-Hill's exhibition at SHRINE, Roberta Smith stated, "Saxon-Hill ... works with untroubled ease and zero pretension when painting still lifes of wilting flowers or inhabited interiors."

Working with a keen, and often untraditional, sense of colour, Saxon-Hill paints imagined figurative scenes that feel rich with the fabric of life. Her paintings play with overlays of patterns and inferred textures, and the works often depict folks and friends engaged with one another. She often moves from using larger gestural marks to more fine detailed expressions in a single canvas, rewarding the viewer in different ways at all distances from the work. Collectively, her works harken to the line work of past masters like Matisse and Picasso, while also looking forward with her new and distinct voice that can serve as an emotional balm for our tragic political and environmental times.



BLAIR SAXON-HILL b. 1979, *Peaches*, 2024, Oil on canvas, 213.4 x 152.4 x 3.2 cm ; 84 x 60 x 1 1/4 in.









*"I am most interested in a kind of notational approach to mark making. One that is expressive and leaves much to the imagination and instead I privilege color, line and viewing distance."*

- Blair Saxon-Hill













BLAIR SAXON-HILL b. 1979, **More of You** (detail), 2024, Oil on canvas, 182.9 x 137.2 x 3.2 cm ; 72 x 54 x 1 1/4 in.











*“Never grounded in a specifics but we take in the character of each bouquet - perhaps the twinkling marks that could represent tile, or a large mauve work of blue hydragenas could induce a feeling of late summer joy. Each work is a suggestion for a mood but open ended.”*

- Blair Saxon-Hill











# BELLA FOSTER

1975 Born in Los Angeles, USA  
1998 Bachelor of Fine Arts, School of Visual Arts, New York, USA  
Present Lives and works in Grass Valley, California, USA

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

2024 It was a Dark and Stormy Night, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
2022 You're What This World Needs, The Pit, Palm Springs, USA  
2021 Make Hay, Marinaro Gallery, New York, USA  
2020 We'll Put on the Day and Wear It till Night Comes, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
2018 Does the earth love you back?, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
2017 Food of Light, CANADA, New York, USA  
2015 South Willard, Los Angeles, USA  
2010 Interior, Art Since the Summer of 69, New York, USA  
2008 Still Life (duo show with Elwyn Palmerton), Southfirst, Brooklyn, USA

## Selected Group Exhibitions

2024 Superbloom, The Pit, Palm Springs, USA  
Halfway to Sanity, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
2023 There Will Be Perils at Every Juncture, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
South Willard, Gordon Robichaux, New York, USA  
Place-World, Sean Horton Presents, New York, USA  
2022 The Pit Presents, No. 9 Cork St. | Frieze, London, UK  
2021 Jennifer Rochlin, Bella Foster, and Viola Frey, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
Oasis, The Pit, Palm Springs, USA

The Interior, Venus Over Manhattan Gallery, New York, USA  
Trove, Miami Art-Week Pop-Up (Curated by Artsy), The Edition Hotel, Miami, USA  
2020 Riders of the Red Horse, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
2018 Palo Santo, Ratio 3, San Francisco, USA  
2016 Fort Greene, Venus Over Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA  
2012 Housebound, Heiner Contemporary, Washington D.C., USA  
Material, Salon 94, New York, USA  
2010 Objects, Furniture, and Patterns, Art Since the Summer of 69, New York, USA  
2008 MMVIII, V and A Gallery, New York, USA  
2006 Grand Union, Front Room Gallery, Brooklyn, USA  
2005 Mystery Meat, Future Prospects Gallery, Cubano Quezon City, Republic of the Philippines  
On the Beach, Printed Matter, New York, USA  
Greater Brooklyn, CRG Gallery, New York, USA  
2004 Where are we going? Where do we come from? And where are we going?, Champion Fine Art, Los Angeles, USA  
2003 Girls Gone Wild, Bronwyn Keenan, New York, USA  
The Kids Are Alright, ATM Gallery, New York, USA

## Collections

Fidelity Investments Corporate Art Collection, Boston, USA  
David Kordansky Private Collection, Los Angeles, USA  
X Museum, Beijing, China  
Xiao Museum of Contemporary Art, Rizhao City, Shandong Province, China





# BLAIR SAXON-HILL

1979 Born in Eugene, OR, USA  
2002 Reed College, Studio Art, Portland, Oregon, USA  
Present Lives and works in Los Angeles, USA

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

2024 Women, Wildflowers, Goats and the Sea, Collaborations, Copenhagen, Denmark  
Even Then Flowers Bloom, SHRINE, New York, USA  
2023 Spirits, Queens, Dogs and Flowers, SHRINE, Los Angeles, USA  
2022 Shrimp Head Momma, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA  
City Dip, Pace Prints, New York, USA  
2018 As If Without Us We Could Be We, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA  
2017 Laid Me Out, Tahoe Gallery, Sierra Nevada College, Artist Curated Projects, Los Angeles, USA  
2016 to no ending except ourselves, JOAN, Los Angeles, USA  
2015 No Edge to Nature, Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR, USA  
2014 From the Beginning (Yet Further On), Littman Gallery, Portland, OR, USA  
Confounding Medium, North View Gallery, Portland, OR, USA  
2011 Tonal Sequence, Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR, USA  
2008 Beyond the Way Station, Lunar Boy Gallery, Astoria, OR, USA  
2002 Evocation of the Empathetic Response Through a Material Linguistic, Feldenheimer Gallery, Reed College, Portland, OR, USA

## Selected Group Exhibitions

2024 Color and Form, Pace Prints, New York, USA

Effetto Notte: Day for Night, Gallerie Nazionali di Arte Antica in collaboration with Aïshti Foundation, Rome, Italy  
Halfway to Sanity, The Pit, Los Angeles, USA  
2022 Some Dogs, Curated by Pamela Hornik, San Francisco, USA  
New Editions, Pace Prints, New York, USA  
Indie Folk, WSU Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Pullman, WA, USA  
2021 Soft Water, Hard Stone, New Museum International Triennial of Contemporary Art, New York, USA  
The Inaugural Exhibition, Nino Mier Gallery, Brussels, Belgium  
2020 Gest, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA  
Five Year Anniversary Exhibition, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA  
Indie Folk, Adams & Ollman, Portland, OR, USA  
PAPER (and one on wood) online viewing room, Nino Mier, Los Angeles, USA  
What Needs to Be Said, Disjecta, Portland, OR, USA  
2019 What Needs to Be Said, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Salem, OR, USA  
What Needs to Be Said, Umpqua Community College, Roseburg, OR, USA  
2018 Pussy, King of the Pirates, Maccarone, Los Angeles, USA  
2017 Concrete Island, Venus Over Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA  
2016 Sister City Project: Portland, 500m Museum, Sapporo, Japan  
Outside the Museum, PICA TBA Festival, Pioneer Courthouse Square, Portland, OR, USA  
Out of Sight, King Street Station, Seattle, USA  
Good Neighbor, Hedreen Gallery, Seattle University, Seattle, USA  
Plus One, Traywick Gallery, Berkeley, CA, USA  
2015 Stilleven: Contemporary Still Life, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Salem, OR, USA



The World Is Not the Earth, Adams & Ollman Gallery, Portland, OR, USA

Crow’s Shadow Institute of the Arts, Jacobs Gallery, Eugene, OR, USA

Dirty Peach, LA Art Book Fair, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA

2014 Portland2014: A Biennial of Contemporary Art, Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, Portland, OR, USA

New Art 2.0, Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, IN, USA

2013 Subject, Answer, Countersubject, Disjecta Center for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR, USA

2012 Interior Margins, The Lumber Room, Portland, OR, USA

Group Exhibition, Regional Arts and Culture Council, Portland, OR, USA

2011 Blair Saxon-Hill and Emily Bixler, Union Pine, Portland, OR, USA

2010 Morph/Shift: Perspectives on Non-Objective, Abstract, Experimental Painting, Pacific Northwest College of Art, curated by Mack McFarland, Portland, OR, USA

SUMMER SHOW 2010, Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR, USA

Grants and Awards

2023 Out of State Career Opportunity Grant, The Ford Family Foundation, OR, USA

2020 Career Opportunity Grant, Oregon Arts Commission and The Ford Family Foundation, OR, USA

2018 Painters and Sculptors Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York, USA

2017 Career Opportunity Grant, Oregon Arts Commission, OR, USA

2016 Hallie Ford Fellowship, The Ford Family Foundation, OR, USA

Oregon Arts Commission Fellowship, OR, USA

2013 Career Opportunity Grant, Oregon Arts Commission, OR, USA

Career Opportunity Grant, The Ford Family Foundation, OR, USA

Golden Spot Award, The Ford Family Foundation, OR, USA

2010 Professional Development Grant, Regional Arts and Culture Council, Portland, OR, USA

Artist Publications

2015 Dirty Peach, Artist Book, Colpa Press, San Francisco, USA

2014 Folder Level, Artist Book, Blair Saxon-Hill with assistance of Publication Studio, Portland, OR, USA

The Riso Book, Artist Book, Colpa Press, San Francisco, USA

Publication Studio Portland Biennial, Publication Studio, Portland, OR, USA

2012 Summer Sigs '12 Anthology, Artist Book, Container Corp., Portland, OR, USA

Collections

Aïshti Foundation, Rome, Italy

Beth DeWoody Collection, New York, and Palm Beach, FLA, USA



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[www.pearllam.com](http://www.pearllam.com)  
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