

# LISSON GALLERY

*Los Angeles Times*  
10 March 2026

## Los Angeles Times

### L.A. artists — scathed by fire — dominate New York’s most talked about art show



Los Angeles artist Kelly Akashi lost her Altadena home in the Eaton fire last year. Her work, which reflects her experience, is being shown at the Whitney Biennial in New York City. (David Butow / For the Times)

By Grant Klarich Johnson

March 10, 2026 3 AM PT

- One in six artists at this year’s Whitney Biennial have L.A. ties, making the city’s contemporary art scene extra visible in the prestigious exhibition.
- Displaced by January’s devastating fires, some L.A.-based artists are processing loss and resilience through their work.
- From glass sculptures to abstract collages, the artists grapple with memory, home and survival in the aftermath of displacement.

“We evacuated on January 7th, and never returned,” the artist Teresa Baker tells me when we connect to talk about the work she’s made for this year’s Whitney Biennial, which is among the country’s most influential exhibitions of contemporary American art.

Hosted every two years by the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, this year's biennial features 56 artists and collectives, roughly 1 in 6 of whom have lived and worked in Los Angeles in the time since the survey's last iteration. The mass destruction wrought by last January's L.A. fires made that interval far from routine, and like Baker, many participating artists have spent time recovering or rebuilding.

Baker, her husband and their three young children — all under the age of 5 — moved five times in the last year. First to San Diego, then to San Francisco and New York City, and finally twice within Montana, a state Baker has known since childhood.

Baker's Indigenous and German heritage inform her three large abstract collage hangings, created using synthetic turf animated by acrylic paint, yarn and a variety of natural materials, including corn husk, willow, buffalo hide and buckskin. They are undeniably painterly. The pieces, says Baker, were made “in a tumultuous time, a time of transition.”



Installation view of Whitney Biennial 2026. Hyundai Terrace Commission Kelly Akashi 2026. “Monument (Altadena).” (Timothy Schenck)

Another L.A.-based artist, Kelly Akashi, who lost her home and studio in Altadena, has erected “Monument (Altadena),” a glass chimney on the Whitney’s outdoor patio. Inspired by the brick-and-mortar version left behind on the site of her former home, it stands as a solemn icon, echoing hundreds of other slender survivors that still dot the L.A.-area burn scars, as well as Manhattan’s many skyscrapers that now frame it.

The chimney, says Akashi, is “a kind of restless object. It only functions with a home.” Once you create a chimney that stands alone, “it always signals that absence.”

Sculptor Sula Bermúdez-Silverman — who, like Akashi, often works with glass — has also been thinking about home in relation to the loss brought about by the L.A. fires.

The biennial’s catalog features Bermúdez-Silverman in conversation with her father, the psychoanalyst George Bermúdez, and in it Bermúdez-Silverman says that the Eaton fire in Altadena “has been a big catalyst for me to rethink my own relationship to material things, and also about the broader impact of consumption, which has led me to live more minimally.”

# LISSON GALLERY

*The Art Newspaper*  
25 February 2026



**THE ART NEWSPAPER**  
AMTD 1984

## How four Los Angeles artists are doing a year after the wildfires

Kelly Akashi, Christina Quarles, Adam Ross and Kathryn Andrews, all of whom lost their homes in the Eaton and Palisades fires, reflect on the last year



Scarlet Cheng  
25 February 2026

Altadena on 7 January 2026, the anniversary of the Eaton fire  
Photo: Ted Soqui/SIPA, courtesy Sipa USA/Alamy Live News

A year can stretch far too long for artists who have lost not only their homes but their studios and even their archives. In 2025, *The Art Newspaper* interviewed four Los Angeles-based artists who lost one or a combination of those vital armatures in the devastating fires in January of that year. Kelly Akashi, Christina Quarles and Adam Ross had homes and studios in Altadena, an area in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains that was heavily impacted by the Eaton fire. And Kathryn Andrews lived in the Pacific Palisades and lost her home in the Palisades fire. All four artists returned to work quickly, proving both their resilience and resourcefulness, but the fires and their aftermath continue to affect their lives and work.

Akashi had lost both her house and studio in the Eaton fire. She rebounded quickly because she had to—she had an upcoming show at Lisson Gallery, originally scheduled to open in late January 2025. She managed to salvage work from the ashes of her studio and make enough new art to open her show on 20 February—just in time to overlap with Frieze Los Angeles. Some of her recovered bronze and glass pieces had signs of fire damage, but she came to see these as an integral part of the work. Next month, Akashi will participate in the Whitney Biennial in New York, for which she says she is making “a glass and mortar re-creation of my chimney”.

Determined to keep working, she has had to make art “in many different places” this past year, including “in the basement of my new rental; a studio donated by the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; extra space the foundry I worked with gave me; and recently, my new studio in San Gabriel”.

Like many artists, Akashi says she was severely underinsured and that it will take another six months to a year to sort out when and how she might rebuild. Of course, finances are a major consideration. “Homeowners’ insurance was very fast, but my business-income insurance has been a nightmare,” she says. “My art insurance has still not provided anything either.” Indeed, a major hurdle for many Los Angeles artists has been getting properly compensated for the works damaged or destroyed by smoke, fire and ash.



Kelly Akashi's *Monument* (2025) was on view as part of her Lisson Gallery show last year  
© Kelly Akashi, courtesy Lisson

# LISSON GALLERY

*HYUNDAI*

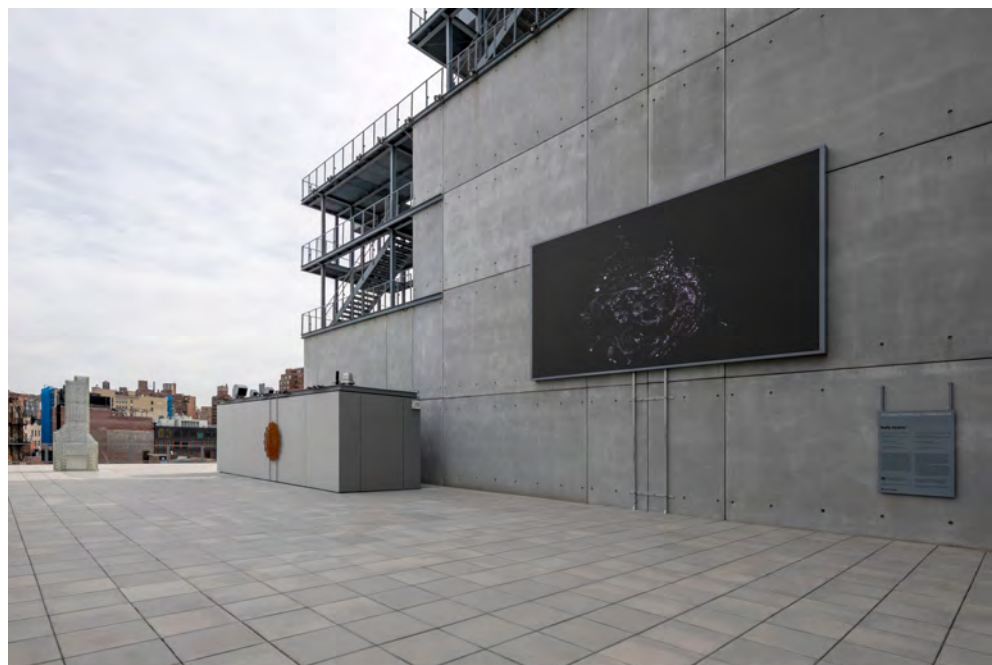
4 March 2026



## **Hyundai Motor and the Whitney Museum of American Art Present *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi* as part of *Whitney Biennial 2026***

- *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi* to open on the Whitney Museum's fifth-floor terrace from March 8 through August 23, 2026, the third in a series of commissions supported by Hyundai Motor Company
- Kelly Akashi to present a site-specific sculptural installation and outdoor-screen animation, exploring themes of memory and resilience
- Hyundai Motor supports the Whitney Biennial, the museum's landmark exhibition series and the longest-running survey of American art, and the Hyundai Terrace Commission as part of its 10-year partnership with the Whitney





**SEOUL/NEW YORK, March 4, 2026** – Hyundai Motor Company and the Whitney Museum of American Art today announced the opening of *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi*, a site-specific presentation by Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi on Whitney’s fifth-floor outdoor gallery. This marks the third Hyundai Terrace Commission since the 10-year partnership between Hyundai Motor and the Whitney was established in 2024. Part of the *Whitney Biennial 2026*, on view from March 8 through August 23, 2026, the commission brings together a new sculptural installation, steel relief, works on paper, and an outdoor-screen animation across the Whitney’s terrace and adjacent spaces.

Anchoring the presentation is *Monument (Altadena)* (2026), a chimney and walkway installation that takes shape as both reconstruction and memorial. After Akashi’s home and studio burned in the Eaton Fire in January 2025, the chimney was the only structure left standing. For the Hyundai Terrace Commission, the artist has worked with a mason to reconstruct the chimney piece by piece alongside a reconstruction of her home’s pathway, rendered in luminous cast glass brick. Installed on the terrace, the work transforms the Whitney’s outdoor gallery into a charged site of witness and a meditation on survival, rupture, and the fragile permanence of what remains.

Also on the terrace, *Inheritance (Distressed)* (2026) is installed on the bulkhead south of *Monument*

*(Altadena)*. The work draws from a personal archive, Akashi's grandmother's doilies, which the artist rescued from a family garage sale and later lost in the same fire. Combining images generated from pre-fire scans with weathering steel (Cor-Ten), a material historically associated with Minimalist sculpture and coded masculinity, the work brings two histories into contact: one intimate and one cultural which reflects on the struggle to know what to do with what we inherit.

Inside the museum, *Imprints* (2026) comprises five framed works on paper. On the terrace's outdoor screen, *Remnants (Constellations)* (2026) extends the presentation into moving image, offering an animated counterpart to the exhibition's material investigations of trace, memory, and aftermath.



*“The act of rebuilding is not simply about material endurance; it is a deliberate labor of care, an engagement with history, and an act of reclamation. In laying each brick, my sculpture mirrors the gestures of memory itself, emphasizing that remembrance is not given, it is constructed through care and persistence. Each brick carries the record of labor and material transformation; together, they compose a new body that holds the traces of its past.”* – **Artist Kelly Akashi.**

*“For the Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi, we were drawn to Kelly for her command of multiple mediums, and in particular for her skillful use of glass and steel. She has met the technical and conceptual demands of large-scale outdoor sculpture with aplomb, producing a monumental work that stands as a resolute testament to remembrance and the legacies that shape our collective and individual histories.”* – **Marcela Guerrero, DeMartini Family Curator of Whitney Museum of American Art.**

*“Weaving together intimate personal histories with broader collective narratives, Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi offers a moment to reflect on memory and resilience. It challenges us to consider the potential for a solidarity that transcends the individual to embrace the communal, aligning with the Hyundai Terrace Commission’s commitment to sharing transformative artistic experiences with a wider audience.”* – **DooEun Choi, Art Director of Hyundai Motor Company.**

Driven by a shared commitment to presenting the most relevant art and ideas of our time, Hyundai Motor’s multiyear partnership with the Whitney includes support for both the Hyundai Terrace Commission and the Whitney Biennial, the museum’s landmark exhibition of contemporary American art, presented every two years.

Hyundai Terrace Commission is an annual, site-specific project on the Whitney Museum’s fifth-floor outdoor gallery. The commission offers an expansive platform for artists to experiment at scale and to engage the museum’s terrace as an interface between art, the built environment, and the surrounding city.

This year’s Biennial, the 82<sup>nd</sup> edition of the exhibition series, offers a vivid, atmospheric survey of fifty-six artists, duos, and collectives shaped by a moment of profound transition. The work on view examines varied forms of relationality, from interspecies and familial kinships to geopolitical entanglements, technological affinities, shared mythologies, and the infrastructures that support and constrain contemporary life. Rather than offering a definitive answer to life today, the exhibition foregrounds mood and texture, inviting visitors into environments that evoke tension, tenderness, humor, and unease, while proposing imaginative, unruly, and unexpected forms of coexistence.

**\*Whitney Biennial 2026 is co-organized by Whitney Museum curators Marcela Guerrero, DeMartini Family Curator, and Drew Sawyer, Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography, with Beatriz Cifuentes, Biennial Curatorial Assistant, and Carina Martinez, Rubio Butterfield Family Fellow.**

**\*\*Accompanied images are approved only for publication in conjunction with the promotion of the *Whitney Biennial 2026* and the *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi*. Each image must not be cropped, bled off the page, colorized, solarized, overlaid with other elements (e.g., tone, text, another image, etc.), or otherwise altered, except in terms of overall size. Reproductions must include the full caption information adjacent to the image. Use of images for front covers may incur a fee and will require prior authorization from the owner and copyright holder of the work. Please contact the Whitney Press Office for such use at [pressoffice@whitney.org](mailto:pressoffice@whitney.org).**

### **Image Credit**

- Image 1-3: *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi*, 2026. Photo: Timothy Schenck.
- Image 4-5: Installation view of the *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, March 8–August 23, 2026). Photo: Steven Probert.

### **About Kelly Akashi**

Kelly Akashi (b. 1983, Los Angeles) is a sculptor whose practice examines impermanence, temporality, and the material traces of human experience. Executed with rigorous conceptual intent and a deep reverence for process, her work spans glass, bronze, stone, and cast materials, and often uses the hand as a recurring motif. Akashi's sculptures, which range from glass-blown flowers and towering weeds to cast hands, bodies, and extinct shells, offer a poetic yet unsentimental reflection on mortality and transience. She holds a BFA from Otis College of Art & Design and an MFA from the University of Southern California, studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, and recently completed an artist residency at Pilchuck Glass School in 2025.

### **About Hyundai Motor's Art Projects**

For over a decade, Hyundai Motor Company has deepened its partnerships with museums and cultural organizations worldwide, including Tate, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Hyundai Translocal Series is a new partnership initiative that roots itself in fostering dialogues and collaborations among art institutions in Korea and across the globe. Hyundai Motor's own art initiatives include open call programs such as the VH AWARD, the Hyundai Blue Prize+, and Artlab Editorial, a digital platform dedicated to art writing by transnational voices. These ongoing collaborations embrace the complexities of the cultural landscape by exploring new ideas and perspectives within and beyond the art ecosystem.

For further information, visit [artlab.hyundai.com](http://artlab.hyundai.com) or follow [@hyundai.artlab](https://www.instagram.com/hyundai.artlab) [#HyundaiArtlab](https://twitter.com/HyundaiArtlab).

Artnet

3 March 2026

## artnet

Art & Exhibitions

### First Looks at the 2026 Whitney Biennial: Politics, Memory, and Unexpected Emotion

Here are our quick takes on the 82nd edition of the sprawling exhibition.



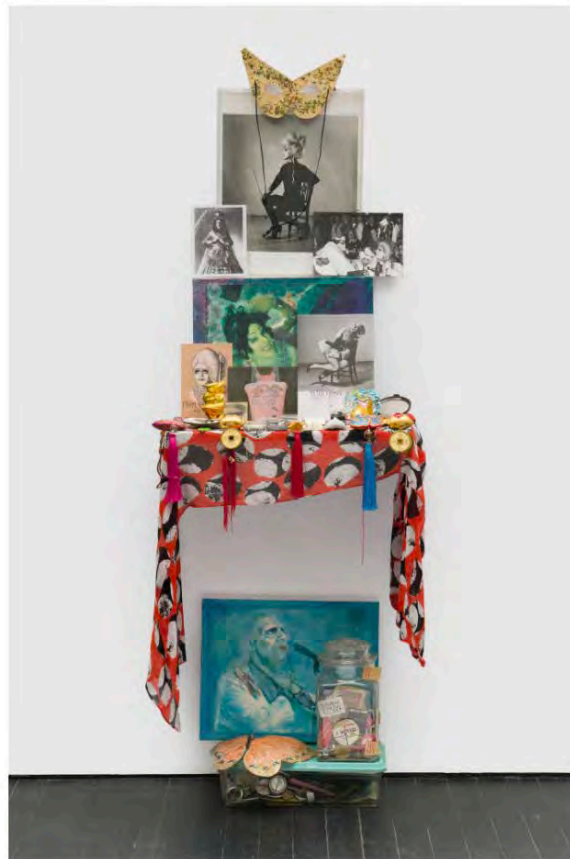
Leo Castañeda, still from *Carnoflux: Levels & Bosses (Igapó)* (2023–25). Photo courtesy the artist. © Leo Castañeda and Maria Thereza Negreiros.

The 82nd Whitney Biennial opens this weekend at New York’s Whitney Museum of American Art, featuring 56 artists, duos, and collectives. Organized by Marcela Guerrero and Drew Sawyer, this year’s edition arrives without a theme, but there were unifying threads.

The result is a sprawling exhibition that rewards slow looking—and likely repeat visits. A few things are immediately apparent: there’s a noticeable dearth of painting, a wide range of materials and formats, and an overtly political bent, with several notably brave curatorial choices.

The last biennial, cheekily titled “Even Better Than the Real Thing,” drew a mixed response. Our knee-jerk reaction this morning? This is better. Here are our quick takes from the preview.

## A Broad View of America



Agosto Machado, *Ethyl (Altar)*, 2024. Photo ©Agosto Machado.

Under the second administration of President Donald Trump, there has been a growing fear that museums are self-censoring. The White House has pressured the Smithsonian Institution to eliminate what it has dubbed “improper ideology”—basically anything that acknowledges this nation’s history of racism, sexism, or discrimination, or celebrates different identities.

The Whitney Biennial, at least, is not obeying in advance. Roughly 30 percent of participants identify as queer. Five are Indigenous. Three are Palestinian. Over a third were born outside the U.S. Five don’t currently live in the country.

This may be America’s big biennial, but, as Guerrero said during the press preview’s introductory remarks, the curators were “interested in thinking about places outside of the geopolitical borders of the United States, and thinking a little bit more broadly.”

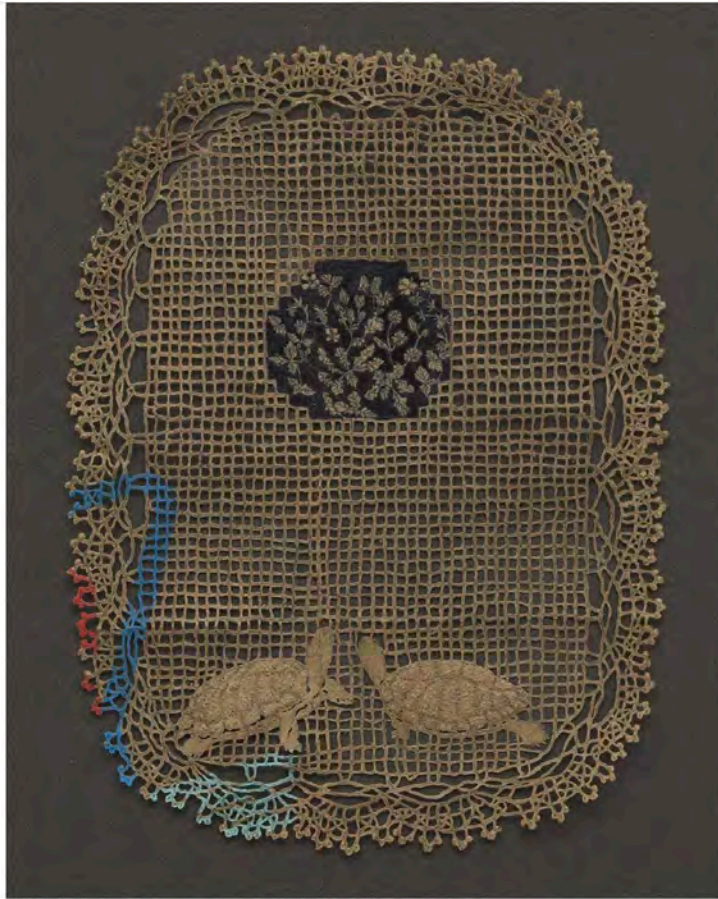


Teresa Baker's work at the Whitney Biennial 2026. Photo: Sarah Cascone.

Trump has worked to restrict the rights and recognition of the trans community, including through an executive order recognizing only the male and female sexes. The Whitney has given participating artists the opportunity to provide preferred pronouns, and 10 of them use they.

Agosto Machado has literally built shrines and altars to his friends from the drag queen scene, a body of work he began creating in the 1960s and continued during the AIDS epidemic. These deeply personal tributes to friends and loved ones incorporate keepsakes and ephemera, photographs, jewelry, and even artworks by artists including Peter Hujar.

There are also nods to the importance of environmentalism and dangers of climate change—some more overt than others.



Jasmin Sian, *Spring dandelion and wild strawberries with Texas bayou ghost turtles* (2025). Photo: courtesy of Anthony Meier, New York.

Teresa Baker, of the Mandan Hidatsa nation, incorporates foraged twigs and buffalo hide hunted by her father into her large-scale works on synthetic turf, imbuing each piece with a tension between the natural and artificial.

Jasmin Sian's delicate paper cuttings look like antique lace doilies, but are actually made from littered paper bags the artist collects while biking to work. Her designs feature animals she encounters riding along the Manhattan Greenway, a tribute to nature's uneasy coexistence with humankind.



Installation view of Whitney Biennial 2026 at the Whitney Museum of American Art of Kelly Akashi's terrace commission, *Monument (Altadena)*, 2026. Photo: Timothy Schenck, courtesy of Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

elly Akashi is also working with lace, with embossed imprints of her grandmother's doilies, and an enlargement cut from Corten steel. The originals were destroyed when the artist's home burned down in last year's Eaton Fire, which destroyed much of Los Angeles's Altadena neighborhood.

All that remained from the blaze was the chimney, which Akashi recreated here on the museum's fifth floor terrace in ghostly cast glass. *Monument (Altadena)* is a memorial, but also a warning, as fires fueled by climate change grow ever stronger and more destructive.

—Sarah Cascone

## A Turn Toward Sincerity



Detail of Emilie Louise Gossiaux's *Kong Play*, featuring hand-sculpted ceramic replicas of a guide dog's favorite chew toy. Photo: Angela Kelley.

The poster child of the 2024 Whitney Biennial was Matt Dryhurst and Holly Herndon's *xhairymutantx*, a battle-hardened A.I.-generated warrior princess. This year, by contrast, the elevator doors open onto a sea of 100 hand-sculpted ceramic dog toys in a rainbow of colors. Emilie Louise Gossiaux's *Kong Play* may initially read as whimsical, but it is, in fact, an elegy.

The work is artist and disability activist Gossiaux's memorial to their departed guide dog, London. As the wall text notes, they began creating the sculptures when London's health started deteriorating in 2024. By producing multiples of their dog's favorite chew toy, they imagined a pleasure-filled afterlife for London, who died in September 2025.

The installation is surrounded by drawings of the artist and London. In one, the dog offers Gossiaux a flower in another, they roll together in a glade in my favorite, they are both bipedal but have exchanged bodies. Gossiaux appears to be illustrating a psychic connection and interchangeability so complete it borders on the mythic. In these images, they resemble zoomorphic Egyptian deities—immortal. Altogether, Gossiaux makes the profound bond one feels toward a service animal visceral.



Mao Ishikawa, *Untitled*, from the series "Akabanaa (Red Flowers)" (1975-77). © Mao Ishikawa. Courtesy of POETIC SCAPE. Photo: Mao Ishikawa

The heart is the point. An unabashed emotional current runs through this biennial. It is not armored in irony or buffered by theory. Even when artists deploy camp or exaggeration, it feels less like a wink than a way to intensify feeling rather than deflect it. More than once, I found myself holding back tears. In a world that often feels on fire, detachment feels untenable. Connection is the point.

Another moving selection comes from the 22-year-old Japanese photographer Mao Ishikawa, an Okinawa native born during the United States's postwar occupation of the island. Selections from two series—"Red Flower (Akabanaa)" (1975-77) and "Life in Philly" (1986)—trace her engagement with lives shaped by American military power, from bar hostesses and Black G.I.s in Okinawa to the everyday world of a former soldier she later visited in Philadelphia. Across both bodies of work, she foregrounds intimacy and mutual recognition, drawing parallels between Okinawan and Black American experiences of discrimination.

—William Van Meter



Installation view of Zach Blas, *CULTUS* (2023) at the Whitney Biennial. Photo: Eileen Kinsella

Given the current concern and seemingly peak obsession with artificial intelligence and its implications, the biennial overall felt surprisingly light on A.I. exploration and themes. However, the artworks and projects that do focus on it go very big and seem quite ominous.

It starts with the first work on view (if you start in the dedicated lobby gallery): Zach Blas's *CULTUS* (2023), a massive room-filling installation of high-definition video and surround sound, LED spheres and panels, and 3D-printed, vitrine-encased "Spanish Tickler" torture objects. *CULTUS* focuses on religious beliefs related to A.I., including how the technology is sometimes seen as having god-like powers.

The installation is a spin on Elizabethan occultist John Dee's Holy Table, complete with a giant orb at the center. It features text pumped out by A.I. models trained on everything ranging from tech company mission statements, to holy books, sadomasochistic erotica, political manifestoes, and much more. Machine learning was also used to create the audio, featuring prophetic voices that read out from the cryptic texts that are suspended from chains on each of the four walls.

Elsewhere, Cooper Jacoby's *Estate* (January 21, 2016), from 2024, has sculptures that look like door intercoms and are fitted with cameras that surveil the surrounding environment. Jacoby installed "reactive A.I. models" that are trained on social media posts from people who formerly worked in creative industries but are no longer alive. The models respond to visual cues from the various viewers and also have LED screen counters that track the time since the death of the respective people, down to the minute.

—Eileen Kinsella

## Two Aesthetics of Colonial Resistance



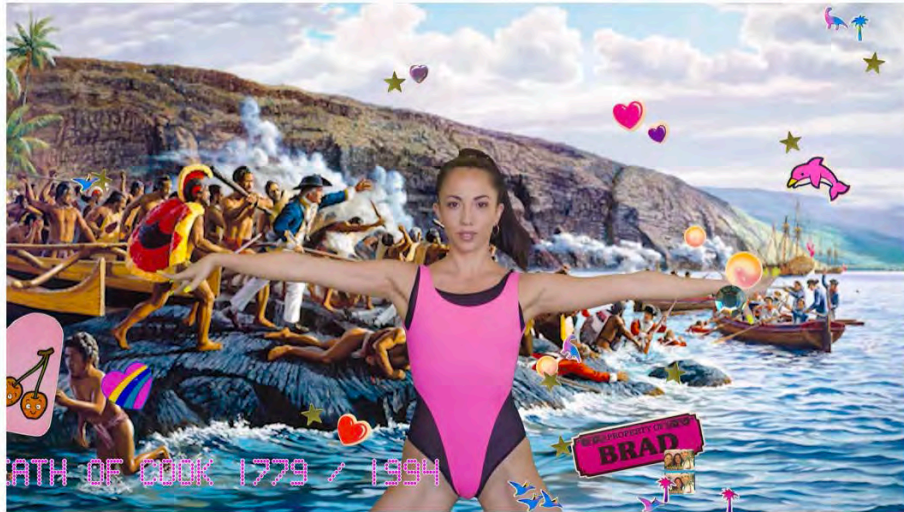
Installation view of Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, *Until we became fire and fire us* (2023–ongoing).  
Photo: Angela Kelley.

In 2024, the Portland-based artist Demian Din Yazhi made waves for secretly embedding “Free Palestine” in a neon sculpture. Last year, the museum canceled a pro-Palestinian performance scheduled as part of its Independent Study Program exhibition, citing concerns that elements of the piece violated its community guidelines. The decision sparked accusations of censorship from students and alumni, public protests, and ultimately the museum’s announcement that it would pause the ISP for the following academic year.

Against that backdrop, Brooklyn- and Palestine-based duo Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme present *Until we became fire and fire us*, a three-channel immersive video and sound installation that is as powerful as it is absorbing—and one of the strongest works in the exhibition. Its presence feels significant. There is no need for coded gestures or embedded slogans here: the politics are neither hidden nor softened.

English and Arabic text drifts across the screen: “On long drives from Jerusalem to Haifa my father would say if you see cactus know that a Palestinian village used to be there.” Later, another line appears: “The land will testify that where there is now a beach there was a village.” The work unfolds like a passage through memory and dream, where land itself becomes witness.

Ambient atmospherics give way to thundering drums: images of wind-blown plants and rocky terrain dissolve into color-saturated scenes of dancing bodies that feel at once joyous and ghostly. Archival drawings made by Abou-Rahme’s father in Jerusalem decades ago surface and recede. Traditional songs braid with contemporary sound. The cumulative effect is deeply moving—a return to places that no longer exist in fact, yet persist in memory, song, and image.



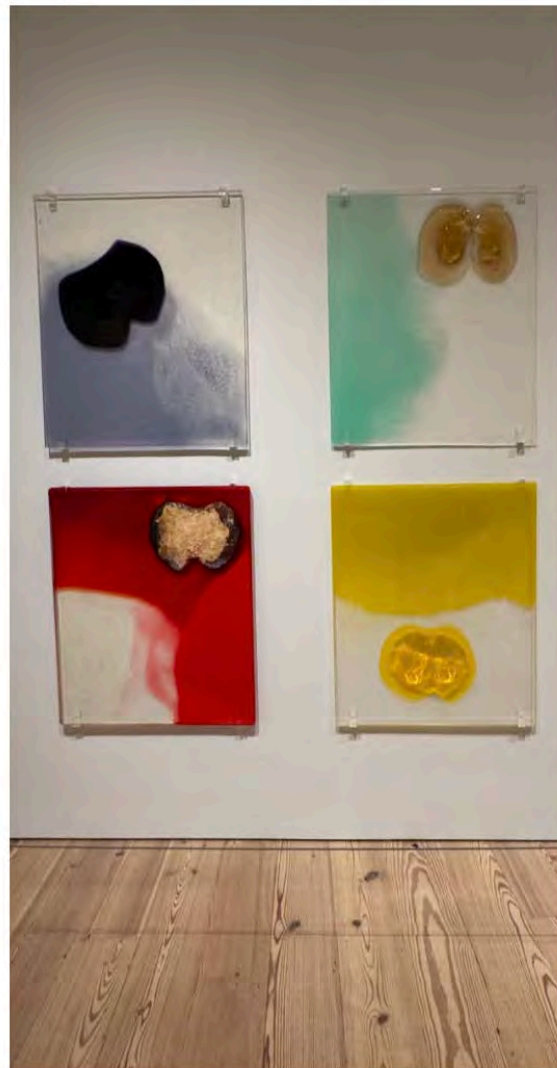
kekahi wahi (Sancia Miala Shiba Nash and Drew K. Broderick) and Bradley Capello, still from *20-minute workout (work in progress)*, 2023. Released by Aupuni Space, starring Maddie Biven, Josh Tengan, Lise Michelle Suguitan Childers, Reise Kochi, Sean Connelly, and YOU. Kealakekua, Ka'awaloa, Kona, Hawai'i. © kekahi wahi. Image courtesy the artists.

It is jarring, then, to step from this elegy for a fractured homeland directly into the kitschy workout-video universe of Hawaiian artist duo kekahi Wahi—all hot leotards, leg-warmers, lacquered yellow fingernails, and animated hearts and dolphins that float across the screen. But Sancia Miala Shiba Nash and Drew K. Broderick are simply using a different tactic to deliver an anti-colonial critique.

Their aerobics squad performs in front of a monument to Captain James Cook, the British naval officer credited with “discovering” islands that were already populated—his voyages later associated with the spread of disease across the South Pacific.

—William Van Meter

## Unlikely Materials



Installation view of Nour Mobarak's *Reproductive Logistics*, featuring resin panels incorporating bodily casts and organic materials. Photo: Angela Kelley.

There was a preponderance of the handmade and the found, and a real curiosity about material. Precious Okoyomon incorporated dolls, while the fashion collective CFGNY Frankenstein-ed stuffed animals together into a sculptural form. The Brooklyn-based artist Malcolm Peacock, meanwhile, interpreted a coastal redwood tree with 3,500 braids of synthetic hair (it took him 10 months to prep the strands).

Elsewhere, Nour Mobarak—a Cairo-born artist who lives in Greece and on Bainbridge Island in Washington—presented *Reproductive Logistics*, a series of gorgeously graphic sculptures cast from her own body. In addition to resin, she used turkey tail, mycelium, dehydrated blood, breast milk, and semen. The results are startlingly beautiful given such inchoate ingredients.



Malcolm Peacock, *Five of them were hers and she carved shelters with windows into the backs of their skulls* (2024). Photo: Angela Kelley.

Performance-based artist Nile Harris (who will stage live performances with Dyer Rhoads) promises to bring *Dark Brown Birkin Bag, 2026* to life, according to the wall text—though one hopes this is simply performance-art parlance, since the listed materials read: “artist’s skin, thread, and hardware.”

—William Van Meter

“Whitney Biennial 2026” will be on view at the Whitney Museum of American Art, 99 Gansevoort Street, New York, New York, March 8–August 23, 2026.

# LISSON GALLERY

*The New York Times*  
24 February 2026

## The New York Times



The artist Kelly Akashi searches through the rubble of her Altadena home and studio in June for artworks that survived. Her home was one of thousands lost between January's various fires throughout the city. Credit...Adali Schell for The New York Times

On Jan. 7, 2025, high Santa Ana winds lashed Los Angeles. The wildfire danger was extreme. By evening, as the Pacific Palisades burned across town, Kelly Akashi took her cat, Turnip, and a few keepsakes and left her house in Altadena, in the San Gabriel Valley. Between 4 and 5 a.m. the next morning, a wall of flame consumed her whole block.

Akashi, 42, grew up in east Los Angeles. She studied at [Otis College of Art and Design](#), teaches at [ArtCenter](#) in Pasadena and is prominent in the craft and contemporary art scenes. Like thousands of others, she sustained devastating losses in the Eaton Fire: a Spanish Colonial bungalow she bought in 2021, with a studio full of artwork and materials. Now, the only structure standing on her lot is a brick chimney.

She has channelled that loss into her art. For the 2026 Whitney Biennial in New York, which opens March 8, Akashi will debut a major new sculpture, "Monument (Altadena)," a 13-foot chimney and a walkway, both made of clear glass bricks.



The original chimney in Altadena, all that remains of Kelly Akashi's house. Her new artwork, a glassy double, is at the Whitney Biennial in New York--a testament to her determination to move on. Credit...Kelly Akashi

This January, as the work was being installed on a fifth-floor terrace of the Whitney, we met for an interview. We had been speaking regularly about her recovery process for a year.

Akashi was pensive and candid, as usual. Focused. And tired. Having a big project had helped her keep going. "I'm obviously not as destabilized as exactly a year ago," she said, but "it's all hitting me now."

The glass chimney is a close replica of the one in Altadena, built in 1926. But it's another order of experience. Akashi would never simply move her chimney from Altadena to New York, she said. She is wary of framing the work too starkly in terms of the fire. It's not disaster porn. The work is personal, of course, but it speaks to broader questions of home, belonging and rest. She thinks of the sculpture as "giving a kind of materiality to restlessness." It's not a tombstone, it's a vitrified ghost.



A bottom section of Akashi's installation, a glass twin of her Altadena chimney awaits installation at the 2026 Whitney Biennial. It will stand 13 feet tall on a terrace. The work "is personal, of course," Akashi said, "but it speaks to broader questions of home, belonging and rest." Credit... Timothy O'Connell for The New York Times

With brickwork, this is simply not done. The head mason, [Christian Inga](#), who started learning his trade at age 7, said he'd never moved anything he'd built.

Glass bricks are tricky. At the factory, the hot glass is ladled into molds rather than cut like clay, which causes slight variations. Akashi's builders hand-sorted the bricks by thickness to keep the rows level. They painted each brick with a special additive to help the mortar adhere. There are also structural concerns. The sculpture has to sustain 100-mph winds, with no house to support it. The base portions are anchored to a steel leveling plate that took the better part of a day to adjust, fastened to a concrete slab.

The project resonated with Inga's team, he told me. "My guys, they're not from here. They're Ecuadorean," he said, from Girón, a town renowned for its workers. His father, also a mason, immigrated from Ecuador in the 1970s. "They really can't go back home. So I told them, look, make this with the intention of a homage to your home."



Installation process for Kelly Akashi's chimney at the 2026 Whitney Biennial, with a close up of glass bricks and mortar.

## The Debris Field

I visited Akashi in February 2025, about six weeks after the wildfires. There had been some hand-wringing about whether the Frieze Art Fair and its satellite events should still happen. In public and in private, including on a video call with local gallerists, Akashi argued adamantly that keeping the show going was the best way to support artists and art workers. The fair moved forward as planned.

Akashi had a solo show at Lisson Gallery opening that week. Her studio was gone, but three bronzes had survived the fire, with a new patina. Other pieces had been safe at the foundry. She had time to remake the glass and stone elements she'd lost. Marcela Guerrero and Drew Sawyer, the Whitney Biennial's in-house curators, had planned a studio visit but saw her show instead. She was one of the first artists they invited to participate. They told me that her chimney work resonates with the biennial's themes of climate crisis.

Akashi and I drove through Altadena to her property. The fires had been capricious. The flames jumped from house to house, sometimes skipping a structure, leaving lawns intact. The trees still had green leaves. The few chimneys jutting from the gray rubble would need to be inspected by a structural engineer, and potentially demolished.



Akashi also rescued blackened branches, and charred lace doilies from her grandmother, for possible use in artworksCredit...Adali Schell for The New York Times

“See the light there?” Akashi pointed to a patch of paler ashes near her hearth, in the greater ash heap that had been her living room. “That’s my whole library.”

She had been collecting materials from the site, including buckets full of book ash. “I want to turn some of it into a diamond and wear it,” she said. Or she might mix it with an acrylic binder, to make a sort of paint. She also rescued blackened branches, and charred lace doilies from her grandmother, for possible use in artworks. Her Whitney presentation includes animated CT scans of doilies on a jumbo outdoor screen.

There’s a low-hanging irony: Akashi, who often uses flame to shape metal and glass, whose sculptures include casts of her body and hand-shaped candles, lost her house and studio in a fire.

Akashi works in many materials, including, in order of heat resistance, wax, paper, stone, bronze and glass. She hadn’t bothered to open her baked flat file, which contained everything from handmade paper to rubbings from the Japanese internment camp in Arizona where her father spent World War II. Much of her stone had cracked in the heat, but a couple of pieces might be usable. Bronze starts to melt at 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit and liquefies at about 2,000 degrees. The fire didn’t get that hot, she thinks, because she has pulled lots of bronzes from the wreckage, relatively unscathed. The borosilicate glass Akashi uses, the stuff of Pyrex, softens at 1,500 and liquefies by 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit. The glass sculptures she lost had been smashed.



Left, ruined sculptures and materials from Akashi's studio. At right, glass rods, the raw glass after the fire, materials Akashi used for her art.

Her electric kiln, scorched and discolored, had held its shape. A glass chain, part of a work in progress, had survived inside. But when she tried to transport the piece, it broke. “The fire didn’t anneal the glass properly,” Akashi said. Annealing, she explained, is like stress relief for glass. Ideally, a kiln strengthens glass using a gentle heat, 1,050 degrees Fahrenheit, then cools down slowly, letting the glass molecules realign.

Akashi had considered rushing back to save more belongings from the flames. But, besides the danger, she didn’t want to develop a fear of fire. Her work depends on her comfort with it.

### Some Relief

Akashi is relatively lucky. She has family in the area (her aunt’s house in Altadena survived with smoke damage) and was able to lease a house in Angelino Heights for her and Turnip within three weeks of the disaster. Now she’s paying both rent and a mortgage.

A hodgepodge of relief has arrived — small grants from FEMA and the Red Cross, a Craft Emergency Relief Fund grant and another from the LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund. She has applied for low-interest recovery loans. In the long term, she has joined a mass tort lawsuit against Southern California Edison, whose equipment, the company has acknowledged, most likely caused the blaze (in recent lawsuits Edison asserts that other businesses and agencies share responsibility).

The art world chipped in too. A collector she knew handed down a mountain of denim from the Los Angeles-based label 69. “He’s moved on to, like, only Balenciaga,” she said. Before she could furnish her rental, two mounds of indigo clothing served as both a wardrobe and chairs.



Akashi in the living room of her rented home in Angelino Heights, Los Angeles, with her cat Turnip. A settlement from her insurance will only cover rent till the end of 2026. Credit...Magdalena Wosinska for The New York Times



Kelly Akashi's hand sculptures were dug from the rubble of the Eaton fire. She has cast her own body for a work titled "Ten Year Project, 2019-2029." Right, the artist holding a bronze sculpture pulled from the rubble.

Akashi had insurance policies for her house, property, business and artwork; she also had earthquake insurance. Some claims have gone smoothly, but she hired a lawyer to help resolve others. “I am severely underinsured to rebuild at today’s rates,” Akashi said. And much of what she lost is irreplaceable.

She told me that survivors of the fire had two lives: one before the disaster and one after. “We’re kind of still living in both lives,” she said. “And it’s very difficult to move back and forth between them.”

She recalled a particularly disjointed Thursday in February of last year. She spent the morning interviewing potential grad students at ArtCenter, then rushed to Altadena to meet volunteers from Samaritan’s Purse and the Billy Graham Church who helped her salvage personal items. They cut into a fallen wall and recovered more sculptures. They prayed with her and a neighbor, and gave her a Bible. At one point they asked if she had community support. “I said, actually, I do. I’m an artist.” They said, ‘your community is incredible.’ ” Then Akashi drove across town to her rental, showered and went to a dinner celebrating her show at Lisson.



Kelly Akashi with a bucket of ashes, her burned book collection, which she may use in creating a pigment of paint, or turn into a diamond. Credit...Magdalena Wosinska for The New York Times

## Demolition Day

By summer, Altadena showed signs of recovery. Akashi watched workers in white hazmat suits roll the rubble of her neighbors’ houses into tarps and carry them away. Crews sprayed a green hydroseed mixture on cleared lots to secure the soil. Excavators pulled at the wreckage. “It’s actually kind of gentle the way they handle everything,” she said. “It’s not as violent as I thought it would be.”

Akashi wasn’t sure if she would rebuild. Regardless, the debris had to go. She scheduled a private removal company for June 9. That spring she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. Akashi didn’t tell many people; she didn’t want friends urging her to slow down. She scheduled her surgery to give herself enough healing time before the cleanup.

She called it the most physically and emotionally difficult month of her life. Then it was over, and the future began to emerge. “I started laying out floor plans,” she said.

“I don’t like the way this has come about, but, sure, it’s always been a fantasy to build a property from scratch.”



Glass stock and fragments retrieved from Akashi's studio.

One idea is to use poured concrete and embed the broken stones from her studio into the walls. She is inspired by the Brion tomb, a Brutalist masterpiece by the Italian architect Carlo Scarpa finished in 1978. "I'm an artist. You can't have things fast, cheap and easy. So I'm willing to sacrifice fast." Any house she builds won't be done until 2028, and her rent money will run out by the end of this year.

After months of deliberation, Akashi selected an architect. Oonagh Ryan was in Altadena "when the ground was still smoking," she told me. "I love this idea of the architect and homeowner working together to celebrate the past and figure out ways to bring those things into the house and bring it forward."

They may be able to incorporate all or part of the surviving chimney into the new house. Whatever happens, Akashi intends to keep it. Ryan showed me a snapshot she had taken on Akashi's property, with the battered chimney in the foreground, a cracked brick boundary wall and the tarpapered side of a new house behind that, and the khaki San Gabriel Mountains in the distance.

Akashi said that when her neighbor knocked down that wall to rebuild, she walked around her chimney as if it were a sculpture. “It’s hard to describe the experience,” she said, “and I want that experience again.” The chimney in Altadena is a touchstone of her old life. Its glassy double in New York is a monument to the need to move on, and the need to remember.

Artnet News  
29 October 2025

artnet news

## JFK's New Terminal Set to Be Stacked With Installations by Contemporary Art Stars

The airport's New Terminal One will house commissions by the likes of Yinka Shonibare, Tomás Saraceno, Firelei Báez, and more.

by **Jo Lawson-Tancred**



Rendering of New Terminal One at JFK International Airport. Image courtesy of The Port Authority of New York.

- **JFK Airport's \$9.5 billion New Terminal One** will feature major **site-specific artworks** by top **contemporary artists**.
- Commissions by **Yinka Shonibare, Tomás Saraceno, Julie Curtiss, Firelei Báez**, and more aim to reflect the city's cultural dynamism.
- The art-filled terminal opens in phases through **2030**, welcoming 23 million travelers annually under one sky.

Come 2030, you'll be able to catch your flight and some contemporary art all in one go at New Terminal One, the swish new \$9.5 billion terminal currently in the works at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. The Port Authority of New York has just announced a fleet of commissions that will decorate the new hub, with Yinka Shonibare and Tomás Saraceno joining Kelly Akashi, Ilana Savdie, Julie Curtiss, Firelei Báez, and Woody De Othello in an all-star line up.

The seven artists have been chosen to represent a mix of local, New York-based talent—Savdie, Báez, and Curtiss—as well as top international names like Shonibare and Saraceno. Their large, site-specific works will include mosaics, murals, and sculpture intended to compliment a larger cultural program that includes immersive digital experiences and films.

“From the moment travelers arrive at our doors to the moment they depart, they will be immersed in stunning works of art and unique installations that reflect the distinct energy and culture of New York, a city like no other,” promised Jennifer Aument, CEO of New Terminal One at JFK.



Artists commissioned to produce new public artworks for JFK International Airport's New Terminal One. Top row, left to right: Yinka Shonibare, Kelly Akashi, Tomás Saraceno, Ilana Savdie. Bottom row, left to right: Julia Curtiss, Firelei Báez, Woody De Othello. Image courtesy of The Port Authority of New York.

United under the theme of “We Travel Under One Sky,” and curated by Culture Corps, the works will help welcome some 23 million annual visitors to the new terminal. Saraceno’s *Cloud Cities New York*, for example, is a suspended cloudscape that changes with the natural light but alludes to coming together of people from all corners of the globe.

This constant thrum of movement and migration into New York is celebrated in Savdie’s *Egregoros*, which takes inspiration from the great voyages depicted in Old Master paintings to bring to life the historical journeys that have helped form the city beloved today.

New York City takes center stage in Curtiss’s *New York Hands*, a mosaic in which large hands clutch iconic symbols of the Big Apple. Báez’s *Blue Calaibi–Yao Muzidi (or on alternate means of navigation)* brings together historical maps of the evolving metropolis overlaid with mystical marine creatures.

JFK’s new “world-class gateway” is set to open in stages, with 14 gates made public next year and completion slated for 2030. It’s not the airport’s only destination for world-class art. Passengers heading to the new \$4.6 billion Terminal 6 should keep an eye out for some 19 public art installations, including a giant new project by Yoko Ono.

# ARTnews Est. 1902

## JFK's Forthcoming Terminal One Taps Artists Yinka Shonibare, Firelei Báez, Kelly Akashi, and More for New Commissions



BY MAXIMILIANO DURÓN  October 29, 2025 1:56pm



A rendering of JFK Terminal One, showing the departures hall.  
COURTESY THE NEW TERMINAL ONE AT JFK/ARUP

Seven artists will create new commissions for the forthcoming \$9.5 billion Terminal One at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, which will open in phases beginning next year.

The commissioned artists are **Kelly Akashi**, **Firelei Báez**, Julie Curtiss, Woody De Othello, Tomás Saraceno, Ilana Savdie, and **Yinka Shonibare**. Three of the artists—Báez, Savdie, and Curtiss—are based in New York, while Akashi is based in Los Angeles and Othello is based in Oakland, California. Shonibare is London-based, and Saraceno is Berlin-based.

The seven monumental works are being presented under the banner “We Travel Under One Sky,” part of the terminal’s larger public art program, which is being organized by Culture Corps.

Several of the works focus on New York’s histories of migration, including Shonibare’s installation of hand-painted Dutch wax batik kites, titled *Kites for Queens*; Savdie’s mosaic *Egregoros*, which alludes to Old Master paintings of voyages; and Curtiss’s mosaic of oversize hands.

Báez’s mural *Blue Calaibi–Yao Muzidi (or on alternate means of navigation)* will overlay sea flora and swimming figures over various historic maps of the city, while Akashi’s 18-foot *Migration of Flora* will feature native flowers rising from a bronze hand.

Othello’s sculptures, collectively titled *The City That Never Sleeps*, will be installed atop the baggage claim carousels and will feature ceramics of watches, pay phones, and street lamps. Saraceno’s *Cloud Cities New York* will be a suspended sculpture that changes throughout the course of the day depending on the light.

In a statement, Rick Cotton, the executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which manages JFK, said, “Public art that is inspiring and evocative of our region is an essential part of the Port Authority’s strategy to create world-class airports that are becoming destinations in their own right. Riveting public art will anchor an expansive cultural program that will also include immersive digital experiences, engaging filmmaking and distinctive branding that will create a uniquely New York sense of place.”

The forthcoming Terminal One broke ground in 2022 and the first portion of the renovation will open in 2026, during which time the terminal’s headhouse and 14 gates will open. The terminal is set to be completed in 2030; when it is finished it will have 23 gates, 2.6 million square feet, and serve some 23 million passengers annually.

The new Terminal One is part of a larger \$19 billion transformation of JFK that includes a \$400 million expansion of Terminal 8 by American Airlines (completed in 2020), a \$1.5 billion expansion of Terminal 4 by Delta Air Lines (nearly completed), and the construction of a \$4.2 billion Terminal 6 to connect it with Terminal 5, which broke ground in 2023.

“These remarkable artists, filmmakers and digital designers will infuse JFK’s New Terminal One with the energy, diversity, and creativity that define our region,” Port Authority chairman Kevin O’Toole said in a statement. “Their work reflects the Port Authority’s commitment to reimagining the entire airport experience across our region—transforming our airports into world-class gateways that embody the very best of New York and New Jersey.”

Curbed  
27 October 2025

# CURBED

## A First Look Inside JFK's New Terminal One For now, it's all about the art.

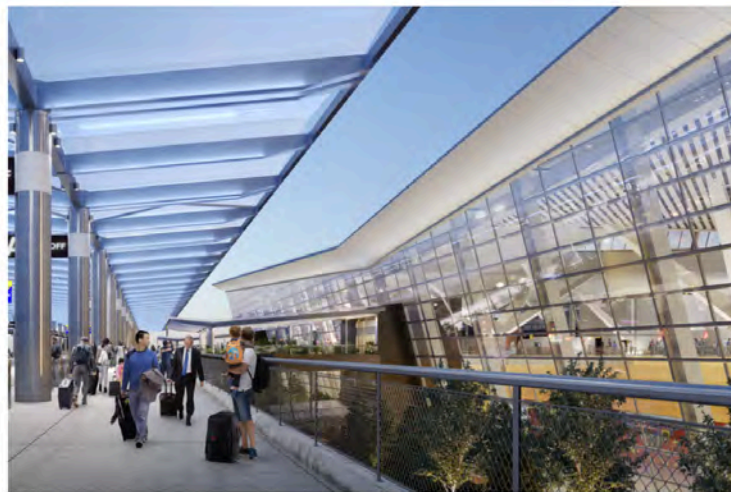
By Adriane Quinlan, an Emmy Award-winning Curbed writer



Displays in JFK's new Terminal One by Pentagram and Arup bring a little bit of New York indoors. One was modeled off Penn Station's old split-flap board; the other reflects the sky overhead. Photo: The New Terminal One at JFK/Arup

**A** brief survey of friends' recent experiences flying through JFK include a public-transit nightmare trying to get there, a five-hour delay spent disassociating on a bench because nearby shops were closed or under construction, and a tale of lost luggage. Would a hanging art installation of clouds in dichroic plexiglass have helped in any of these situations? No, but one will be coming to JFK's Terminal One anyway. After the first part of a \$9.5 billion upgrade is completed by next summer — part of the Port Authority's \$19 billion upgrade to JFK — Terminal One will open the first phase of what will be the country's largest single airport terminal (a hulking 2.6 million square feet). It may also be, per CEO Jennifer Aument, the "hottest new cultural destination in New York City."

That's a tall order, and given the airy but sterile building by Gensler, the burden is falling on the new terminal's blue-chip art, which was unveiled on Monday. (Artists were put forward by Yvonne Force Villareal and Doreen Remen of Culture Corps — two curators with downtown chops and experience in huge public projects.) The clouds, which will hang past the security gates, are by Tomás Saraceno, an Argentine who builds abstractions of clouds and spiderwebs. In an entry hall, kites overhead, frozen mid-swoop, are by Yinka Shonibare, a Nigerian Brit who works in batik as a prod at colonialism. By the ticketing counters is a massive bronze hand by Kelly Akashi, a brainy, L.A.-based sculptor. The goal is to turn the pass-through into what Aument calls “a destination” and make the terminal an experience worth having on its own — forget the fact that you need to get to that conference in Switzerland.



The snazzy terminal, designed by Gensler, is funded privately and will serve a group of international airlines. Photo: The New Terminal One at JFK/Arup

By the gates, wall-size LED screens designed by Arup will show short silent films of surfers paddling in the Rockaways, cart vendors making it through a night shift, and a saxophone player busking through Queens — three of the pieces by nine local filmmakers, who were tapped by Gentilhomme, a firm that specializes in digital displays. (Also designed by Arup are banners programmed to announce “Welcome to New York” in sync with the languages spoken in the countries of travelers then coming through customs.) Walk out to baggage claim, and you’ll find the center of the carousels capped with oozy, organic, metal odes to city pay phones and street lamps by Woody De Othello, a young sculptor repped by downtown’s Karma gallery. A playroom allows toddlers to climb a mini-Empire State Building, like little King Kongs, next to a mural by Brooklyn-based artist Julie Curtiss of hands holding the classics: a Mister Softee, a black-and-white cookie.



The art is part of a grander plan to New York-ify the space with shops and restaurants, too. So now's the time to lobby for a Zabar's. Photo: The New Terminal One at JFK/Arup

Even the tagline, from Pentagram, is a slightly askew nod to the city: “Like No Other.” Also from Pentagram and Arup: a monumental display that’s an ode to the maddening flicker of the old Penn Station departures and arrivals board. It will wrap along a curved wall over the security lines, making a shuffling noise as it gently flips through images of the state — Niagara Falls, downtown skyscrapers — in colors programmed to match the time of day. Saraceno, the Argentine who built the glittery disco-ball-like clouds, says he pulled the tones for the dichroic-glass film from images of the city at sunset. There’s an 85-foot-wide piece in customs, by Firelei Báez, which was laid over blown-up images of city maps but looks more like a calming expanse of swirling, far-off galaxies. Another mural, by Ilana Savdie, apparently includes patterns from Lenape beading, but the jewel-toned abstraction obscures any political bent. Then there’s the bronze hand, by Akashi, who based its charm bracelet off what she found in jewelry stores on Canal Street and made the largest bloom in the bouquet our state flower, the rose. This is subtle stuff, but anything more literal might feel cheesy.

# LISSON GALLERY

*EastWest Bank*  
May 7, 2025



## Artist Support: Kelly Akashi's Journey of Resilience

May 7, 2025



Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery, 2025.  
(Photo by East West Bank.)

**Kelly Akashi is an artist known for sculpting enduring materials like natural stone, gold, bronze and crystal into original artworks that are powerful reflections on time, change and memory.**

After the Los Angeles Eaton Fire destroyed her home and art studio, she began a poignant new chapter of resilience in art. As she rebuilds, her artwork is evolving in new ways—shaped by loss, hope and care from the creative community. For two decades, East West Bank has supported contemporary artists whose work connects ideas, perspectives and people. In a meaningful visit with Kelly after the fires, we spoke with her about the importance of living and creating in Los Angeles, rebuilding plans, her deep appreciation for Agnes Lew and East West Bank's support for the arts, and how she's hopeful about LA's future.

## Los Angeles as home in the broader art world

### **You're a native Angeleno. Why has it been important to live and create here?**

Los Angeles has a remarkable lineage of artists who are deeply rooted in this place while also shaping global conversations. After studying in Germany in the 2000s, I came to appreciate LA's unique position in the broader art world. It's not only an ideal city for making—where materials, labor and challenging ideas are within reach—but it also offers a rare mix of solitude and sociality. There's space here: physically, emotionally and creatively.

### **You've often incorporated elements of your family's history into your art. Has this experience deepened any personal or historical themes in your work?**

Yes, especially in recent works. I've used inherited heirlooms, most recently doilies from my grandmother, that evoke a kind of shared cultural memory. These are objects many people recognize from family homes. Often, we inherit them without quite knowing what to do with them. They've become a material metaphor in my work for the way we carry family history and navigate shared cultural legacies.



*Monument (Shelter)*, 2025. Lost-wax cast bronze, inherited doily, patinated burn-out cast bronze, weathering steel.

6 x 12 in Base: 40 x 26 x 9 in

(©Kelly Akashi. Photo courtesy of Lisson Gallery.)

## Resilience in art after the Los Angeles fires

**What was your creative process like before the Eaton Fire? How has it changed and what is it like now?**

Right now, I'm still displaced from both my home and studio. I imagine it will take time to rebuild my material library, my space and my rhythm. It's possible I won't fully know how my process has changed until much later.

**Your art explores themes of transformation and impermanence. After losing your home and studio in the Eaton Fire, did you find your relationship with those ideas shifting in unexpected ways?**

The show I was working on before the fire already revolved around inheritance, impermanence and the natural world. In the aftermath, I found myself returning to the same themes, but with a newly charged history. The content didn't shift, but the context and urgency around it certainly did.

**Many artists rely on their surroundings to inspire their work. How has being uprooted affected your creative process and the materials you work with?**

It's still hard to say. I'm in the early stages of processing the logistical and emotional weight of what happened. Rebuilding has added another job to my life. I'm still trying to re-ground myself. But I'm grateful I could reimagine and open the Frieze Los Angeles exhibition at Lisson Gallery when I did.



*Witness*, 2024-2025. Eaton Fire patinated lost-wax cast bronze and flame-worked borosilicate glass.  
12 x 11 x 5 in

*(©Kelly Akashi. Photo courtesy of Lisson Gallery.)*

**Rebuilding after a major loss is both a personal and creative challenge. What has surprised you most about the process of starting over?**

The many layers of grief. How non-linear they are. How they can catch you off guard. It's been humbling to experience its slowness.

**The art world and local community have rallied around those impacted by the wildfires. What moments of support or generosity have stood out to you the most?**

There have been so many gestures of care, and I've been moved by all of them, small and large. When I opened the show, I felt an overwhelming sense of being seen. My community showed up—not just for me, but for one another—and it reminded me why I've built my life here. The way the community has responded to the fires has solidified my commitment to Los Angeles and to continuing to make work here.

## The art world and East West Bank

**How did you choose East West Bank?**

**[Agnes Lew](#), Managing Director, Head of Private Banking, East West Bank**, first visited my studio during Frieze week in 2020 with a group from the Bank. We stayed in touch during the pandemic, and over time, I came to see her as a steady and generous force in the Los Angeles art community. She helped artists and galleries access the Paycheck Protection Program loans when they were needed most—a true advocate behind the scenes. Agnes introduced me to the Bank, and over time, the Bank has supported me through various stages of my career.

**As an East West Bank customer, what role has financial stability and institutional support played in helping you regain your footing?**

One of the things I've appreciated most is how East West Bank supports artists not just as clients, but as members of a larger creative community. Agnes is well-known for inviting groups of artists, collectors, curators, advisors and gallerists to the Hollywood Bowl to enjoy summer concerts. In this way, East West Bank has helped foster connections in moments of joy and offered support in moments of difficulty. That sense of investment—beyond transactions—has made a real difference.

## Optimism for the future and hope for Los Angeles

**You have a successful art career. What advice would you give to aspiring artists?**

Don't cut corners when it comes to your business. If something is outside your area of expertise, find someone who can help. You don't have to do everything yourself, and honestly, you shouldn't.

Also, be kind to yourself. Growth comes from letting yourself learn from your mistakes.

**Looking ahead, what excites you most? Are you approaching your work differently now, or are there new projects on the horizon?**

Yes, there are some exciting things on the horizon, but I'm not able to share them just yet.



*Monument*, 2025. Carved and polished limestone, lost-wax cast crystal, inherited doily, waterjet-cut weathering steel.  
13 x 25 x 5 in Base: 30 x 72 x 48 in  
(©Kelly Akashi. Photo courtesy of Lisson Gallery.)

**What is something you would love to see for the LA art community?**

I feel hopeful about LA's future, but I'd love to see more robust funding for MFA programs, as well as more public conversations that take exhibitions and cultural production seriously. At ArtCenter College of Design, where I teach, we organize thoughtful conversations around practice. I'd love to see more of that citywide.

**Kelly Akashi's new artwork in the East West Bank Collection**

In support of Kelly and her art, the Bank has acquired this wonderful new sculpture from Kelly's 2025 exhibit at Lisson Gallery. Find out more about the [East West Bank Collection](#).

See more of Kelly's art at [Lisson Gallery](#).



Kelly Akashi. *Untitled*, 2024-2025. Weathering steel, incised acrylic, 23 carat gold leaf, on board.  
14 x 14 x 1 1/2 in  
(©Kelly Akashi. Photo courtesy of Lisson Gallery.)

# LISSON GALLERY

ArtAsiaPacific  
30 May 2025



Installation view of "Kelly Akashi," at Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles, 2025. Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery.

## Kelly Akashi

Lisson Gallery

For her eponymous solo show at Lisson Gallery in Los Angeles, American artist Kelly Akashi took an almost Ikebana approach to her installation. As in the poetic Japanese art of floral arranging, she readjusted and repositioned her hewn and cast sculptural objects down to the minute of the exhibition's opening. Originally intending to open the show at the end of January, Akashi suddenly found herself, like tens of thousands of Angelenos, completely displaced, as her home and attached studio—and the artworks within—were lost to the Eaton Fire that razed her Altadena neighborhood. Akashi solicited the local art community, seeking donations and other support, and, as a result, was able to almost entirely remake her show in under a month. The fires burned an astonishing 14,000 acres—roughly the size of Manhattan—and Akashi's show was a poignant reminder of the individual anguish experienced by those affected.

When it was safe to return to the site of her home and studio, Akashi trawled the ashes to recover a few pieces that had

withstood the fires, though irreparably changed. Among several new additions to the works on display were bronze casts of Akashi's own hands and tree branches, retrieved directly from the wreckage. In one particular work, *Witness (Altadena)* (2025), a delicate branch teetered precariously upon the bronze palm, intimating the way in which the artist's life had been profoundly transformed by these fires, and the rationale that our existence is at the whims of nature's balance.

Sculptural objects fashioned from bronze, glass, crystal, and more were tenderly placed on whittled onyx, alabaster, and basalt, displayed on four Corten steel platforms. These arrangements, all from her *Monument* series (2024–25) are a nod to Richard Serra's monumental yet minimal sculptures, though Akashi's are more domestic and emotive, and at times reminiscent of the knickknacks one might find at their grandmother's home. In fact, lace doilies passed down to Akashi from her grandmother feature in several works from *Monument*.

Among the wreckage of her studio, Akashi also found a dainty hand-blown glass chain in a kiln, flecks of gray debris dotting the clear glass. A cast bronze mask of her face and two enlarged seedpods were still intact, though with deeper, darker patinas from being burned. These cast seedpods continued to shed ashes onto the gallery floor, a gentle reminder of the sustained cycle of survival and weathering change.

*Monument (Regeneration)* (2024–25)—a globular web of clear borosilicate glass—demonstrates Akashi's prodigious technical prowess. Similar to a previous sculpture Akashi showed in New York, *Cosmic Axis* (2022–23), the work takes on a renewed meaning in this context. The "roots" allude to fervent calls by community leaders to stay in Los Angeles and rebuild (instead of decamping to more affordable regions), while the intricate web of glass acts as a metaphor for the connections between people and community, and the flower shoots represent a glimpse of hope for future regrowth.

In American science fiction writer Octavia Butler's 1993 post-apocalyptic novel *Parable of the Sower*, set in a fictional 2025, a prophetic narrator describes a blaze that engulfs her home, family, and neighborhood. Grappling with survival in a climate-ravaged world and leading by example, the narrator begins to develop ideas for a new belief system called "Earthseed," centered on principles of community, with mantras such as "God is Change" and "All that you touch, you change. All that you change, changes you." In the wake of the tragic fire that engulfed Los Angeles this year, the prescience of Butler's novel became chilling. Akashi emerged as a fitting if unlikely example of resilience and strength, and her poignant show at Lisson was emblematic of cycles of tragedy and loss, and, subsequently, the power of community to support rebuilding and regeneration.

JENNIFER S. LI

LOS ANGELES

*Art in America*  
April 14, 2025

HOME | ART IN AMERICA | COLUMNS

## For LA Artists, Getting Back to Work Means Playing the Long Game



An aerial view of Altadena, Calif., showing surviving trees and new greenery amid homes destroyed by the Eaton Fire, March 2025.

Photo Mario Tama Via Getty

“I’m on my fifth place,” Kathryn Andrews said more than eight weeks after, having lost her rented Pacific Palisades home. It was the second time she’d lost a home to fire, the first being the Bobcat Fire in 2020. This time around, she has a better idea of what to expect from rebuilding. “It hits you over time,” she said.

Andrews contributed a piece to one of the city’s many benefit shows. Her untitled contribution was a small, pea-size dot painted on the wall at eye level. It harkens to ’70s Minimalism yet is very much of the fires: She stenciled the dot directly on the wall using ash and soil from the home she lost.

**ALTADENA'S ARTISTIC LEGACY** has more recently been a draw for other artists, among them Kelly Akashi. Until January, Akashi was living and working in a home once owned by artists Jim Shaw and Marnie Weber, who had built a studio with a kiln in the backyard.

When she evacuated, Akashi wasn't able to take much besides her cat. She thought about going back to retrieve more of her belongings, but decided against it—for her own safety, and to avoid seeing the fire, worried she might become afraid of flames, which are essential to her work in glass and metal.



View of Kelly Akashi's 2025 exhibition at Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles.

©Kelly Akashi/Courtesy Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles.

She lost much of the work that was slated to debut January 31 in a show at Lisson Gallery. Some of what appeared in the show, which was pushed back to late February, was spared by being offsite at the time of the fire. Several bronze sculptures had been in Akashi's studio during the fire and managed to survive, but she had to remake much of the work. One such piece shows the lower half of Akashi's face; another two resemble seedpods. "I didn't clean off what they went through," she said. "I could have sandblasted and completely stripped them. But the patinas you see were created by the fire."

Christina Quarles is also trying to figure out what to do with work damaged by fire debris. She and her family lost their home for the second time in nine months in the Eaton fire: In April 2024, an electrical fire destroyed their home. Also lost in the Eaton fire was the rebuilding progress they had made since then, as well as the Airbnb where they had been staying during the reconstruction.



Kelly Akashi: *Witness*, 2024–25.

©Kelly Akashi/Courtesy Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles.

Quarles's backyard studio survived both fires, and she joked that she couldn't tell whether this was a good or a bad omen. In the Eaton fire, it was the only structure on their block that survived, though the four paintings inside were damaged. Quarles treats all her canvases with PVA size, which melts at a low temperature. In her case, the emulsion melted and became porous, then reattached after being dusted with debris blown in through an open window.

Quarles must now decide what to do with these four paintings. Two of them formed a diptych—she started one panel right before the 2024 fire, and the other the week after; Quarles said she finds the debris damage interesting conceptually, which echoes how Akashi and Andrews are trying to represent the fires and their damage. The debris adhering to the canvases might age the paintings faster, so she could make an insurance claim for their total loss. She described this as the more financially practical route: She'd be paid for them as if her gallery had sold them; however, the insurance company would own them. "The thought of that made me so sad, even if it's financially maybe a better move, because I don't know if I can sell them or not," she said. The gamble is whether or not a collector would see the value in this debris-affected diptych.

Something that's always been appealing about Altadena is its proximity to nature, and I noticed that a number of artists living there have consistently made work about the relationship between humans and the planet, and more specifically about climate change. Thater and Akashi both said that they plan to double down on this strain of their work. "People are so focused on the loss, but that misses the bigger point, that we're collectively and mindlessly destroying our planet, without reflecting upon the fact that we have agency in this," Andrews said. "We're burning our own houses down."

*The Aspen Times*  
April 16, 2025

**THE ASPEN TIMES** | **ATW** ASPEN TIMES WEEKLY  
**Snowmass Sun** Serving Aspen and Snowmass Village, CO

## Anderson Ranch Arts Center announces 2025 Summer Series lineup



Titus Kaphar (left) and André Holland (right) will be speaking at Anderson Ranch on July 9, 2025.

*Sarah Shatz/Courtesy of the artists*

Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Snowmass has announced its 2025 Summer Series, featuring conversations with artists, critics, and cultural leaders who are reshaping the global art conversation.

The lectures will start on July 9 and go through Aug. 7 and will be free and open to the public.

"We are proud to present our 2025 Summer Series, which brings together an exceptional group of artists and thinkers whose work challenges conventions and invites us to reconsider the world around us," Peter Waanders, president and CEO of Anderson Ranch Arts Center, said in a press release. "This year's lineup reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering a space for rigorous dialogue and multi-disciplinary, creative exchange."

The first lecture will feature Anderson Ranch's 2025 International Artist Honoree Titus Kaphar. According to the press release, Kaphar works across mediums and genres that include painting, sculpture, and film.

There will be four additional lectures after his, including Kelly Akashi on July 17, Dawoud Bey on July 24, Issy Wood on July 28, and Miles Greenberg on Aug. 7.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Artillery Magazine*  
March 28, 2025



## KELLY AKASHI

At Lisson Gallery

BY M. CHARLENE STEVENS | MAR 28, 2025



*Kelly Akashi, "Monument (Shelter)," 2025. © Kelly Akashi. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery.*

Time is a common theme in Kelly Akashi's work. Doilies inherited from her grandmother represent the past. The artist's hands, cast in bronze, serve as timestamps for the present— lines and wrinkles marking specific moments. Cast bronze seed pods represent the future, though against the backdrop of the Los Angeles fires, we're reminded that some pinecones don't express seeds unless exposed to heat.

Having lost her studio in the January fires, Akashi cast artifacts found in the wreckage, incorporating them into a series of new mixed-media sculptures. The weathering steel desk in *Monument* (2025), resembles the grain of dark wood office furniture from a distance, but suggests scorched earth upon closer inspection. Waterjet cut patterns in the metal mirror those of the doilies scattered throughout the show – a play of binaries: hard and soft, masculine and feminine, permanent and ephemeral.

The cast-bronze pinecones in the *Monument* series leave the viewer with a sense of hope and renewal, giving the "Phoenix Rising From the Ashes" vibe that Los Angeles needs right now.

Kelly Akashi  
Lisson Gallery  
1037 N. Sycamore Ave.,  
Los Angeles, CA 90038  
On view through March 29, 2025

# LISSON GALLERY

*L.A. Art Documents*  
April 2, 2025



LA Art Documents · Apr 2

## Kelly Akashi / Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles

Kelly Akashi

Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles

February 20 - March 29, 2025

Lisson Gallery's inaugural exhibition with Los Angeles-based artist [Kelly Akashi](#) was set to open on January 31 in L.A., featuring an entirely new body of work that both Lisson and Akashi were eager to share with her hometown. Akashi is an artist whose work and practice are imbued with the shared ethos and identity of her city. The beginning of 2025 brought heartbreaking devastation to many Angelenos. Akashi's cherished home and studio were among the countless losses as the destructive fires tore through communities across Los Angeles in early January.

With an incredible amount of perseverance and support from her community, Akashi immediately went back to work, rebuilding and recontextualizing her exhibition. For her first exhibition with Lisson Gallery, Akashi triumphantly presents a number of new bodies of work featuring glass, earth, stone, lace, and bronze elements, incorporating both inherited and uniquely processed materials. Akashi personally recovered several bronze cast and borosilicate glass forms from the wreckage of her studio. She includes these objects in the exhibition, now with the somber patina created by the fire, acting as a record and acknowledgment of the event. These, along with other works, are hung on the gallery walls and installed among a landscape of stone and marble sculptures mounted on Corten steel pedestals, creating a singular and associative environment with its own circular ecosystem, rich with the possibilities of making, displacing, and reclaiming.

Intimate groupings of objects are dispersed across several oxidized plinths and tables, some splayed and disarranged, others forming concatenating configurations between carved and rough-hewn pillars and wedges of marble, as well as cast body parts and delicately hand-blown glass flowers. This mode of display mimics natural occurrences, perhaps of hands enclosing like caverns or plants growing out of cracks in the ground. Nearly every other object, however, has undergone a meticulous and labor-intensive transformation, shaped both by the artist and the forces of nature. This may involve the cutting and sculpting of multiple layers of materials such as alabaster, basalt, onyx, and limestone, or a remarkable alteration of substances—transforming skin into crystal or stems into glass. Other works present intriguing juxtapositions, such as an organic form emerging from a bronze cast of the artist's lower face, or a delicate glass chain, damaged by the Eaton Fire, that adorns a basalt structure. A cornerstone of the exhibition, Akashi presents an exceptionally elaborate glass sphere made from finely latticed borosilicate glasswork, its detailed and delicate structure seemingly impossible in its complexity and ethereal nature.

Draped over the weathering steel surfaces are a number of lace doilies that belonged to the artist's grandmother and recently came into her possession. While these might suggest traces of the personal, domestic and emotional narratives attached to such heirlooms, something the artist is known to do, they also contain the universal truth of familial lineage, of the passing down of knowledge and the unavoidable, constant inheritance of history.

From recent exhibitions centering on the fragility and complexity of the figure and especially her own body, Akashi now turns to the resilient and regenerative properties of nature, through a series of scanned, sculpted, and drawn seed pods. Initial CT scans of Devil's Claw, Sweet Gum and Datura seedpods, among other species, are blown up to triffid-like proportions, 3D-printed and cast in bronze. Whether hanging like ornamental, ceremonial lights or scored into surfaces with silverpoint like cave paintings, these pods offer up their secrets to life more or less readily, some seeds lying dormant but still filled with potential while others have long ago scattered and sprouted new growths – all have the potential to change the world. Akashi's alchemical transformation of matter enacts the continuous life cycle begun by the seed, revealing how all of existence is already in front of us, even if what was once made of one substance may now appear in a different form and might yet soon become something else anew.

<https://www.lissongallery.com/>

# LISSON GALLERY

*The New York Times*  
March 22, 2025



*The New York Times*

## ‘This Is Our Pompeii’: Altadena Artists Picking Up the Pieces

Neighbors on Mariposa Street in Altadena, Calif., say artworks can be remade, but how do you restart a community?



The artist John Knuth surveys the desolate landscape around Mariposa Street, in Altadena, Calif., where he lived with his wife, the interior designer Taylor Jacobson, and their young son. Where once were pretty wood and stucco houses, you can now see clear across city blocks. The vista is interrupted only by singed, leafless trees and free-standing stone and brick chimneys which, Knuth says, “have become like gravestones.”

Knuth, 46, is one of scores of artists who, until early this January, had homes in Altadena. He knows of four other artists on his block alone. Most chose Altadena for its affordable, modest homes, its proximity to nature, and its charming, small-town feel. Others grew up there. Many had space on their properties for home studios.

More than two months after the Eaton fire destroyed Altadena, its artists are taking stock of what they have lost, and what their future could look like. Just as important as studio space and materials, they have found, are the reassuring foundations of home and community. Artworks, in many cases, can be remade. A street, or a whole neighborhood, is a different matter.

The artist Kelly Akashi, 41, who lived a few blocks east of Mariposa Street, would sometimes drop in on Mosher Hall and Sawatsky on her walk to the coffee shop. Akashi's home and adjacent studio, which she'd bought in 2021, both burned, along with new glass, bronze and stone sculptures and paintings made for [an exhibition at Lisson Gallery](#) in Los Angeles.

Like Whalen, Akashi managed to replace most of the damaged work with help from fabricators in time for her show, which opened Feb. 20. She even made new cast bronze sculptures of hands (her own) holding sticks and branches that she'd plucked from piles of windblown debris. What are not so quickly replaced are the rare materials and tools Akashi collected through the years, including obscure samples of colored glass.



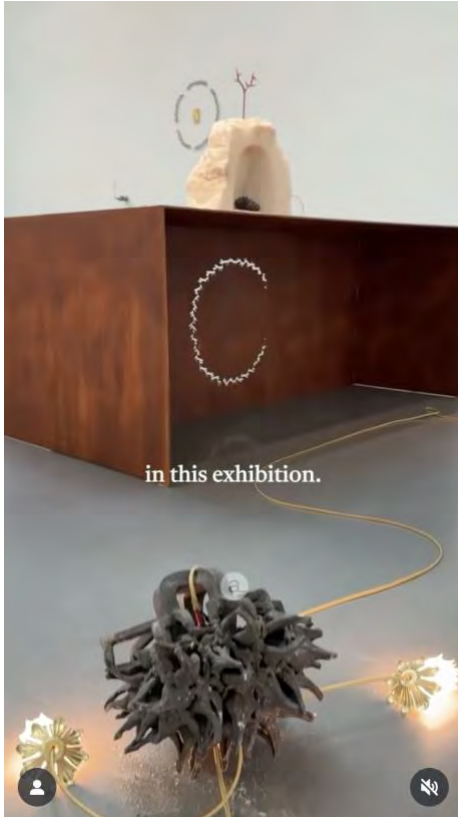
Kelly Akashi unpacking a bronze cast of her hand that survived the fire. Magdalena Wosinska for The New York Times



On one block of West Mariposa Street in Altadena, five artists lost their homes or studios. Chantal Anderson for The New York Times

# LISSON GALLERY

@art via Instagram  
March 20, 2025



art 🌐 Kelly Akashi's (@citizenbong) inaugural exhibition with Lisson Gallery (@lisson\_gallery) was originally set to debut in Los Angeles on January 31, 2025, featuring a new body of work deeply connected to her hometown. However, the devastating fires that swept through L.A. in early January destroyed Akashi's home and studio. Despite this loss, she persevered, reconstructing her exhibition with salvaged materials from the wreckage, integrating fire-damaged bronze and glass pieces into her works as a testament to resilience and transformation. The exhibition features intricate compositions of stone, glass, bronze, and lace, evoking natural processes and familial inheritance. Central to the show are seedpod sculptures—scanned, 3D-printed, and cast in bronze—symbolizing regeneration and the cyclical nature of existence. Akashi's work blurs the boundaries between destruction and renewal, embracing the alchemy of materials to highlight the persistence of life and creation.

#art

#artist

#kellyakashi

#lissongallery

## artnet

### The Pool of Art Critics (Salaciously) Shrinks—and More Juicy Art World Gossip

Plus, which artist has a grievance over the charade of artist dinners? Which 'White Lotus' cast member is dating the son of a mega collector?

It has been about nine weeks since the devastating fires in Los Angeles decimated an estimated 58,000 acres of land, killed at least 29 people, and destroyed the homes and livelihoods of thousands. Many artists have lost not only their homes but also their studios, artworks, equipment, and archives. Relief efforts for those who suffered loss have been outsized, with fundraisers like **Grief and Hope** and **Aid For Artists** rallying millions of dollars in donations for victims.

Artist **Kelly Akashi** has been one of the most vocal advocates for fellow victims of the fires. Though she herself lost her home and studio in the fires, as well as the work she had created for her show at Lisson, she turned it around and gamely put together a new body of work in just three weeks for one of **Frieze L.A.**'s most talked about presentations.

That was a nice moment of snatching a positive story from the literal ashes—but this week, Akashi publicly criticized a new relief effort launched by the **Rema Hort Mann Foundation** in New York, the foundation to support emerging artists and cancer patients founded by collectors **Susan and Michael Hort**. The foundation pledged to distribute ten \$10,000 grants to artists impacted by the fires, with recipients selected by a jury of arts professionals including family members **Jamie** and Susan Hort, **White Columns** executive director **Matthew Higgs**, **NADA** executive director **Heather Hubbs**, and senior director of art advisory **Schwartzman, Augusto Arbizo**.

To Akashi, the effort felt more like a competition than genuine relief. “By asking us to write narratives of our need, you are asking us to beg for sympathy for a cash prize that your jury panel will judge. I don’t understand how your board doesn’t recognize how heartless this sounds,” she wrote in an email to the foundation, which she later shared on her public Instagram page.

9:23



Dear @remahortmannfoundation,

I appreciate your response. I hope the foundation can recognize the cruel implications of having artists who lost everything complete between each other to determine who is in greater need.

By asking us to write narratives of our need, you are asking us to beg for sympathy for a cash prize that your jury panel will judge. I don't understand how your board doesn't recognize how heartless this sounds.

I am discussing this with other artists in my situation who greatly need support and we are perplexed by the choice between competing with each other and desperately needing financial support.

I am not asking to be voted in, I am asking that you remove the competitive aspect of this funding. Some suggestions I have are to work with a big fundraiser like @griefxhope to identify artists to award, or simply dividing your fund between all qualifying artists. The prizes will be smaller but more sensitive to the emotional context.

I guarantee sending rejection letters out to artists in the same situation as me will not go over well. I can share that I would personally feel morally conflicted receiving funds in this situation.

Please share this message with your board. I ask for your sensitivity and sympathy and to please reconsider the structure of your support to halt further emotional distress among those who have lost so much so recently.

My very best,  
Kelly

Text of the email that Kelly Akashi sent to the Rema Hort Mann Foundation, which Akashi published on her Instagram page.

This past week, notices of rejection have come to artists who applied for the grant. Artist **Camilla Taylor**, who lost their home and studio, told me that their request was rejected after outlining the costs being incurred to create a show scheduled for November without their usual facilities.

“My first thought, which is maybe petty, is that they want someone more famous than me,” they told me over the phone.

Another artist who lost their home and was denied a grant (and asked to remain anonymous) told me, “They had the perfect play book with Grief and Hope. They were told how to handle it in a letter Kelly sent them a month ago. They should have seen the people who were in pain, and divided their allocated funds equally.”

Added Akashi, “You’re dealing with vulnerable, traumatized people. It’s not about whose loss is the greatest, even though they’re trying to frame it that way.”

The challenge of balancing fairness and impact is huge, dealing with a disaster this size, clearly. When approached for clarity on the foundation’s decision-making process, Susan Hort wrote over email, “We acted nimbly and took swift action... The application was open-ended to be as detailed or short as the applicant had time for, and grants were given based on need, not their work. All recipients—10 artists—have no gallery representation or established support of any kind, and have lost either their home, their studio, or both.”

*Art in America*  
March 25, 2025

[HOME](#) | [ART IN AMERICA](#) | [REVIEWS](#)

## What Gardens Tell Us about How Humans View Nature



Kelly Akashi: *Heirloom*, 2022.  
Photo Paul Salvesson

At the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut, a group show inaugurates the museum's new sculpture garden, with works prompting questions about what gardens have been and can still be.

Perhaps more than any other art form, gardens give us particular, material insight into the relationships between humans and their environment. So proposed the renowned garden historian John Dixon Hunt, who described gardens as “sophisticated... deliberate... and complex in their mixture of culture and nature.” Gardens have been sites for the display of immense power over the earth, as in Louis XIV’s Versailles, but they have also provided spaces for resistance, as in the subsistence gardens enslaved peoples cultivated in the American South. Titled “A Garden of Promise and Dissent,” the exhibition at the Aldrich deliberately engages this wide range of garden histories.

Rachelle Dang’s *Seedling Carrier* (2019) echoes human attempts to control nature on a global scale. Based on eighteenth-century innovations that allowed imperial explorers to transport living plant matter on yearslong oceanic voyages, Dang’s wood and aluminum carrier is filled with broken pots and surrounded by scattered ceramic seed pods. Rendered entirely in white, the sculpture’s ghostly presence indicates that despite attempts at care and containment, many plants did not survive the journey.



LISSON GALLERY

*Artforum*  
March 2025

# ARTFORUM

REVIEWS LOS ANGELES

## Kelly Akashi

Lisson Gallery | Los Angeles

By Tara Anne Dalbow



Kelly Akashi, *Witness*, 2024–25, Eaton Fire-patinated cast bronze, flame-worked borosilicate glass, 12 × 11 × 5".

Long before one of the most devastating fires in the history of Los Angeles leveled artist Kelly Akashi's home and studio, she was preserving the interstices where destruction and creation meet in bronze, stone, steel, and glass. As one walked through Akashi's exhibition at Lisson Gallery, her first with the space, one quickly noticed the veil of velvety-gray ash and scaly-black patina on the bronze casts salvaged from the wreckage. Among the newly minted replicas of sculptures that couldn't be recovered were crimson borosilicate glass tendrils, oversize seed husks sprouting ornate leaf buds, and a wall-mounted ring of weathering steel sprigs. Taken together, the objects, new and old, envisioned and enacted nature's cyclical progression from degeneration to the promise of new life.

If the context lent urgency to the show, it was the artist's mastery of her materials that precipitated the feeling of irrevocability. Just outside the gallery, visitors were confronted by an astonishing true-to-size relief of Akashi's nude body emerging from a travertine pillar. The innumerable pockmarks constellating the surface of the stone can be interpreted as hollows yet to be filled—suggesting that the figure is still in the process of forming—or as early signs of its inevitable deterioration. The hardened wax from snuffed-out candles that spills from the lifted face and shoulders visualizes the presence of the past and animates questions concerning endurance and evanescence. What is the relationship between a flame and a stone, and a stone and the earth to which it will ultimately return? In other words, what is the flicker of a human life to the ever-turning Earth?

Inside, four smaller stone sculptures were displayed atop oversize Cor-Ten steel stands, each sparsely adorned with chains, seeds, flowers, or hands cast in crystal, glass, or metal alloys. The abundance of negative space on the weathered tabletops suggested not austerity so much as a connectedness that extends beyond the means of representation. Emptiness was transformed into substance. Two of the sculptural slabs, *Monument*, 2025, composed of striated onyx, and *Monument (Home)*, 2024–25, crafted from pale alabaster, evoked ancient wayside shrines. Circular depressions, arched ingresses, and shallow shelves carved from the stones' lustrous interiors accommodated an array of votive offerings: rose-colored crystal fingers, patinated bronze pine cones, and heirloom doilies passed down to Akashi by her grandmother. The tension between the delicate linens and the various naturally occurring materials threw the different meanings of inheritance into stark relief. It's true: We carry forth human artifacts from the past but also humanity's impact upon the land.

Seedpods, scaled up to nearly the size of the stones, hung from the tabletops or spilled across the floor. Merging centuries-old craft techniques with modern technology, Akashi CT-scans seed husks and then 3D-prints them at larger-than-life proportions before preserving them in traditional lost-wax bronze casts. From the open pores of *Untitled (Datura Pod with Seeds)*, 2024–25, gilded silk cords ended in illuminated borosilicate glass blossoms.

*Monument (Regeneration)*, 2024–25, a diaphanous sphere of latticed glass filaments in the center of the space, was representative of the apotheosis of Akashi's facility for handcraft. The work comprises intertwining crystalline threads that create the appearance of a rhizomatic root system from which a handful of exalted salt-white flowers sprout, their fallen petals littering the surface of the cylindrical steel pedestal that rises to present the sculpture at eye height to the viewer. Among other things, Akashi's oeuvre is a study of

how forms and textures morph and multiply across materials, both organic and artificial, raw and refined. As the intricate open-weave needlework of the doilies reappears in the glass sphere's lattice, a similar pattern was reflected in the lines thatched upon the bronze palms in *Monument (Shelter)*, 2025, which includes Akashi's left and right hands touching fingers to wrists in the shape of a circle, a miniature datura pod nestled in the center. The gravity of the presentation was lightened by the uncanny similarities between the Mexican agate set within the carved limestone archway in another work that shares the title *Monument*, 2025, and a scalloped coaster arrayed beneath it.

The intermingling of disembodied hands, severed digits, torn branches, and plucked petals in freestanding and wall-mounted works such as *Witness (Altadena)*, 2025, where a twig appears to spring from the distal pulp of the artist's middle finger, suggested that our limbs are akin to those of trees, or any other plant or animal appendage—composed of the self-same substance that similarly strives, proliferates, bends, breaks, degrades, and eventually gives way as the cycle begins anew. Nowhere was this better exemplified than in *Witness*, 2024–25, a flame-licked cast of the lower half of a face from which the glass stems of a burgeoning plant unfurl upward in search of light.

L I S S O N   G A L L E R Y

*Hyperallergic*  
13 March 2025

## HYPERALLERGIC

# From the Fire's Remains, Kelly Akashi Sculpts Possibility

In the aftermath of tragedy, Akashi shows us the importance of the ability to imagine and create new structures, to see the potential futures in a seed.



Kelly Akashi, "Monument (Shelter)" (2025), lost-wax cast bronze, inherited doily, patinated burn-out cast bronze, weathering steel (all photos Alex Paik/*Hyperallergic*)

LOS ANGELES — “Witness” is a bronze cast of the bottom half of Kelly Akashi’s face. The surface of the sculpture (from 2024–25) has an irregular patina that is unexpectedly beautiful. It was one of several elements in the artist’s current exhibition at [Lisson Gallery](#) that was recovered from the remains of her Altadena home and studio, one of thousands of structures destroyed during the recent Eaton and Palisades Fires. A bright red glass form seems to sprout from the face, resembling both blood vessels and the tendrils of a new plant.

This new body of work brings several threads from her previous pieces — an interest in longer-term, geological views of time (*longue durée*) and the use of inherited objects as a way to understand her family’s histories — together with the local and personal tragedy the artist experienced. Seeds and sprouts feature prominently throughout the exhibition, weaving a narrative about imagining, building, and nurturing new possibilities. Seeds contain the necessary components to grow into something much larger. They hold the promise of new life, the promise of a future.



Installation view of Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles. Pictured: “Monument” (2025) and “Untitled (Datura Pod with Seeds)” (2024–25)



Kelly Akashi, "Monument" (2025), detail

I was particularly fascinated by the enlarged cast bronze *Datura* seed pods that dot the exhibition. Electrical wiring snakes out from these sculptures, tapering off into spiky, seed-shaped lights. One of them lies on the floor; beneath it is ash, presumably from the Eaton Fire, that dislodged and settled on the gallery floor during installation. "Devil's Claw with Seeds" (2024–25) looks like some sort of alien skull, its horn-like protrusions protecting itself, and the seeds within, from the outside world.

Delayed by the fires, the exhibition opened on February 19, the 83rd anniversary of [Executive Order 9066](#), which authorized the forced internment of Japanese Americans during WWII. In previous work, Akashi incorporated jewelry from her paternal grandmother as a way to examine the continued impact of her paternal grandparents' internment across generations. For this show, the artist centers her maternal lineage, making use of lace doilies that belonged to her maternal grandmother. Designs taken from these doilies are repeated throughout the exhibition, most notably as patterns laser cut into the Corten

steel plinths on which her sculptures rest. Richard Serra used the same type of steel; here, it's Akashi's cheeky way of literally carving women into a medium and canon typically associated with White male artists. Other sculptures sit directly atop these doilies, as if to acknowledge how the stories of our ancestors have set the foundational conditions for our lived experiences.



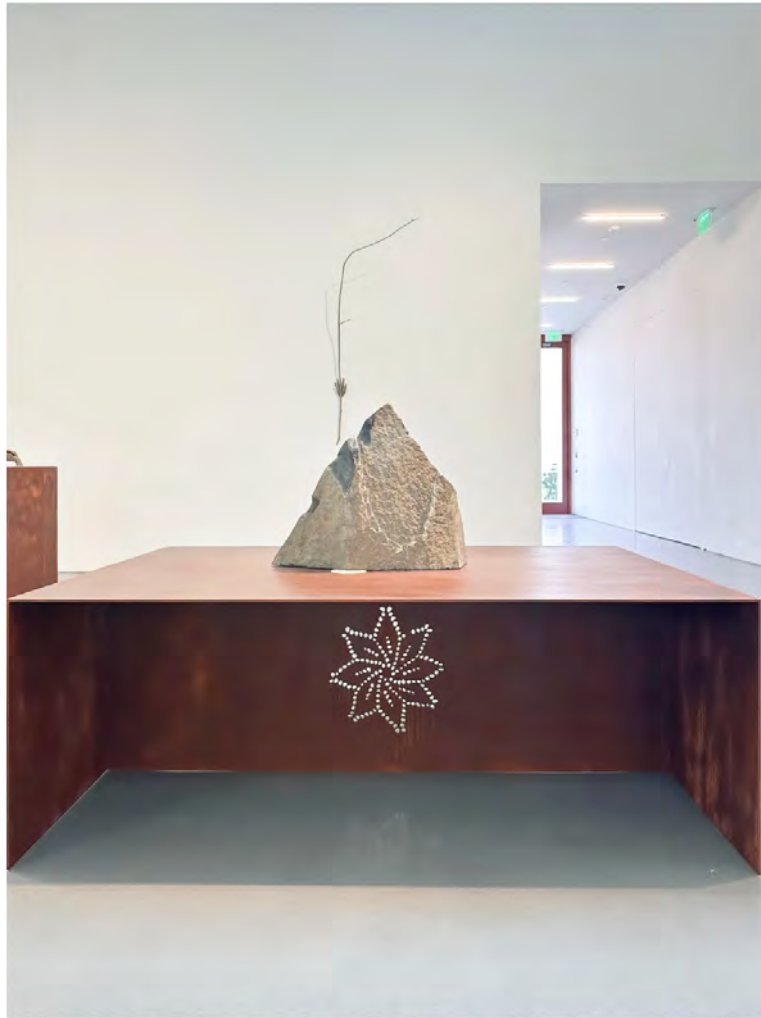
Kelly Akashi, "Witness" (2024–25), Eaton Fire patinated lost-wax cast bronze and flame-worked borosilicate glass

"Monument (Shelter)" (2025) is the exhibition's key work. Two bronze hands, resting upon Akashi's grandmother's lace doily, hold a turquoise-colored seed pod. These hands — casts of the artist's — cover and cradle the seed. Did they create it? Are they revealing it to us? Or are they protecting the seed? Perhaps all three can be true. This, to me, forms the show's central theme — how our family histories, communities, and personal histories help us imagine, build, and protect new futures for ourselves, even when outside forces seek to limit what is possible.

Both [Ijeoma Oluo](#) and [adrienne maree brown](#) write about how limiting imagination is a tool of White supremacy. Being unable to imagine new structures locks us within existing institutions and hierarchies, confining progress to incremental changes within these same structures without ever moving beyond them. In the aftermath of local and personal tragedy, and in the midst of the unprecedented and systematic destruction of our government institutions, Akashi shows us the importance of what is perhaps the most basic function of art — the ability to imagine and create new possibilities, to see the potential futures in a seed.



Installation view of *Kelly Akashi* at Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles. Left: "Untitled (Datura Pod with Seeds)" (2024–25), right: "Monument (Home)" (2024–25)



Installation view of *Kelly Akashi* at Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles. Foreground: "Monument" (2024–25); wall: "Witness (Altadena)" (2025)



Kelly Akashi, "Monument" (2025)



Kelly Akashi, "Monument (Home)" (2024-25)



Kelly Akashi, "Monument (Regeneration)" (2024-25)



Kelly Akashi, "Devil's Claw with Seeds" (2024-25)



Kelly Akashi, "Witness (Altadena)" (2025)

[Kelly Akashi](#) continues at *Lisson Gallery* (1037 North Sycamore Avenue, Hollywood, Los Angeles) through March 29. The exhibition was organized by the gallery.

# Rebuilding a Sense of Style After the L.A. Wildfires

Five Angelenos discuss how they're putting their wardrobes—and their lives—back together.

On the night that Luc Brinker lost his Malibu home, the fashion and modeling agent had seen the smoke of the Palisades Fire coming over the mountains. He made sure his nine-year-old son and the nanny safely evacuated, then gathered a few practical items, among them clean underwear, two pairs of Céline jeans, three pairs of cowboy boots (including a pair of Lucceses in python) and four Hanes white Ts. He loaded it all into his car alongside his two dogs and a few cherished works of art. Then after saying goodbye to more than 200 pieces of legacy denim and 243 pairs of shoes, he closed the door and drove away.

That night, Brinker lost a fashion collection that had taken decades to build. *They're just clothes!* one might argue—but similarly, art collections are just paintings and libraries are just books. From a young age, particularly as a gay boy in a conservative Oregon small town, Brinker understood fashion as a vital form of individual expression. “My personal style was defined by all of the pieces of myself that happened in those years,” he says, and the items he owned were attached to major milestones in his life. His 1994 Gucci loafers, for example, were his first purchase as a high school student with a job at the grocery store. His efforts to replace the irreplaceable have been slow-going since the Los Angeles wildfires have calmed. “I’ve been to every department store, and when I tell you that I left with nothing,” he says. Everything he found was too new, too impersonal, too 2025.

Since fires that swept through Los Angeles in January destroyed thousands of homes, many in L.A. are mourning the loss of their material possessions. Clothing, easily dismissed as something frivolous or replaceable, was no minor loss; what we wear, regardless of fashion, is an affirmation of our sense of self.

It's a concept the sculptor Kelly Akashi understands well, despite never having a truly vested interest in fashion; the night she lost her Altadena home and studio, she only vaguely remembers grabbing a pair of Reeboks and a red Uniqlo coat. With almost nothing to wear, she had assembled a placeholder wardrobe: blank v-necks sourced from a Target that had already been picked over. "There was no luxury of 'Do you like these shirts?'" she says. "It was just: 'These are shirts we can get.'" On top of the devastation of losing everything, she felt the acute distress of losing touch with a sense of style: "You kind of detach from how you know yourself or who you think you are."

With help from friends who gave her more specific clothing, Akashi says she felt like an individual again, albeit someone else; wearing another person's clothes can feel as dislocating as living in their house.



At her recent opening at Lisson Gallery, Akashi wore a vintage Skinny Puppy shirt gifted by friend-of-a-friend Ezra Woods (replacing one she got from her high school boyfriend in 2000 and lost in the fires); a Dries Van Noten jacket and Tibi pants gifted by art dealer Jill Feldman; and J. Crew loafers donated by the 24LA project run by Kenyan Armitage.

Photo by Janelle Zara

LISSON GALLERY

*Meer*

7 March 2025

# Kelly Akashi's exhibition

20 Feb — 29 Mar 2025 at Lisson Gallery in Los Angeles, United States

7 MARCH 2025



Kelly Akashi, exhibition view. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery's inaugural exhibition with Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi was set to open on January 31 in L.A., featuring an entirely new body of work that both Lisson and Akashi were eager to share with her hometown. Akashi is an artist whose work and practice are imbued with the shared ethos and identity of her city. The beginning of 2025 brought heartbreaking devastation to many Angelenos. Akashi's cherished home and studio were among the countless losses as the destructive fires tore through communities across Los Angeles in early January.

With an incredible amount of perseverance and support from her community, Akashi immediately went back to work, rebuilding and recontextualizing her exhibition. For her first exhibition with Lisson Gallery, Akashi triumphantly presents a number of new bodies of work featuring glass, earth, stone, lace, and bronze elements, incorporating both inherited and uniquely processed materials. Akashi personally recovered several bronze cast and borosilicate glass forms from the wreckage of her studio. She includes these objects in the exhibition, now with the somber patina created by the fire, acting as a record and acknowledgment of the event. These, along with other works, are hung on the gallery walls and installed among a landscape of stone and marble sculptures mounted on Corten steel pedestals, creating a singular and associative environment with its own circular ecosystem, rich with the possibilities of making, displacing, and reclaiming.

Intimate groupings of objects are dispersed across several oxidized plinths and tables, some splayed and disarranged, others forming concatenating configurations between carved and rough-hewn pillars and wedges of marble, as well as cast body parts and delicately hand-blown glass flowers. This mode of display mimics natural occurrences, perhaps of hands enclosing like caverns or plants growing out of cracks in the ground. Nearly every other object, however, has undergone a meticulous and labor-intensive transformation, shaped both by the artist and the forces of nature. This may involve the cutting and sculpting of multiple layers of materials such as alabaster, basalt, onyx, and limestone, or a remarkable alteration of substances—transforming skin into crystal or stems into glass. Other works present intriguing juxtapositions, such as an organic form emerging from a bronze cast of the artist's lower face, or a delicate glass chain, damaged by the Eaton Fire, that adorns a basalt structure. A cornerstone of the exhibition, Akashi presents an exceptionally elaborate glass sphere made from finely latticed borosilicate glasswork, its detailed and delicate structure seemingly impossible in its complexity and ethereal nature.

Draped over the weathering steel surfaces are a number of lace doilies that belonged to the artist's grandmother and recently came into her possession. While these might suggest traces of the personal, domestic and emotional narratives attached to such heirlooms, something the artist is known to do, they also contain the universal truth of familial lineage, of the passing down of knowledge and the unavoidable, constant inheritance of history.

From recent exhibitions centering on the fragility and complexity of the figure and especially her own body, Akashi now turns to the resilient and regenerative properties of nature, through a series of scanned, sculpted, and drawn seed pods. Initial CT scans of Devil's Claw, Sweet Gum and Datura seedpods, among other species, are blown up to triffid-like proportions, 3D-printed and cast in bronze. Whether hanging like ornamental, ceremonial lights or scored into surfaces with silverpoint like cave paintings, these pods offer up their secrets to life more or less readily, some seeds lying dormant but still filled with potential while others have long ago scattered and sprouted new growths – all have the potential to change the world. Akashi's alchemical transformation of matter enacts the continuous life cycle begun by the seed, revealing how all of existence is already in front of us, even if what was once made of one substance may now appear in a different form and might yet soon become something else anew.

## CULTURED

# Meet 5 Women Collectors Putting Women Artists at the Center of Their Focus—and Homes

From the Bahamas to Montana, these collectors are lifting up artists who thrill and challenge them. They also happen to be female.

Collecting art is an art in itself. And as Women's History Month begins, we're looking to the collectors making space for and celebrating women artists in museums, galleries, and their own homes.

On the walls of abodes across California, New York, Florida, Montana, London, and the Bahamas, these collectors make clear their goal to uplift women-identifying artists and people of color. Some discovered their love for collecting through careers in computer science and jewelry design, while others unearthed it at an early age, learning under families committed to supporting local creatives. Regardless of the paths they took, all are opening doors for others to follow through.



Ivana Berendika at home in Baker's Bay. Hanging sculpture: Anina Major, *Majestic Harmony*, 2020. On wall: Eliza Douglas, *Untitled*, 2022. Photography by Jeremy Liebman.

## **Ivana Berendika**

When Ivana Berendika made her first visit to a museum—to see an exhibition of World War II ephemera—she was confronted with artifacts that felt all too familiar for a child growing up in what was then Yugoslavia: bombs, guns, and tanks. “There was no space for art in that environment; that was our reality,” she remembers. The Serbian jewelry designer and collector’s current surroundings are a far cry from those beginnings. After leaving her home country at 18 and settling in Miami, Berendika now has homes in New York, Montana, and the Bahamas. Her home in Baker’s Bay, where she spends part of the year, is airy, sprawling, and verdant—and full of works from a formidable art collection that includes a plethora of female artists including Jenny Holzer, Kelly Akashi, and Lauren Halsey.

## Highlights from Frieze Los Angeles 2025



PHOTO: CASEY KELBAUGH. COURTESY FRIEZE AND CKA.

### Frieze Los Angeles 2025.

Less than two months after the fatal wildfires devastated Los Angeles, wiping out lives, homes, and property, 97 of the leading global and local galleries united to support LA's art community at **Frieze Los Angeles 2025**.

"Frieze Los Angeles was a resounding success," said Christine Messineo, Director of Americas, **Frieze**. "Collectors and institutions engaged with real intent, purchasing with sustained interest throughout the fair, from the opening moments to the final hours on Sunday afternoon. The market has proven its resilience. In the face of recent challenges, the global **art community** has recognized the vital role of investing in the creative economy. We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined us in this important work, and we look forward to building on the achievements of this year's edition."



10 of 10

© KELLY AKASHI, COURTESY LISSON, MULTIPLE CITIES

## < 10. Kelly Akashi at Lisson >

A Los Angeles-born and based multidisciplinary artist, Kelly Akashi is best known for her representational sculptures imaginatively created in bronze, stone, and **glass**. Exhibiting internationally even before completing her MFA at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles in 2014, Akashi creates intimate pieces that convey a poetic sensibility, a genuine love of materials, and a willingness to take chances in a continuous embrace of experimentation.

After losing her home and studio to the destructive Los Angeles fires, Akashi rallied to create new work for her inaugural show at the gallery, which opened to critical acclaim at the end of January.

She created a unique sculpture featuring her **cast** hands (a motif she has utilized in various ways over the years) to showcase at the fair. Molding her hands in crystal, she has them gripping two sides of a triangular pipestone wedge, the shape symbolic of separation or splitting things apart, which could be seen as a way to move forward or as a remembrance of the recent past.

*Image: Kelly Akashi, Wedged Life Forms (Opaline), 2024. Lost-wax cast crystal, pipestone. 24.02" x 16.5" x 7.48" (61 cm x 41.9 cm x 19 cm)*

## 4 EXHIBITIONS TO SEE IN LOS ANGELES CHOSEN BY COURTNEY KILLOUGH

It's the final weekend of Frieze LA, and if you're looking to cap off your art-filled experience with some unforgettable exhibitions, these four shows are a must-see. From meditative installations to vibrant explorations of contemporary anxieties, each offers a distinct encounter with painting, sculpture, and immersive environments. Kelly Akashi reflects on resilience, reconstructing her works after wildfire devastation, while Woody De Othello transforms the gallery into an altered landscape—complete with evocative lighting, music, and sand—surrounding his ceramics, bronze sculptures, and works on paper. George Rouy presents hauntingly beautiful faceless figures alongside a special performance, closing with a final show today, Saturday, February 22, at 7:30 PM. Meanwhile, Mr. makes his long-awaited return to the West Coast with his first major solo exhibition in over a decade, featuring his signature colorful figures that probe the anxieties of modern life. Don't miss these captivating experiences before Frieze LA comes to a close!

### Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery



Lisson Gallery's exhibition with Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi is a powerful testament to resilience, transformation, and renewal. Originally set to open on January 31, the exhibition took on new meaning after Akashi lost her home and studio in the devastating wildfires that swept through Los Angeles in early 2025.



With immense determination and community support, she rebuilt her body of work, incorporating salvaged bronze and glass pieces from the wreckage, now marked by fire's imprint. The exhibition features an intricate landscape of materials—stone, marble, glass, lace, and bronze—arranged in organic formations that evoke cycles of destruction and regeneration.

Delicate glass flowers, cast body parts, and oxidized steel plinths intermingle with heirloom lace from Akashi's grandmother, underscoring the tension between permanence and fragility. A striking highlight is an elaborate borosilicate glass sphere, showcasing the artist's mastery of impossibly intricate forms. Through her alchemical approach, Akashi reveals the ever-changing nature of existence, where even destruction holds the promise of renewal.



The exhibition is on view at [Lisson Gallery](#) until March 29th, 2025 1037 N. Sycamore Avenue, Los Angeles

*The Art Newspaper*  
20 February, 2025



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

### 'I think Frieze Los Angeles is exactly what the city needs right now': Sophia Cohen on the healing power of art

The one-time gallerist with a dizzying array of other art-world roles describes her early love of Pop art and her regret at not buying a Salman Toor before he was famous



Aged 13, Sophia Cohen bought a Roy Lichtenstein-inspired work: "My siblings made fun of me for spending all my allowance"

Photo: Molly Matalon

Sophia Cohen wears many hats. Following a stint as an associate director at Gagosian, she founded the advisory and cultural consulting firm Siren. She is the arts editor-at-large for *Cultured* magazine, co-chairs the Young Collectors Council at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, helped launch the Global Ambassadors initiative at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, is a member of the Milken Institute's Young Leaders Circle and helped curate a range of artist-designed merchandise for the New York Mets baseball team (owned by her father, Steven Cohen, another taste-making collector).

In addition to all her work encouraging and supporting a younger generation of collectors, she has built up a personal collection that represents a who's-who of established and fast-rising contemporary artists, from Rashid Johnson, Fiona Waterstreet and Jonas Wood to Anna Park, Chanel Khoury, Matt Johnson and Anna Weyant. Ahead of this week's fairs she discussed one of her most recent acquisitions, what work she most covets in a museum collection and why the art world's support for Los Angeles is so crucial in the present moment.

### **The Art Newspaper: How were you affected by the wildfires in January?**

Sophia Cohen: What a harrowing experience that pales in comparison to the countless people who lost everything. Fortunately, we didn't lose our home, but seeing the fire so close from our backyard was one of the scarier things. Hearing the stories of friends and families who lost everything was heart-wrenching. My husband and I are doing everything we can to help the people in our community to rebuild.

### **What are you looking forward to during Frieze Los Angeles this year?**

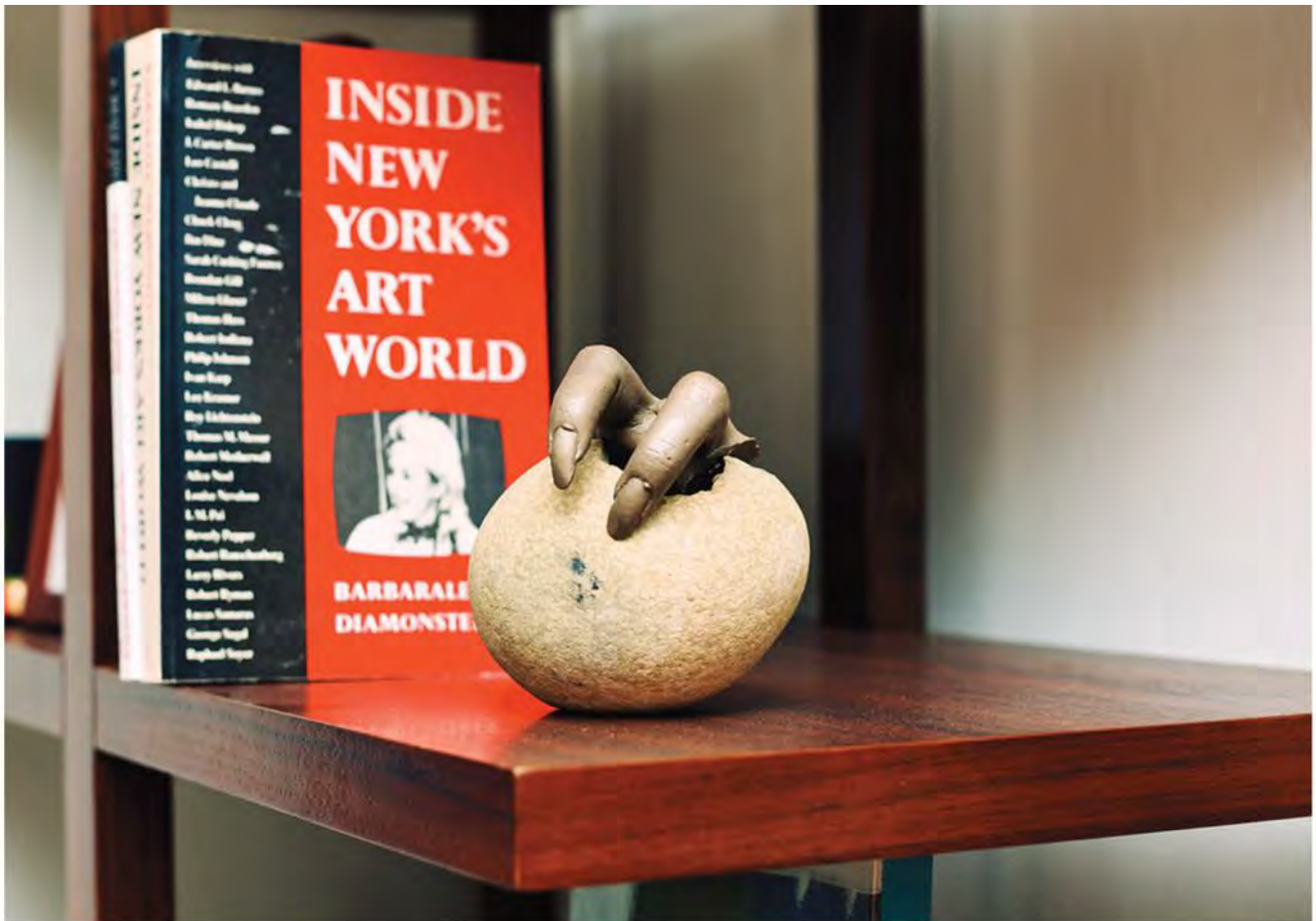
I think Frieze Los Angeles is exactly what the city needs right now. To remind everyone that art can heal, bring communities together and showcase the city in a beautiful way. It will be great to see the global art community and friends this week—I am very much looking forward to that.

### **Where do you like to eat and drink in or near Santa Monica?**

I am more of a homebody when it comes to eating, but nothing beats the Santa Monica Farmers Market. Anytime I get down there, I make it a point to go on the day of the market to get the fresh produce.

### **What was the first work you ever bought?**

When I was 13, I bought a Roy Lichtenstein-inspired work that my siblings made fun of me for spending all my allowance on. It's safe to say that started the addiction to buying things that may be a bit above my price range—but always worth it.



Art-world digits: Cohen's collection includes *Spawn* (2021), a sculpture by the Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi made of sandstone and lost-wax cast bronze

Photo: Molly Matalon

### **What was the most recent work you bought?**

I bought a Keita Morimoto work from Almine Rech this past December at Art Basel Miami Beach. It was one of those works that I walked up to and immediately felt a connection to. I'm really happy to have done it.

### **How quickly do you decide to buy a work of art?**

It can be in an instant, or it can be a slow-burn chase. Both ways I enjoy thoroughly. The instant buy reminds me that art does have that immediate attraction and pull to a person, and the slow burn allows me to enjoy the art of the chase—looking for the right piece by an artist and taking my time.

### **What do you regret not buying when you had the chance?**

I am not someone who usually regrets things, as there will always be more art to buy, but if I had to pick one, maybe a Salman Toor, but it's sort of a moot point as I didn't know until he was already big!

# 8 Events at Frieze L.A. Art Week You Can't Miss

Despite the recent fires, Los Angeles has come together for its annual art week, welcoming the international jet set to the Pacific coast for a packed calendar of gallery openings, museum exhibitions, satellite fairs, and parties—capped off by the main event: Frieze L.A. Still, this year feels a bit different. With local schools on spring break, many parents may forgo the fairs altogether. If you're in town, here's what to prioritize outside of the main tent (traffic included).

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## Shop for a Good Cause at the 100% Show

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With the fires still very much lingering in the Los Angeles imagination and repair efforts still in their infancy, the first responders to the needs of the city and its arts community have mobilized from within. Grief + Hope is one example. The group's most publicized effort is a pop-up exhibition called the "100% show" which focuses on creating sales opportunity for artists impacted directly by the fires. Organized by the Hammer Museum's Aram Moshayedi, the exhibition includes a great swath of practices from Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio and Paul McCarthy to Tara Walters and Kelly Akashi. The latter is also showing at Lisson Gallery after an astonishing rally to finish her first solo show with the blue chip standby. With celebrities dropping by the show and an unprecedented slice of Los Angeles's art world on display, this charitable exhibition is not to be missed.

*Surface*

20 February, 2025

ART

# The Surface Primer On L.A. Art Week

From Frieze, Felix and The Future Perfect to Post-Fair, The Other Art Fair, and openings at Los Angeles institutions

BY DAVID GRAVER

February 20, 2025



Coco Fusco, *Only in Darkness*. Courtesy Orange Barrel Media, the artist and Mendes Wood DM.

Currently underway in Los Angeles, a week of art and design fairs and activations align with marquee exhibitions at L.A.'s own galleries and institutions. On the fair circuit, the 2025 edition of Frieze Los Angeles at the Santa Monica Airport is dedicated to a celebration of creative resilience. It joins the seventh edition of the Felix Art Fair at The Hollywood Roosevelt, as well as the inaugural edition of Post-Fair—formerly known as the Santa Monica Post Office—and the 140 exhibiting artists of The Other Art Fair in Atwater Village. This is all in addition to the LA Art Show at the Los Angeles Convention Center, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

Alongside major museum shows like “Imagining Black Diasporas: 21st-Century Art and Poetics” at LACMA, “Alice Coltrane, Monument Eternal” at the Hammer Museum, and “Joseph Beuys: In Defense of Nature” at The Broad, many L.A. galleries are hosting meaningful exhibitions by leading artists—including Nina Chanel Abney at Deitch, Alex Israel at Gagosian in Beverly Hills, Bruce Nauman at Marian Goodman Gallery, Kour Pour at Nazarian / Curcio, Jon Rafman at Sprüth Magers, Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery, Charlie Engelman’s “Pith” at Château Shatto, and Doug Aitken’s “Psychic Debris Field” at Regen Projects. Further, The Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation is hosting a Frieze Weekend celebration for Casper’s Brindle’s solo exhibition “Numina” at William Turner Gallery.

Highlights are set to abound at Frieze, Felix, Post-Fair, and The Other Art Fair, with the latter introducing a new mural by L.A. artist Judy Baca. Among the 95 international and local galleries at Frieze, Almine Rech will present a solo booth of paintings by Brooklyn-based Tomokazu “Matsu” Matsuyama and Gagosian will exhibit Chris Burden’s ethereal, large-scale *Nomadic Folly*. Xavier Hufkens’ booth will introduce new paintings by Tracey Emin alongside sculptures by Louise Bourgeois. Southern Guild will make their Frieze Los Angeles debut with new work by five women artists. Finally, displayed across a series of public billboards and digital screens throughout Los Angeles, artist Coco Fusco’s *Only in Darkness* broaches race, gender, and colonialism through skywriting. It’s a city-wide collaboration with Mendes Wood DM and Orange Barrel Media.

# LISSON GALLERY

*13 Things LA*

26 February 2025

13things  published by 

## 13ThingsLA: February 26

Earth Spells for your art calendar



*Tau Lewis, The Handle of the Axe (detail), 2024 (Courtesy of David Zwirner Gallery)*

Well, that was a lot. Last week's Art Week had us rushed off our feet, but we're back with fresh REVIEWS at Lisson Gallery, Marian Goodman Gallery, MAK Center/Schindler House, and David Zwirner Gallery. Plus an essay I wrote for a show at MASH, and PST:Art popping up at the Ebell. The Broad embraces zines, and new shows open at Descanso Gardens/Sturt Haaga Gallery, Shatto Gallery, Regen Projects, Eastern Projects, Leica Gallery, and Trophy Room L.A. P.S. It's our publisher Heidi's birthday week!! All the flowers, girl. We love you!

And special for our paid subscribers, I'm working on figuring out the quirks of the [Substack Chat thing](#), where currently, I'm curious as to your opinions on Art Week!

## Full Calendar



*Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery*

**REVIEW: Kelly Akashi is now open at Lisson Gallery.** The quiet, beguiling confidence of Akashi's latest suite of natural, industrial, and familial sculptures and arrangements is a triumph in more ways than one. Most poignantly, this is the exhibition planned for January which was delayed when the artist lost her home and studio to the Eaton Fire. The resilience she demonstrated in rescuing what she could (and it turns out several of the objects and elements displayed here survived the fire by happening to be inside a kiln that night) and getting right back to work on the rest is a story about a real warrior queen. But then again, *Kelly Akashi's* work has always flourished in the liminal borderland between nature, psyche, the body, memory, and manifestation, fragility and endurance, and elemental resonance. Her minimal but emotional juxtapositional arrangements and wrought pieces in stone, metal, glass, light, and lace—formed into antler, stem, branch, hand, mask, and seed—speak to inheritance, ornament, offering, terrestrial time, and the kind of meditative, surrealist poetics that befit liberated wildling women. *On view in Hollywood through March 29; [lissongallery.com](http://lissongallery.com). —SND*

*Puck*

26 February 2025

PUCK



# Frieze Your Mind

Frieze week in L.A. has everything we love about the city itself—fresh, energetic works, attention-seeking hipsters, and poolside pop-ups. So what if it doesn't always fit into a nice, neat art market narrative?



I was hoping Frieze L.A. would provide at least a glimpse of the state of the market at the moment. And it did, despite the lack of a trend to give the whole market coherence. Photo: Casey Kelbaugh/Courtesy of Frieze and CKA

**A**fter a quiet winter in the art market, I headed out to Frieze week in Los Angeles not expecting much. That's mainly because we've had so little public evidence of where the art market stands lately. Still, I was hoping Frieze L.A. would provide at least a glimpse of the state of the market at the moment. And it did, despite the lack of a trend to give the whole market coherence.

## Day Two: The Gallery Scavenger Hunt

Wednesday's main event was the Felix art fair at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. The fair is split into two sections—one poolside and the other in the hotel's tower, where two floors are emptied of furniture and fairgoers sidle past each other to enter and exit each hotel room. Actor **Henry Winkler** got in early and eagerly investigated every one. This was something of the sweet spot in the current market: a wide range of artists at affordable prices, and lots of ceramics. Down among the cabanas, we saw **Adam Cohen** selling 100 small rondo portraits of figures from art history in a hallway. At least one high-volume collector and dealer I know had expected Felix to be the week's high point in terms of interest and energy, but when we left, at least, the pool area had yet to develop into its usual raucous scene.

There are more than a dozen galleries not far from the Roosevelt. So after a quick lunch, we headed to Jeffrey Deitch to see his **Nina Chanel Abney** show and stopped right next door at Lisson for **Kelly Akashi**. Not being Angelenos, we walked West to Karma to see **Woody De Othello's** sculptures (all bathed in an otherworldly yellow light) and paintings hung around the perimeter of a room filled with sand. Further on, we made it to Matthew Marks's show of **Jacqueline Humphries** paintings. Then we trucked it back to Deitch's second space, filled with work by **Tschabalala Self**, Regen Projects's **Doug Aitken** show, and Tanya Bonakdar's **Shilpa Gupta** show, passing through the gallery Various Small Fires before stopping in to see **Terran Last Gun's** modern take on Indigenous ledger drawings and **Julian Stanczak's** early work from the '60s to the '80s at **Diane Rosenstein's** gallery.

*Artnet*

21 February 2025

# Los Angeles Toasts Clear Air, Conceptual Art, and Mysterious Mike Kelleys During Cautiously Optimistic Frieze Week

Which artist's work is selling for about \$2,715 per square inch? What did Ari Emmanuel buy from the art fair that he owns?



Gwyneth Paltrow at the 2025 VIP opening of Frieze Los Angeles. Photo by Casey Kelbaugh. Courtesy of Frieze and CKA.

I think I'll remember this Frieze Week in Los Angeles for the disoriented, woolly feeling I got when I touched down at LAX. Thoughts I hadn't had since the tail end of the pandemic clouded my mind: Should I be wearing a mask? How much small talk about the fires is appropriate? If I'm having fun at a party, should I keep it off Instagram? The conflict over whether to come at all was still at the top of mind for many interlopers, who only experienced the disaster via news stories and social media.

A lot of this inner dialogue seemed rather dramatic to locals, but I can't pretend that the week felt normal. There was an optimistic spirit, but it did feel forced at times. The devastation of the fires was pretty much invisible to those touring art spaces, but it could still be palpably felt everywhere. Burned-off areas are blocked by red tape, and a rainstorm last week cleared the air enough so that it could be classified as "moderate-good" in the air quality index. One dealer told me that a recurring line from art advisors trying to cajole their clients into visiting the fair has been: "Hey look, the air quality is actually pretty good!" **Arty Nelson**, the owner the **One Trick Pony** gallery, put it well: "Three weeks ago, it was too hard to know what to do. The tragedy highlight reel was being broadcast around the world."

The community did rise to the occasion. One of the busiest events I went to was the afterparty for **Kelly Akashi's** show at **Lisson**. Akashi lost her home and studio in the fires, as well as the work she had created for the show, which had been set to open on January 31. She got right back in the saddle and put together a gangbuster presentation in just three weeks. "I'm really grateful to everyone who came together to make the exhibition happen," she said.

**Michelle Pobar**, a Lisson director, told me that the response to Akashi's show was "extraordinary," and that "Kelly's resilience throughout this journey has been nothing short of inspiring, and we couldn't be prouder of the outcome."



Exhibition view of 'Kelly Akashi' at Lisson, Gallery Los Angeles, 20 February – 29 March 2025 © Kelly Akashi, Courtesy Lisson

As the week comes to a close, the city's 70-degree weather is melting away any remaining skepticism about whether the fairs should have proceeded. To end with another quote from Arty Nelson, the One Trick Pony dealer: "Los Angeles is a city that is vast and wild—we've gone through riots, earthquakes, and fires. But the people really showed up, and that's been so meaningful."

*Artsy*

25 February 2025

## After Tragedy, L.A. Art Week 2025 Showcased Resilience, Creativity, and Community

Tara Anne Dalbow



Interior view of Frieze Los Angeles, 2025. Photo by Casey Kelbaugh. Courtesy of Frieze and CKA.

When Frieze, the cornerstone of L.A. Art Week, confirmed at the end of January that the fair would proceed as planned, its organizers added a subtitle: “A Celebration of Creative Resilience and Community Rebuilding.” And celebrate they did, last week at the fair’s sixth edition – with sold-out stands, thousands of guests, and several pioneering public programs. A similar header could be aptly applied to the other fairs that ran simultaneously – Felix Art Fair, Post-Fair, The Other Art Fair, and The L.A. Art Show – and the innumerable benefits and exhibitions that opened across the city.

A palpable sense of festivity and camaraderie could be felt from Santa Monica to the east side as the art world convened en masse for the first time following last month's devastating wildfires that ravaged more than 40,000 acres of land and more than 10,000 homes across Los Angeles County. Unanimously, the local artists, gallerists, and collectors that Artsy spoke with expressed an infectious mix of pride, enthusiasm, and relief regarding the week's healthy turnout. Lingering fears of empty booths and a somber atmosphere were quickly assuaged, along with any doubts about the arts community's capacity for meaningful support and solidarity.



Kelly Akashi, installation view at Lisson Gallery Los Angeles, 2025. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

Among the many memorable exhibition openings, Bruce Nauman at Marian Goodman Gallery, Lisa Yuskavage at David Zwirner, Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery, and Woody De Othello at Karma were some of the most talked about. “Emotion is energy in motion,” explained De Othello. “It is felt rather than seen, almost like wave lengths or sound reverberations.” His hope for the surreal ceramic vessels scattered about the yellow-light-flooded gallery was that they might encourage us to fine-tune our sensitivity to the unseen, namely the emotions of other human beings.

Considering the outpouring of support and compassion in the city over the past two months, these sculptures and the Art Week, more broadly, offered a glimpse into precisely what the people of L.A. have done and continue to do: turn up the dial on their capacity for empathy, reminding all of us that together is the only way through. ■

LISSON GALLERY

*Ocula*

25 February 2025

OCULA

# Frieze Los Angeles Celebrates the City's Strength and Solidarity

Opening in the aftermath of this year's catastrophic spate of wildfires, Frieze L.A. proved a testament to the community's resilience.



Jackie Amézquita, 'Inside Out' by Art Production Fund. Frieze Los Angeles (20–23 February 2025). Courtesy Frieze and CKA. Photo: Casey Kelbaugh.

Even before the fifth edition of Frieze Los Angeles opened its doors last Thursday, the city that only a few weeks prior had endured the most devastating fires in its history was palpably buoyant. Opening night celebrations for highly anticipated exhibitions were packed: Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery, Bruce Nauman at Marian Goodman Gallery, Lisa Yuskavage at David Zwirner, Daisy Sheff and Joe Minter at the newly inaugurated Parker Gallery on Melrose. A bevy of after-parties had to turn back crowds of invited guests. And yet, artists, gallerists, and collectors alike held their breath until they saw the serpentine line unfurling from WHY Architecture's custom-designed white tents at Santa Monica airport on the morning of the VIP preview. The collective sigh of relief was quickly followed by a contagious optimism and genuine fellowship that continued for the remainder of the week.

LISSON GALLERY

*The Art Newspaper*  
21 February 2025



**THE ART NEWSPAPER**

## **Expert Eye: Amanda Sroka's Frieze Los Angeles favourites**

Gathering objects of desire with the senior curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles



Amanda Sroka, trained at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, is currently ICA LA's senior curator  
Photo: Eric Thayer

# LISSON GALLERY

*Vanity Fair*  
21 February 2025

## The Art World Returns to a Post-Fires Los Angeles

After the catastrophic January wildfires, it was an open question as to whether Frieze, the city's marquee fair, and its dozens of offshoot openings and satellites would go on. Six weeks later, those arriving in town found a return to form—and some lessons in quiet resilience.



FRIEZE LA: BY CASEY KELBAUGH. COURTESY OF FRIEZE AND CKA; ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

On January 7, the artist **Kelly Akashi** packed a bag at her house in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Altadena to go stay at the Los Feliz home of a friend, the Château Shatto gallery founder **Olivia Barrett**. The winds whipping around her home, a historic abode that before her had been inhabited by LA artists **Jim Shaw** and **Marnie Weber**, were approaching 100 miles per hour, and they were upsetting her cat. The city had also cut off her power in order to prevent the spread of fires, and she didn't want to spend the night in the dark and cold.

Akashi—who has long been one of LA's most beloved artist's artists, with a fiercely devoted network of friends across age, medium, or gallery affiliation—quickly packed some essentials and family heirlooms, leaving behind the contents of her studio, the entirety of a show set to open at Lisson Gallery later that month. She didn't want to stay too long, given the risks posed by tree branches flying through the air.

“I was thinking, Everyone’s going to go, ‘Kelly, why were you packing? You got knocked out by a branch, that was so stupid, you were so worried about a potential fire, you weren’t paying attention to the wind,’” Akashi told me this week. “So I just packed up quickly and I started driving.”

As she was leaving, she saw something glowing in the distance and ignored it, determined to make it out of the danger of the winds. A few hours later alerts started coming in on her phone that there was a fire and it was spreading. She heard there was a 10-foot inferno wall coming down her street, and the news had failed to reach some of her neighbors until it was terrifyingly late. She feared for the worst, for her home, and her studio, which contained the bronze sculptures and glass installations for her first show with a new gallery.

Los Feliz, where she was holing up, while safe from the fire, was just 15 miles away from Altadena. Soon enough, like much of the city, it would be engulfed in smoke. At Barrett’s house Akashi decided to face the inevitable.



Exhibition view of Kelly Akashi at Lisson, Gallery Los Angeles, 20 February – 29 March 2025 KELLY AKASHI, COURTESY LISSON

“We went up to the top floor of the house and we could see the fire,” she said. “And I was like, ‘My house is probably burning right now.’”

A few days later, before the National Guard sealed off the neighborhood, she returned to the house, which she moved into in 2021 after years of shuttling between different pads and studios. There was seemingly nothing left except for her Skutt kiln, which had within it an

intact bead of hand-blown glass, protected by the sealed-off iron drum. It at first appeared that the rest of the show had been pinned down under tons of collapsed rubble or outright destroyed. But a few days later, she and a few friends showed up in P100 masks, covered head to toe in organic clothing—“there were burning embers that had been falling out of the sky, and they said anything plastic could melt on my skin,” Akashi explained—and an extraction mandate: recover what they could from the ashes.

“My friend went with me, and he’s crazy. I mean, we were wearing protective gear but he just jumped in my studio,” she said, noting that among the many unknown toxins and hazards were a home’s worth of sharp, rusty nails. “I’m like, ‘What are you doing? Get out,’ and he’s like, ‘Look.’ And he just pulls out two bronzes, the two seedpods that are in the show. I didn’t know if they had melted. I didn’t know how hot the fire had gotten; house fires tend to get to over 1,800 degrees, but it probably didn’t get to even 1,400 at my house.”

We were speaking exactly six weeks after the fires first raged, after rains had put the fires out for good and calmed the city’s nerves—to a degree. But there was still a palpable sense of the fact that batteries, cars, and motorcycles had been incinerated in the blaze and gone...somewhere? It was a little disconcerting to see white specks blanketing my eyelashes when I returned home Tuesday evening.

Yet Akashi was optimistic. We chatted over lunch at Pink’s, a hot dog stand in Hollywood that churns out creatively topped wieners with remarkable quality. The hot dogs are named after celebrities. Akashi got the **Mario Lopez** dog (guacamole, chopped tomatoes, bacon bits, sour cream, jalapeños) and I got the **Emeril Lagasse** Bam dog (mustard, onions, cheese, jalapeños, three strips of bacon, coleslaw).

A number of collectors and dealers were in town for Frieze week, the annual bonanza of parties, dinners, and openings that has come to occupy a very specific place in Los Angeles’s pre-Academy Awards cultural schedule. After much debate, the fair was not canceled, despite the devastation. Akashi’s always a fixture of the fair week—we first met during this week years ago, at a Chateau Marmont dinner where a posse of artists, dealers, collectors, and restaurant owners lingered long after dessert on the outdoor patio—but especially on this particular year.



Nomadic Folly, 2001, Installation view, Frieze Los Angeles, 2025 CHRIS BURDEN/LICENSED BY THE CHRIS BURDEN ESTATE.

Akashi decided not to cancel her show, just push it back, and fill the gallery space with a suite of works that emerged from an intense period of concentrated art-making in the last few weeks. The bronzes that survived had been fished out of the ashes and now had a patina of fire. The centerpiece of the show, a hand-blown glass piece, had been at a friend's house when the disaster struck. The rest of the work had to be cast quickly. She would sneak into the destruction zone to find snapped branches, and then cast them as bronze sculptures to install in the show.

The January show would open during Frieze week. For Akashi, there was no other option. To despair would mean to give up.

“They say, ‘You can’t be a glassblower if you can’t deal with heat and loss,’ and I’d say I’m being tested right now on both of those,” she said.

For the last decade or so, Los Angeles has become a bona fide art town, a city that yearned to shed its plastic reputation and become a hub for high art alongside the Hollywood glitz. LACMA announced its polarizing but undoubtedly ambitious expansion plan in 2013, and in 2015 mega-collector Eli Broad opened his own towering private museum across the street from MOCA. In 2016 Tinseltown bigwig **Ari Emanuel** bought the Frieze art fairs and plotted an outpost on the Paramount Pictures back lot, right near the New York City sets, which opened in 2019. Galleries from New York and Europe opened major LA spaces: Marian Goodman, David Zwirner, Lisson, Perrotin, Michael Werner, on and on. During the fair’s golden years, there was a general sense that Frieze LA was entering its imperial era

when it rented out the Getty Villa for a chest-thumping opening bash, borrowing the backdrop of [the opulent masterpiece-filled temples built by oil fortunes](#) to set the tone for a successful week.



Lorraine Nicholson and Al Pacino BY MYLES HENDRICK.

Now even that historic property is surrounded by devastation, barely spared the flames itself. Thousands of homes were destroyed, and hundreds of artists lost their homes and studios, sometimes watching entire archives go up in flames. Collectors saw masterpieces reduced to ash, and many who live in the city’s tony west-side neighborhood have decamped to second homes in Aspen, or Las Vegas, or New York for the winter. Many predicted that February’s Frieze week—a week *The New York Times* [said in a headline just days before the fires](#), “cements Los Angeles as an international art capital”—would likely be canceled.

But Frieze decided to barrel forward with a fair that had moved to Santa Monica in order to be closer to the collectors in the Pacific Palisades, large swaths of which [no longer exist](#). Locals mostly applauded the choice, arguing that canceling the fair would do more damage to a community that’s endured so much loss already this year. Privately, some dealers grumbled about having to pay pre-fire booth prices for a fair in a city that’s suffered \$250 billion in property damages since the fair was announced. After the Grammys and the Oscars announced their own plans to move forward, and the Lakers started playing at the Crypto.com Arena, Frieze followed suit. (Perhaps it should be mentioned that Endeavor [is shopping Frieze](#) in the midst of Silver Lake Capital taking Endeavor private again, and canceling its marquee American edition could scare off anyone wading into the bidding pool.)

On Monday there was an open studio gathering hosted by several Eagle Rock–based artists (**Lily Stockman, Hilary Pecis, Jake Longstreth, Mindy Shapero, Lia Halloran, and Nancy Baker Cahill**) and multiple people came up to me and said, “Thank you for coming”—not thanking me for coming to eat staggeringly good tacos in a parking

lot, but for coming to Los Angeles *at all*. There was a palpable sense of manic energy from locals in desperate need of some counterprogramming, giddy at the prospect of the global art community rolling into town. On Monday night, Tower Bar, the place that acted as a Noah's ark for displaced Angelenos (and their pets), was filled with New Yorkers hoping the same Tinseltown magic would endure in the after times. (Residents have already taken to speaking the COVID-era markers of the “before times” and the “after times.”) By Tuesday morning the press corps had descended upon the arts district to the massive complex that is Hauser & Wirth, which was staging **David Hammons's** *Concerto in Black and Blue*, which is a mostly empty dark gallery illuminated only by viewers' tiny blue flashlights. Phones are locked in a Yondr pouch like a **Dave Chappelle** set. Word was that Hammons, the press-shy artist who's made few public appearances in decades, was on hand to install the show.

On Tuesday night I stopped by the studio of **Tristan Unrau**, a pretty remarkable young painter who will have a show next year at David Kordansky Gallery, which also currently has on view at its massive Mid City space epic exhibitions by **Sam McKinniss** and **Lesley Vance**. Unrau and I shared an Uber ride across town, and he said that what hit him most was the strangeness of the tragedy, the fact that people were learning to grieve the loss of possessions. Despite the widespread devastation, for the most part, things were going back to normal.



Camille Rowe and Theo Niarchos BY MYLES HENDRICK.



Lorraine Nicholson and Jed Moch BY MYLES HENDRICK.

“It would have been a little ridiculous if they canceled everything,” he said. “The first Saturday after everything was eerily quiet, but after that it was busy again.”

Case in point: Unrau and I were headed to a Frieze kickoff party not at the Getty Villa as in years past, but at another kind of Getty villa—the home of family heir **Balthazar Getty** high atop the Sunset Strip, where we were greeted with a massive bowl of free cigarettes (I noticed an uptick of smoking in general), a gigantic taxidermy polar bear in the library, and Getty himself, who was ducking well-wishers yelling “Balty!” in his direction.

After that, *Vanity Fair* editor at large **Lorraine Nicholson** hosted a dinner at her Laurel Canyon home to celebrate the opening of “Ponyshow,” an exhibition put together by curator **Jed Moch**, with some of the proceeds from the sales benefiting fire relief. What a cross section of New Yorkers and Angelenos: the actor **Logan Lerman** chatting near **Al Pacino** and **Danny Huston** while *New Yorker* writer **Naomi Fry** was testing out some questions with London-based artist **Issy Wood**. (Fry would be interviewing Wood at her show at Michael Werner Gallery in Beverly Hills the next day.) The artist **Honor Titus** and the pop star **Kim Petras** were there, with work by **Kai Althoff**, **Sam Anderson**, **Uri Aran**, **Jan Gatewood**, **Eric N. Mack**, and **Ed Ruscha** on the walls as part of the show. Gatewood was among the artists in attendance, alongside the model/influencer **Devon Lee Carlson** and the filmmaker **Nadia Lee Cohen**. Artist **Rose Salane** was standing near the rocker **Holden Jaffe** of Del Water Gap, and **David O. Russell** was leaving as the artist **Calvin Marcus** arrived. **Theo Niarchos** was there, having just opened a stellar show

at his Hollywood space, Maison d'Art, of work by Cy Twombly from the collection of the Cologne doctor **Reiner Speck**.

On Wednesday, the Felix fair opened at the Hollywood Roosevelt, ahead of a vast spree of openings throughout the city. Gagosian has an **Alex Israel** show, and next week it opens its Oscar weekend exhibition: three portraits of **Bob Dylan** by **Richard Prince**. David Zwirner has **Lisa Yuskavage**'s first LA show in years, Blum is showing a survey of **Yoshitomo Nara** sculptures, and **Doug Aitken** has shows at Regen Projects and the Marciano Foundation. **Marian Goodman** hosted **Bruce Nauman**'s first LA show in decades, Karma unveiled a suite of new sculptures by **Woody De Othello**, and the dealer **Sam Parker** opened the doors of his new Parker Gallery space on Melrose with work by **Daisy Sheff** and **Joe Minter**.

On Wednesday night, **Matthew Marks** opened his gallery's first show with the painter **Jacqueline Humphries**, and the dinner at nearby restaurant Ysabel attracted a slew of the city's museum directors, prominent local collectors, and artists from across all types of mega-galleries. Perhaps out of denial, or nerves over how the fair would go the next day, the fires were not a topic of conversation at my table.

Frieze opened Thursday morning just a few miles from the devastation of the Pacific Palisades, and an hour after the first VIPs arrived at the Santa Monica Airport, the place was packed. Hauser & Wirth sold out its booth of paintings by **Ambera Wellmann**, presented with Company Gallery, all in the low six figures. Karma sold works in the six figures by **Jonas Wood**, Calvin Marcus, and **Reggie Burrows Hodges**. Matthew Brown had a rush of offers for work by **Sasha Gordon**, and Kordansky sold out its booth of work by **Maia Cruz Palileo**. Gagosian was still looking for a buyer for Chris Burden's *Nomadic Folly*, an interactive tented installation that was first shown at the Istanbul Biennial in the weeks after September 11, 2001. **Gwyneth Paltrow** came down from Montecito for the festivities. **James Franco**, fresh off his appearance at *SNL 50*, was on the ground, presumably to talk up his recently revived artistic practice. **Esther Kim Varet**, the gallery owner turned congressional candidate in Orange County, sat down at a picnic table to take a Zoom call with her campaign team to discuss talking points. One adviser stopped by to say that she was walking the rapper **Kid Cudi** through the fair. He's a Sunday painter now.

Imade my way to Lisson Gallery to see Akashi's full show on Thursday before the fair. There were delicate wall installations and mysterious sculptures, made from glass, from rock, from stone, from bronze, all installed on Corten steel pedestals, a real-time chronicle of the first few months of 2025 in Los Angeles. The works recovered from the wreckage of the house are triumphantly on view, bearing their scars from the flames.

One, a wall sculpture of half a head, called *Witness*, listed its media: “Eaton Fire patinated lost-wax cast bronze and flame-worked borosilicate glass.” It’s undeniable: The flames give the work an incredible red patina that seems otherworldly, an artwork crafted by the hand of a furious fire god. The recovered work might be too pat a metaphor for a city rising from the ashes, but it also matches Akashi’s unbowed optimism in the face of ecological collapse, and her unbending faith in Los Angeles and its artists. We had spoken a little bit about these themes at Pink’s earlier in the week.

“I am sorry if I start crying,” she said as we took the last bites of our hot dogs. “The best possible outcome is that people really remember that art has a value outside of the market. Because I think the way the community has come together has shown us a power that maybe we’ve kind of forgotten about.”

*Ocula*

19 February, 2025

## OCULA

### Post-Fair: Chris Sharp on the Road to His Latest L.A. Venture

In Conversation with  
[Michael Polsinelli](#)  
Los Angeles, 19 February 2025

Chris Sharp. Courtesy Chris Sharp Gallery, Los Angeles.



In an art world dominated by the fair duopoly, galleries are carving out new ways of networking their businesses. At the forefront of one of the latest initiatives, you'll find Chris Sharp.

Post-Fair—the new Los Angeles art fair conceived by gallerist Chris Sharp—is set to open its pilot edition this week, shadowing the timing of Frieze L.A. After two decades spent continent-hopping as a curator, writer, and editor—including the launch of his acclaimed project space, Lulu, with artist Martín Soto Climent in Mexico City—Sharp eventually returned to his native U.S. in 2021 to open his eponymous L.A. gallery. As preparations intensify for his new fair, Sharp talks to Michael Polsinelli about the drivers, challenges, and concepts that have led him to his latest initiatives.

## The California wildfires have been devastating. How are you?

We've been very lucky. No one in my team and none of my artists has been directly impacted. However, for some, it's unthinkable. About 150 of us from the L.A. art community—gallerists, curators, museum directors, artists—got together in a digital town hall to discuss whether to proceed with the fairs following the devastation. The artist [Kelly Akashi](#), who lost everything in the fires, including the work she was about to include in her solo show at [Lisson Gallery](#), said something really powerful (I paraphrase): 'I don't want anyone to lose opportunities because some of us lost everything. It's important that artists continue being able to do what they do and this is an important time for them to get attention.' I've always liked Kelly, but I now have a new level of respect for her. So, the art community came together and made the decision to proceed.



INSIGHTS

Kelly Akashi's Circle of Life Connects  
Body to Cosmos

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**We're speaking as the preparations for your pilot edition of Post-Fair are fully in motion. I'm curious: What questions were you asking yourself when you decided to start the fair?**

What I'm doing has something of a precursor in Place des Vosges, which was a micro-boutique fair project I organised last year in [Paris](#). I found this really beautiful big apartment and invited seven other galleries to do it with me, including the likes of Corbett vs. Dempsey, [Kerlin Gallery](#), and [Kate MacGarry](#). We each paid 5,000 USD, which reduced the sales pressures, although we all made sales. There was a collegial feeling to the whole project; we gave tours to each other's collectors for example. That's rare for art fairs, which are typically very tribal and competitive.

## A Spin Through Some of the Week's Biggest Gallery Shows in Los Angeles

I was more excited to see a restaged version of **David Hammons**'s seminal piece *Concerto in Black and Blue*, which has not been exhibited since its debut in 2002 at the Ace Gallery in New York. Hammons has always been one of the US's most elusive artists, so it's something of a coup that Hauser & Wirth even mounted this work.

At its core, the piece is rather simple: an unadorned gallery is left in darkness, and visitors are given small blue flashlights to navigate the space. The work debuted less than a year after 9/11, and the pitch black space was widely seen as a parallel for the darkness of the moment. This time around, a different tragedy, the LA wildfires, offers new resonance. Yet I didn't think of the fires here, because what I really thought about was Hauser & Wirth's space, with its airy courtyard, chicken coop, high-end farm-to-table restaurant, and glossy art bookstore. Although I didn't see the original Ace presentation, a video by Linda Goode Bryant documenting the 2002 show is on view, offering a sense of the claustrophobia and grittiness felt back then. Hauser & Wirth's space, by contrast, is sterile, cavernous, and not quite dark enough to make clear that this is a work about being ensconced in blackness. I imagine I'd have preferred the piece's original iteration.

From Hauser & Wirth, I headed to one of the two sections of Hollywood replete with galleries now. As the gallery scene in Los Angeles has boomed, the so-called Melrose Hill neighborhood—a **recently redeveloped corridor** of galleries and restaurants around Melrose and Western Avenues in Hollywood—has continued to grow since last year's edition of Frieze. The two new anchors of the neighborhood are the Brick (née LAXART), which has a show of new and ongoing work by Gregg Bordowitz, and **David Zwirner**, which now has three spaces here, two of which have shows on this week.

Last May, timed to its 30th anniversary, Zwirner opened a massive, Annabelle Selldorf–designed three-story building. On view here is a stellar exhibition of new paintings by **Lisa Yuskavage**, who hasn't had an LA solo show in nearly 30 years. For this new body of work, Yuskavage has mined her archive in a way, placing figures from across her oeuvre in various imagined artist studios. During a press tour, Yuskavage noted that she's fond of Easter eggs in film, and so past works (in various forms of completion) also show up here. There's, of course, a long history of artists painting themselves in their studio, from Judith Leyster to Gustave Courbet to Philip Guston; Yuskavage's starting point, interestingly enough, is Cubist painter Georges Braque. She wanted to reference all of these artists, then take it one step further—to “keep pushing it open,” as she put it.

New York's Anton Kern Gallery and Glasgow's The Modern Institute are also staging a pop-up dedicated to treacly rainbow and unicorn paintings of New York–based artist Andrew Sim. The less said about those works, the better.

Clearly, there's no shortage of art worth seeing here, but none of it is likely to make anyone forget that Los Angeles is still reeling from the devastating wildfires that burned through acres upon acres earlier this year. Thankfully, there is **one response** to the blazes: the group exhibition “**One Hundred Percent,**” for which some 80 artists impacted by the wildfire are showing their work, with all the sales going supporting their rebuilding efforts. Organized by curator Aram Moshayedi, the exhibition shows the range of artistic expression in LA as the focus is on those impacted, from blue-chip artists like Kelly Akashi, Ruby Neri, and Kathryn Andrews to closely watched ones like Beatriz Cortes and Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio. It's heartbreaking to see how many notable artists are assembled here, and it's stirring to see them all come together.

*The Guardian*

18 February, 2025

# Their studios burned. Their art was destroyed. A new exhibit of more than 80 LA artists devastated by fire

Los Angeles's artistic community reflects on disaster in One Hundred Percent, a 'non-hierarchical' volunteer effort



📷 Jeffrey Sugishita took a series of self-portraits in the ruins of the Altadena house where he had lived for four years. In the photograph, the young artist wears a helmet sculpture he made of cracked earth and flowers, originally inspired by the superbloom season of southern California.

Photograph: Jeffrey Sugishita/courtesy of Aram Moshayedi/One Hundred Percent

**W**hen [Jeffrey Sugishita](#) visited the burned-down husk of the house where he had been living, flames were still smoldering inside. For about 30 minutes, Sugishita wandered the wreckage, looking at the empty space where his room had been.

“What’s burnt is burnt,” the 26-year-old artist said. “I told myself: ‘I’m going to make something new out of this.’”

Sugishita went to his car, took out the helmet sculptures he had saved from the blaze, and started photographing himself, using only his iPhone and a tripod.

One of those self-portraits - [Sugishita](#), standing amidst the charred ruins, wearing a helmet of flowers - is now at the center of a Los Angeles art exhibit that opened Friday, which brings together the work of nearly 100 artists who lost their homes, studios and life’s work to January’s [historic wildfires](#).

Highlighting the ongoing toll of California’s extreme weather, the show for artists displaced by wildfire opened as the gallery was being flooded by torrential rains. Water seeped across the gallery floor, and workers swept puddles out the door as new emergency alerts had been issued, highlighting the risk of mudslides in recently-burned areas across [Los Angeles](#).

Some of the artists who contributed to the new show are well-known, such as [Ruby Neri](#), [Kelly Akashi](#) and Kathryn Andrews, or even, like [Paul McCarthy](#), famous in the art world for decades. Others have mostly exhibited their work locally, or are just beginning their careers, like Sugishita, who graduated from art school in 2023.

“It felt really necessary to create a context where people who have been displaced could converge together, in an exhibit that could be as far-reaching and inclusive as possible,” said Aram Moshayedi, who serves as the interim chief curator of the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, but who put together the show independently, as part of an all-volunteer effort.

A hundred percent of any sales will go to the artists, he said, inspiring the show's name: One Hundred Percent.

The thread of the exhibit is the artists' common and very recent devastation. Some of the works exhibited are ones the artists threw in their cars as they fled the fast-moving flames.

One Altadena artist gently touched the chipped frame of her photo collage of a contemplative woman, which had been damaged in her escape from the Eaton fire.

For the past month, "all of my art has been in my van and in Airbnbs", said **Calethia DeConto**, 44, whose Altadena rental is still standing, but so damaged by smoke and soot that she cannot return.

**Daniel Mendel-Black** displayed a digital print of a painting that he had just finished in early January, but had been incinerated in the Eaton fire. The original painting had been inspired by themes of social fragmentation and dystopia, he said, and it was strange to try to reconstruct it. "A lot of things I could talk about conceptually, are now completely emotionally actualized," he said.

Some artists showed works salvaged from the ashes of their homes, like **Ronna Ballister**'s row of slightly charred ceramic pots, which the 73-year-old found by digging through the rubble of her Altadena home.

For others, their only option was creating something entirely new. **Howard Goldberg** lost almost everything he had made to the Altadena fire, "30 years of art turned to ash".

Without a home, studio or materials, moving from place to place, Goldberg made new work using recent copies of the Los Angeles Times, a throwback to a technique he has used before. It felt appropriate, he said: "My own personal catastrophe is on the front page." He rearranged the letters of the paper's name into different daily messages, Among Less EliTees, me see LosT signAl, as if the newspaper itself was speaking, or even "blabbering", like "an idiot that has to keep talking ... has to find the story".

Displaying their work in a group show with other artists who had suffered wildfire losses inspired complicated feelings, the artists said: hope that community could be restored by coming together, but also layers of grief and anger.



📷 The Malibu house that Victoria Franklin-Dillon's family had lived in for 70 years, burned to the ground. Photograph: courtesy of Victoria Franklin-Dillon

“Behind every single one of these pieces is a whole history that is gone,” said Lou Dillon, 38, whose mother’s home in Malibu, where their family had lived for 70 years, had been reduced to charred stones. Dillon and her mother, Victoria Franklin-Dillon, 73, displayed their two works of art side-by-side: the mother’s drawing of a view from her Malibu home, and the daughter’s 2015 painting of that hill on fire during a previous Malibu blaze.

“This was a climate change disaster and all of us are responsible for it,” said [Camilla Taylor](#), whose Altadena home was destroyed. “We are addicted to convenience, and there is a cost to that convenience.”

The heat of the fire that burned their house was so great that “the windows didn’t break, they slumped, they melted,” they said. “I had a collection of marbles. They are now a single mass.”

Taylor contributed a sculpture of a blackened figure with a metallic mask that had been stored in a gallery, and thus survived. Though Taylor had made the figure before the fire, it now reminded them of what it was like picking through the charcoal of their destroyed home, and seeing an occasional rivulet of metal.

“It’s going to come for all of us,” they said. “We have to do better.”



📷 This original version of this landscape, by Devin True, was so damaged by smoke in his Altadena home that he printed a new version to display in the One Hundred Percent show. Photograph: Devin True/courtesy of Aram Moshayedi

While some of the artists who contributed work had lived in areas affected by the Palisades fire, an area by the Pacific Ocean north-west of the city, the majority came from Altadena, a town nestled in the foothills east of Los Angeles.

Once relatively affordable, Altadena attracted a racially diverse and close-knit community of creative residents. It's a particular loss, said DeConto, one of the Altadena artists, "when you've found that magical place and then that place is completely destroyed".

Artist [Devin True](#), 49, DeConto's partner, said he and his Altadena neighbors spent the morning of the

Eaton fire working to put out spot fires with garden hoses, in order to protect the houses still standing on their block. When the water in their hoses ran out, they filled buckets from a neighbor's hot tub.

Now, with Altadena badly damaged, and rents rising across Los Angeles after the fires, "we're not sure where we can afford to live," True said.

What was clear, many artists said, was that they would find a way to keep creating.

"I'm beginning a new life's work, that's the way I see it," said Robbins, the 87-year-old artist who lost his home in Altadena. "We'll see what we can do."

*One Hundred Percent is on view through 22 February at 619 N Western Avenue in Los Angeles. It is open from Tuesday through Saturday, 11 am to 6pm*

# The Most Efficient Frieze Los Angeles Itinerary Ever

Insiders' tips for Frieze Week and how to beat the traffic before it beats you.

A few years ago, in 2022, we wrote up a few tips to help confounded visitors better navigate the city during Frieze LA. In the time since, however, so much of the Los Angeles art world has already changed. Enterprising developers have since come up with new Hollywood commercial districts—like **Melrose Hill**, a stretch of Western Avenue where **David Zwirner** is the anchor tenant and parking is hell on earth.

Dozens of galleries have come to L.A. in recent years, including blue-chip newcomers **Marian Goodman**, **Lisson**, and **Karma**. But in the subsequent market downturn, many smaller galleries have also gone, most recently **Shrine** and **House of Gaga**. By far the most devastating change to L.A.'s art world has been the mass displacement of artists, collectors, and culture workers during the January wildfires. In the disaster's economic fallout, moving ahead with the February fairs was a community decision to not fall further behind. Despite having lost both her home and studio, artist **Kelly Akashi** says, "You don't have the luxury to not work."

LISSON GALLERY

*Frieze*

18 February, 2025

# FRIEZE

## 7 Shows to See During Frieze Los Angeles 2025

From Bruce Nauman's first solo exhibition in the city in three decades, to Togar's immersive exploration of early cinema, here's what to see in LA now

Kelly Akashi | Lisson Gallery | 20 February – 29 March



Kelly Akashi, *Untitled*, 2024, lost-wax cast bronze, borosilicate glass, 35.6 × 14 × 8.9 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Lisson Gallery

For her first exhibition at Lisson Gallery, Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi wanted to make an intimate body of work. 'It was always my intention for these works to show the handling of glass over time', she told me, 'but, of course, it wasn't my intention to show the patina they accrued from a historic fire.' Initially scheduled to open in late January, Akashi's show was delayed when the Eaton Fire destroyed her Altadena studio, along with most of her art. Akashi is remaking the lost paintings and sculptures – such as striking bronze-and-glass seed pods that sprout from massive alabaster pedestals – and repairing others with a flame torch, including a delicate chain of glass that survived the inferno inside the artist's kiln. While these works aren't explicitly about resilience and perseverance, Akashi acknowledges that's possibly how they'll now be seen. 'They were always meant to be true and honest to my process, and that allows them to carry this added layer of history.'

*Observer*

18 February, 2025

# Observer's Guide to the L.A. Gallery and Museum Exhibitions to Check Out During Frieze

Ever resilient, the Los Angeles scene is kicking off this year's Art Week with major shows activating the city.

By [Elisa Carollo](#) • 02/18/25 3:40pm

The [Los Angeles wildfires](#), as destructive as they were, failed to halt Los Angeles Art Week, with [Frieze](#), [Felix Art Fair](#) and [the new Post-Fair](#) proceeding as planned. [Art galleries](#) and local cultural institutions are similarly back in action, opening their doors to stage some of the year's most compelling shows—both for those intrepid visitors willing to venture west and, more significantly, as a source of solace for affected communities. “Each year, Frieze Los Angeles celebrates the city's extraordinary artistic scene,” said [Christine Messineo](#), director of Americas at Frieze, in a statement. “In these trying times, we reaffirm our commitment to Frieze's vital role as a platform for creative recovery and renewal.”

In true Hollywood fashion, the show must go on, and this week's L.A. art calendar brims with exhibitions worth exploring. To help you navigate the City of Stars at its most luminous, Observer has compiled a guide to the best of the week.

## Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery, through March 29



Kelly Akashi will debut at Lisson Gallery during Frieze L.A. Courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery.

Akashi was one of many Angelenos devastated by the fires, losing an entire body of works she and her team had been creating for months in preparation for her debut with the gallery. Despite the initial shock, Akashi and her team returned to work with the same resilience and perseverance that has driven the entire Los Angeles community to rebuild and reframe their losses. Now inseparable from the tragedy, her exhibition confronts the fragility of human existence, shaped by a material world that can be obliterated in seconds—often by natural disasters fueled by our unsustainable cycle of endless production and consumption. From the ashes of her studio, Akashi salvaged several bronze cast and borosilicate glass forms, their surfaces marked with a somber patina—the alchemic trace of the fire’s destructive force, which transformed the objects into something new. In doing so, the artist urges a reckoning with the cosmic cycle of creation, transformation and destruction, reminding us that we exist within a continuum beyond our control. While Akashi’s work reveres process and materiality, her visual language underscores the impermanence of the natural world, recording and indexing fragmented moments in time.

# CULTURED

## Headed to Los Angeles for Frieze? Here Are 20 Exceptional Shows To See While You're There

After the devastation of this January's fires, Los Angeles is rallying around its creative community during Art Week with a slate of must-see programming.

### **"Kelly Akashi"**

**When:** Through March 8

**Where:** Lisson Gallery

**Why It's Worth a Look:** Kelly Akashi, based in Los Angeles, was at work on this new show when the wildfires broke out last month. Following the loss of her home and studio to the flames, she got back to work recontextualizing the series on view, offering new pieces made of glass, earth, stone, lace, and bronze—including several items recovered from the site of her former studio.

**Know Before You Go:** The pieces recovered, along with the new works, are hung around the gallery and installed in a manufactured landscape of stone and marble sculptures mounted on steel pedestals, creating a singular, immersive environment.



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

# Los Angeles artists face long road to recovery after deadly wildfires

Some lost everything, others are in limbo waiting to go home and most have found support in the art community



What is left of Kelly Akashi's studio after the Eaton fire tore through her neighbourhood  
Kelly Akashi

During last month's Los Angeles wildfires, the loss of any home was tragic. For artists who had studios at their homes, the conflagrations were doubly devastating. It meant losing their workplace, equipment, supplies, archives, works in progress and finished. It meant the loss of livelihoods and, for Kelly Akashi, the potential loss of a solo show at Lisson Gallery, which was timed to this month's Frieze Los Angeles fair (20-23 February). Most of the work she made for that exhibition went up in smoke.

Akashi's home and studio in Altadena fell to the Eaton blaze, which started the evening of 7 January and rapidly burned through more than 9,000 structures, causing 17 deaths. Altadena is an older neighbourhood of tree-lined streets pressed against the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, so quiet it might be described as sleepy. Akashi evacuated on 8 January, quickly packing an overnight bag and her cat.



The artist Kelly Akashi in her Altadena studio  
Brad Torchia

Akashi, like the other artists *The Art Newspaper* spoke to, was able to move to housing provided by friends or family. But she knows this is a short-term solution and anticipates moving again before she finds new long-term housing. The artist's house and studio also had a special lineage, having previously belonged to the veteran artists Jim Shaw and Marnie Weber. As someone born and educated in Los Angeles, Akashi says, "It was really important to have this historic studio."

Right now, finding a place to work is critical. Akashi's show at Lisson, originally scheduled to open in late January, has been postponed. On Instagram she has published an "ask" list that includes equipment, materials and a place where she can work with glass and metal—both of which require high heat.

There has been a groundswell of groups and organisations pitching in to help artists in different ways, including the Getty-led L.A. Arts Community Fire Relief Fund, with an initial funding of \$12m. Kathryn Andrews's gallery, David Kordansky, is offering a selection of her work for sale with 100% of proceeds going to the artist. (Artist Ruby Neri is also a beneficiary of that programme.)

Meanwhile, Akashi is eager to return to what is left of her home and studio, especially to see if any of her work survived. "I've already purchased a nonferrous metal detector, which detects bronze and brass, not steel," she says. She is fiercely determined to make new work, adding to a handful of extant pieces including bronzes and pedestals at foundries, for her new show.

"We would like to open the show by Frieze," she says. She hopes the week of fairs and events in late February will provide a show of support for the Los Angeles art scene and the artists who have helped make it a cultural capital.

# LISSON GALLERY

*FAD Magazine*

14 February, 2025

## 9 EXHIBITIONS TO SEE IN LOS ANGELES DURING THE ART WEEK.

Despite the fires Los Angeles is determined to put on a show for the Artworld several art fairs are opening next week and lots of exhibitions – below are nine exhibitions to see in Los Angeles during the art week.

The [LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund](#), seems to be the best place to contribute to helping the L.A art community.

### Lisson Gallery – Kelly Akashi – Opens February 19th



For her first exhibition with Lisson Gallery, Kelly Akashi presents a number of new bodies of work featuring glass, earth, stone and bronze elements, incorporating both found and uniquely processed materials. These are variously hung from the ceiling and lit from below, or else installed among a landscape of stone and marble sculptures mounted on Corten steel pedestals, creating a singular and associative environment with its own circular ecosystem, rich with the possibilities of making, remaking and unmaking.

Intimate groupings of objects are dispersed across several Corten steel plinths and tables, some seemingly placed at random, others forming concatenating configurations between carved and rough-hewn pillars and wedges of marble, as well as cast body parts and delicately hand-blown glass flowers. This mode of display mimics natural occurrences, perhaps of hands touching rock or plants growing out of cracks in the ground. Yet nearly every other object has somehow undergone an intense, perhaps labor-intensive transformation. This could have been through the cutting and shaping of many strata of alabaster, soapstone or onyx, or perhaps through an uncanny material alteration – changing skin for metal or stem for crystal – while other pieces invoke curious juxtapositions, say, an organic entity sprouting from a bronze cast of the lower part of the artist's face.

Grid-like holes have been meticulously drilled into the surface of partially polished fragments of marble that serve as substructures for gardens of protruding glass rods topped with flowers, leaves and other organic forms. But here, Akashi nods to the artifice of their own making, in some cases keeping the miniature scaffolding she employs to construct such delicate glass forms. The geometric armature encasing each formal object becomes an integral part of the composition itself. Further proof of her virtuosic skill in glassmaking, Akashi presents an exceptionally elaborate glass sphere made from finely latticed borosilicate glasswork, its detailed and delicate structure seemingly impossible in its complexity and ethereal nature.

Draped over the oxidized Corten steel surfaces are a number of Akashi's grandmother's lace doilies, which recently came into her possession. While these might suggest traces of the personal, domestic and emotional narratives attached to such heirlooms, something the artist is known to do, they also contain the universal truth of familial lineage, of the passing down of knowledge and the unavoidable, constant inheritance of history.

LISSON GALLERY

*Flaunt*

February, 2025

# FLAUNT

## FRIEZE LOS ANGELES 2025 | RECEPTION HOSTED BY FRIEZE AND ROSETTA & BALTHAZAR GETTY

CELEBRATING THE LA ARTS COMMUNITY

*Written by Kayla Hardy*

This year's Frieze LA comes at a time when community is not just celebrated but needed. Considering all of the devastation the city has faced since the wildfires, LA's art community proves its resilience. With Rosetta and Balthazar Getty, Frieze hosted an exclusive reception in the Hollywood Hills with guests from different parts of the LA art community including figures from fashion, entertainment, and philanthropy.



Violet Getty designed and launched T-shirts to contribute to the LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund. Guests enjoyed cocktails from Maestro Dobel Tequila and shared their night with creative leaders like artists Kelly Akashi, Delfin Finley, Kohshin Finley, Alex Prager, Torbjørn Rødland, Fair Director, Americas Christine Messineo, Frieze CEO Simon Fox, 2025 curator Essence Harden, and Getty President and CEO Katherine E. Fleming.

The welcoming reception for Frieze LA was followed by a weekend packed with breathtaking pieces of art that solidified and highlighted the Los Angeles art community and beyond. Among the attendees were some recognizable faces, including Julia Fox, Adrien Brody, Takashi Murakami, Kid Cudi, Tim Cook, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Anthony Kiedis, many of whom are artists themselves. The fair, which is held annually in February, continues to be successful as a celebration of art, artists, and the human connection.



Photos by Max Christensen/BFA.com, Nina Fernandez/BFA.com, and Casey Kelbaugh, courtesy of Frieze

Amanda Sroka, the senior curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, has been a fundamental part of the museum's recent evolution from a local, non-collecting institution into a cutting-edge contemporary kunsthalle. During her tenure at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, she co-organised the institution's first artist room dedicated to a woman, Marisa Merz—the only female member of the Italian Arte Povera movement—and spearheaded *Senga Nengudi: Topologies*, the largest travelling show at the museum ever dedicated to a Black woman artist. Trained at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, under the art historian Sarah Wilson, Sroka's abiding interest in global conceptual practices has informed her expansive curatorial outlook. The museum's current show, *Scientia Sexualis* [↗](#), is on view until 2 March.

During Frieze Los Angeles's VIP preview, Sroka shared some of her favourite works.



Photo: Eric Thayer

## **Kelly Akashi**

*Wedged Life Forms (Opaline) (2024)*

Lisson

“Kelly is often working across multiple materials, and the hands depicted in the work are also her hands. She also has an amazing solo show at this gallery right now; her work is a glimpse into the fragility and resilience of the moment.”

## Wallpaper\*

ART AND CULTURE

### Los Angeles art exhibitions: the best shows to see in March 2025

Read our pick of the best Los Angeles art exhibitions to see this month, from journeying through cowboy culture at Albertz Benda to LA-based artist Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery

If you missed Frieze LA in February, many of the galleries who had openings coinciding with the fair, which has officially become 'art week' in [Los Angeles](#), are still available to view in March, including Helmut Lang at Schindler House in West Hollywood, along with a new gallery opening specializing in South Asian Art in Hollywood, and many others are still giving a portion of proceeds back to LA wildfire relief. If you are up for a road trip, head out to Palm Springs for the Desert X art installations which will run through May across the Coachella Valley.

Here are some of the best new and continuing shows to see in Los Angeles this March.

#### Los Angeles Art Exhibitions: what to see in March 2025

**Kelly Akashi**

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**Lisson, Hollywood, until 29 March**



(Image credit: Courtesy of Lisson Gallery Los Angeles)

LA-based artist Kelly Akashi lost her home in the recent Altadena fires in January, so her debut at Lisson was postponed until LA Art week in February. The haunting body of work features glass, earth, stone, and bronze elements, incorporating both found and uniquely processed materials, hung from the ceiling and lit from below, or installed among a landscape of stone and marble sculptures mounted on Corten steel pedestals, creating a singular and associative environment with its own circular ecosystem, rich with the possibilities of making, remaking, and unmaking.

LISSON GALLERY

*Los Angeles Times*  
18 February 2025

# Los Angeles Times

Our guide for what to see during Frieze Los Angeles

## Kelly Akashi at Lisson Gallery



Kelly Akashi, "Untitled," 2024. Lost-wax cast bronze, borosilicate glass, stone: 35.6 x 14 x 8.9 cm, stone: 14 x 5 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (Courtesy Lisson Gallery)

L.A. artist Kelly Akashi's show at Lisson was originally meant to feature all new work and open on Jan. 31. Devastatingly, in early January, Akashi's home and studio were lost to the fires — putting the exhibition on pause. Now, like the proverbial phoenix, Akashi's show will go on, recontextualized to meet the moment. Akashi's work is unlike anything else: a multidisciplinary practice that ranges between glassblowing, casting, candle-making and stone carving, plus her signature hand motif that is usually cast in bronze or crystal. The collection of works for this show, featuring a number of new pieces, mixes glass, earth, stone, lace and bronze elements, along with some bronze cast and borosilicate glass forms that Akashi recovered from the rubble of her studio. [lissongallery.com](http://lissongallery.com)

*Cultured Magazine*  
14 February, 2025

# CULTURED

## Ahead of Frieze Los Angeles, Collector Ann Soh Woods Shares a Guide to the City's Must-See Shows

This Hammer Museum and Gyopo board member, and Kikori Whiskey founder, pulls back the curtain on the pulse of the LA arts scene.



Ann Soh Woods with Suki Seokyeong Kang's *Note—moon, mat, square #19-01*, 2009-19. On back wall: Yunhee Min, *Luminaire Delirium*, 2015. Photography by Corey Nickols. All images courtesy of Soh Woods.

"Art has the power to provoke, heal, and inspire," says Los Angeles-based collector Ann Soh Woods, "and I am committed to championing voices that push boundaries and spark meaningful conversations."

The Kikori Whiskey founder's love of art was first sparked growing up in Chicago, where her parents regularly toted her and her siblings along to the Art Institute. In LA, Soh Woods's home doubles as a dynamic art space where visitors are treated to works by the likes of Andrea Bowers and Haegue Yang, as well as other artists challenging traditional narratives of power and inclusion. Following the devastating wildfires in the city last month, that local arts community is more vital than ever to well-steeped figures like Soh Woods, who also serves on the Hammer Museum's Board of Advisors.

Looking ahead to Frieze Los Angeles, which opens next week, she's getting ready to see her community gathered in full force, along with both international visitors and those from across the country coming to see local talent on display. Before the festivities kick off, Soh Woods caught up with *CULTURED* to share her experience getting immersed in the city's art scene, which artists she's got an eye on, and what shows travelers should make sure to see while they're traversing LA.

### **How would you describe the LA art scene? How have you seen the community come together recently?**

Communitarian values rooted in care and mutual support are foundational to the LA arts community, and they are the reason why art has become a cornerstone for my life here in LA. Artists, curators, gallerists, and other patrons and collectors are dear friends, and Gyopo, where I am honored to serve on the board, is my Korean-American family.

Hence, it was not surprising but no less moving to see this community rally together to support artists and art workers affected by the devastating fires that ravaged our beloved city. From the swift creation of the LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund by major arts organizations to the generosity of online fundraisers and artists donating proceeds from their work, the response has been nothing short of inspiring. This is a city bound by compassion, resilience, and hope. LA is open, thriving with so many great shows—come experience for yourself!

### **How has the local art scene influenced your collection?**

Serving on the board of advisors at the Hammer Museum has been an absolute privilege, and I'm continually inspired by their "Made in L.A." biennial. This incredible galvanizing exhibition showcases to the world the depth and diversity of talent, creativity, and storytelling that thrive in our city.

Supporting local artists isn't just a passion—it's a source of immense joy and pride. There's nothing more fulfilling than championing the vibrant voices that make LA an artistic powerhouse!

### **What are the must-see shows this month?**

Alice Coltrane, "Monument Eternal" at the Hammer Museum. Julian Abraham "Togar" and Anna Sew Hoy at Commonwealth and Council. "Sensing the Future: Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)" at the Getty. I am also looking forward to seeing Kelly Akashi at Lisson, Tau Lewis at David Zwirner, and Nina Chanel Abney and Tschabalala Self at Jeffrey Deitch. "One Hundred Percent," a benefit exhibition by and for artists impacted by the fires, curated by [Hammer Museum] Interim Chief Curator Aram Moshayed.

LISSON GALLERY

*The Art Newspaper*  
12 February, 2025



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

# Los Angeles pop-up exhibition showcases—and benefits—wildfire victims

Curated by Aram Moshayedi, “One Hundred Percent” includes works by Kelly Akashi, Kathryn Andrews, Paul McCarthy, Diana Thater and others impacted by the fires



Jeffrey Sugishita, *ZEN//SHIN III*, 2025  
Courtesy of the artist

As a curator who has done big group exhibitions, like the Hammer Museum's *Made in LA* biennial, Aram Moshayedi is used to spending at least two or three years organising an exhibition. This time, he did it in three weeks.

Soon after the wildfires tore through Altadena and Pacific Palisades, he issued an open invitation to visual artists and other creatives directly impacted to each contribute one work to a pop-up show. More than 80 chose to participate, from emerging artists who just graduated from college to internationally known figures such as Diana Thater and Paul McCarthy, both of whom lost their homes in Altadena.

The exhibition's title, *One Hundred Percent*, is a nod to its business model: all proceeds will go directly to the artist, with Moshayedi's team working on a volunteer basis, taking nothing and charging nothing. The show will take place at 619 N Western Avenue, across from David Zwirner gallery, 14-22 February, so it overlaps with the Frieze Los Angeles fair.

The opening, Thursday evening (13 February), promises to be one of the first big art-world gatherings after the fires. "I think there will be a lot of emotions," says Moshayedi. "It's a convergence of people who have been affected either directly or indirectly by the fires and will hopefully offer an opportunity for some kind of release."

Expect a wide variety of works, from ceramics that survived in some form because the medium could withstand the extreme heat of the fire to new work made for this occasion. One young artist, Jeffrey Sugishita [↗](#), is showing a photograph he made of himself standing amid the still-smouldering ruins of his home, wearing all black except for a helmet fashioned from flowers. Prices will range from \$50 to \$30,000.

Moshayedi, who is the interim chief curator at the Hammer Museum but developed this project independently, has worked with a few of the participating artists before, including Kelly Akashi, Kathryn Andrews, Asher Hartman, McCarthy, Jon Polypchuk and Analia Saban. He had the idea for the show after realising how many artists were devastated by the wildfires that he did not know at all.

“As soon as the fires started, I started collecting PDFs of available works by artists I knew to send around to collectors, donors, board members and others I thought who I thought might be able to buy work in that moment of need,” he says. “But I realised there were a lot more artists I didn’t know. I wanted to find a way to tap into that community of artists, who were anonymous to me, and lend whatever support and services I could as a curator.”

The art-world-friendly [real estate broker Geoffrey Anenberg](#) helped Moshayedi find a space to use on Western, across from Zwirner, that was most recently a furniture showroom. The curator then worked with the grassroots group [Grief and Hope](#), which has been raising emergency relief funds for artists and art workers, to send out the open invite. His invite acknowledges the enormity of the loss for many and expresses a desire not to burden the participants. “Keeping in mind that your various capacities may be limited, the idea of what constitutes a contribution or participation is completely open-ended and at your discretion,” it says.

At press time, Moshayedi had collected over 60 of the 80-plus works and was busy installing. He has also secured a donation of sound equipment from Dublab that could be used for performance or live music, yet to be scheduled.

## ArtReview

# What Will Los Angeles Become After the Fires?



Palisades Fire, January 2025. Photo © CAL FIRE Official, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

**The devastation of the Altadena and Palisades neighbourhoods this January revealed stark inequalities in the city**

A single painting haunts Nathanael West's 1939 novel *The Day of the Locust*, set in Hollywood during the Great Depression. A disillusioned film set designer, Tod, obsessively composes 'The Burning of Los Angeles', which depicts an apocalyptic end to the city; in it, all 'the people who came to California to die: the cultists... the wave, funeral, airplane and preview watchers' run from police while a fire burns Kahn's Persian Palace theatre to the ground. By the end of the novel, Tod finds himself chased by a similar mob outside the same theatre, the spotlights of a premiere transformed into a hallucinatory vision of 'fiery columns' moving in 'wide crazy sweeps'. In a Wildean fashion, LA's reality mirrors and then overtakes Tod's painterly representation. The story ends in chaos.

Whenever a new wildfire begins in Los Angeles, there is a cross-dissolve: overwrought, Hollywood-style representations of LA catastrophe overlap with one's actual experience of it – then a new, devastating reality sets in. I felt a little like Tod when I drove from the Palisades, where I work, during the LA fires this January, as smoke began to billow from the mountains. Through my ash-clouded windshield, I saw a man waving a large palm tree frond. The leafy branch was on fire: tall, sharp flames grew from its stalk. A policeman chased him. I drove on, and homes and schools and churches continued to burn outside my view. When I left, LA's future felt transparent, so faint I could put a hand through its projection. A thought: *What if I kept driving? What if I left?*

The question highlights a sentiment that has been brewing since long before January's fires: living in LA feels increasingly unsustainable, and with the climate crisis comes greater risk – of fires, floods and more. 'My parents chose to be here, but I didn't,' the journalist and author of *After/Image: Los Angeles Outside the Frame* (2018), Lynell George, told me. She lives in what LA County calls a 'foothill community', a high fire risk area between Pasadena and Altadena that was evacuated in Eaton's blaze. When we spoke, she had just returned to her house, and described the surrounding neighbourhood as 'completely decimated'. 'The place that [my parents] chose to come to is not the place where I live now', George said.

When George's parents moved to LA in the mid-twentieth century, the city was still blossoming from waves of migration during LA's 'booster era'. Back then, real estate hopefuls had sold the area as the 'Land of Eternal Spring', according to Tom Zimmermann, author of *Paradise Promoted: The Booster Campaign that Sold Los Angeles* (2008) – and their mission was successful. The city's inhabitants ballooned by roughly 3000 percent between 1890 and 1940, buoyed by migration from the American Midwest and South. My family followed a similar path, encouraged by popular stories of cheaper land, get-rich-quick schemes and year-round sunshine. Both sides of my father's family emigrated, first from Russia and Ukraine, then to New York City, and finally to LA in the early twentieth century; when my mother was eight, she moved from Tucson, Arizona to LA's West Side, where she attended Pacific Palisades High School, colloquially known as 'Pali'. Pali burned down two weeks ago, as did my friends' family's houses in Altadena and the Palisades respectively, along with the hiking trails and restaurants and beaches I grew up with. The Palisades and Eaton fires destroyed not only these landmarks, but also the remnants of that advertised dream, however fictional it was from the outset.

These latest fires reveal just how inaccurate LA's original mirage is now. 'People talk about fire in Los Angeles like it's an equal-opportunity destroyer,' Rosecrans Baldwin, author of *Everything Now: Lessons from the City-State of Los Angeles* (2021) told me. 'But [the Palisades and Altadena] are very different communities... There are a lot of people affected by this who don't have the resources to withstand it'.

Indeed, the two neighbourhoods are a study in contrasts, revealing the ways historic biases and demographics remain relevant today. The Pacific Palisades was created as an exclusive Methodist community in 1922, and all residents purchased the coveted, pricey land directly from founder Reverend Charles Holmes Scott. Throughout the twentieth century, the beachy enclave attracted affluent newcomers; today, the Pacific Palisades is 82 percent white, and its median household earns nearly three times LA's average – almost 200,000 USD, according to the 2023 census. Altadena, originally a tourist destination for wealthy East Coast Americans, became a haven for Black professionals in LA who were excluded from buying property elsewhere. In fact, a recent UCLA [study](#) found that the map of Eaton's perimeter aligns closely with a 1939 redlining map of the same area: many of the burned neighbourhoods, home to the majority of Altadena's Black residents, were labeled risky for bank lenders at the time. As a result, 'Black households [in Altadena] are 1.3 times more likely to experience destruction or major damage' than their non-Black counterparts – and 45 percent of Altadena's Black homeowners report being cost-burdened, potentially rendering them unable to shoulder the strain of rebuilding.

LA's fantasy of boundless wealth and land has long been outdated, but neighborhoods like Altadena that don't conform to its shiny narrative still get less attention, which has a real impact on the strength of recovery efforts. Of the 23 opinion pieces *The New York Times* has published on the LA fires, at the time of writing, not one of them focused on Altadena exclusively. 'For a lot of people', Lynell George told me, 'Learning about [Altadena's] erasure was the first time they learned what Altadena was'. Some might never know at all: When newly reelected President Trump visited Los Angeles, he only toured the Palisades, avoiding Altadena altogether.

In *The Day of the Locust*, West sought to reveal his city's darker underbelly, concluding his novel with a hallucination of fiery destruction, not its reality. This decision fits – or used to fit – a town where fiction often overwhelms actuality: for every real natural disaster that occurs in the city, it seems that there are even more scripts and books written about it. Now, though, it feels like this scale is shifting – and the old mentality has a cost. ‘The city we have is a fantasy, and we know it’, science reporter and *New Yorker* columnist Nicola Twilley told me. ‘That everyone can live in a single-family home, that we can control the rivers, and that we can live on a beautiful hillside surrounded by nature – it’s a fantasy. And like many fantasies, when it collides with reality, that’s when people get hurt’.

Books and movies end; LA doesn't. What it will look like in the future is an open question. For the people most affected by the fires, the answer is simple, and it doesn't include any Hollywood Hills pool parties or long drives up the cinematic Pacific Coast Highway. When I asked sculptor Kelly Akashi, who lost her home and studio to Eaton's flames, what she wanted most, she replied easily. ‘Housing’, she said. ‘That's all’.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Hyperallergic*  
3 February, 2025

## HYPERALLERGIC

### 11 Shows to See in Los Angeles This February

Work by artists impacted by last month's fires, Joseph Beuys's reforestation project, Alice Coltrane's rippling influence, and much more.



Joshua Petker, "Pink Watermelon" (2024), oil and acrylic on linen, featured in *The Wave: A Benefit for LA Wildfires* (image courtesy Anat Egbi)

Last month, the Los Angeles art world was deeply affected by the wildfires that destroyed homes and businesses in the Pacific Palisades and Altadena. The art community pulled together and acted fast, establishing [support networks](#) and [fundraisers](#) to help those affected. Galleries quickly organized benefit shows, with proceeds going to relief organizations, or showcased works by artists who lost their homes or studios, some of which we've highlighted below. Other exhibitions addressing climate change, environmental activism, or Indigenous practices, such as *Fire Kinship* and *Joseph Beuys: In Defense of Nature*, had already been planned for months or years, but took on renewed relevance with the recent fires. Taken as a group, the shows below highlight the perseverance and generosity that the Angeleno arts community has shown in the face of tragedy.

## **Kelly Akashi**

[Lisson Gallery](#), 1037 North Sycamore Avenue, Hollywood, Los Angeles

February 20–March 29

Kelly Akashi employs an impressive array of materials and processes — blown glass, cast bronze, carved stone, photography — to create poetic works that emphasize the impermanence, fragility, and mercurial nature of existence. There is, however, an immediacy and captivating tactility in her work that foregrounds the here and now, underlined by the repeated inclusion of burning candles. Akashi lost her home and studio in the Eaton Fire, along with much of the work for her upcoming show at Lisson Gallery, which was originally scheduled to open on January 31. Despite the tremendous loss, Akashi has been busy recreating destroyed works and fabricating new ones, giving the show an added sense of poignancy.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Wallpaper\**  
03 February 2025

## Wallpaper\*

### Don't miss these seven artists at Frieze Los Angeles

Frieze LA returns for its sixth edition, running 20-23 February, showcasing over 100 galleries from more than 20 countries, as well as local staples featuring the city's leading creatives



Frieze London 2024  
(Image credit: Photo by Linda Ny Lind. Courtesy Frieze and Linda Ny Lind.)

Frieze Los Angeles, the premiere art fair on America's west coast, is returning for its sixth edition, running **20-23 February**. The fair will see an impressive roster of over 100 galleries flock to the city, including an international cohort from over 20 countries, as well as local dealers showcasing the most coveted names in contemporary art. Transforming the grounds of the historic Santa Monica Airport with an exhibition space designed by Kulapat Yantrasast's architectural studio WHY, the fair will also host an impressive presentation of site-specific installations curated by Art Production Fund that feature artists like Lita Albuquerque and Madeline Hollander exploring the culture and landscape of LA.

Frieze is taking place just over a month after the city faced some of the most destructive wildfires in California's history, devastating entire communities and claiming nearly 30 lives. Included among the thousands affected are dozens of artists who lost their homes and studios. Several

local dealers, artists and museum leaders supported the return of Frieze and concurrent events like Felix Art Fair as part of an effort to foster the city's revival. Frieze and other cultural institutions have also joined forces to launch the LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund, which raised over \$12 million to support those impacted by the fires.

Organised in two sections—Galleries featuring seasoned dealers and Focus showcasing solo booths presented by ventures launched in or after 2013—the fair offers one of the best opportunities to discover leading names in art today.

## Kelly Akashi



Kelly Akashi  
(Image credit: Courtesy of Kelly Akashi)

In the Galleries section, several booths stand out, including that of global powerhouse Lisson Gallery, which will bring works by several names on its roster, including Kelly Akashi. The artist, who creates stunning sculptures that combine materials like glass, bronze, rope and candles and often feature casts of hands and elements of the natural world, is one of several LA residents who lost their homes and studios during the wildfires. The gallery will also open a solo exhibition of Akashi's work on February 20 at its West Hollywood location. As resilient as she is talented, Akashi has been working steadily to make new pieces for the show, as many were lost in the fire.

# The Arts Intel Report

ART

## Frieze Los Angeles



The scene at Frieze Los Angeles in 2024.

Despite the recent wildfires, Frieze Los Angeles is forging ahead with its sixth edition, this one at the Santa Monica Airport, one of the country's oldest aviation hubs. Swanky booths will showcase art from over 100 of the world's leading galleries, with a large tent designed by Kulapat Yantrasast's WHY. Along with events and talks, tours are available in a number of categories: most talked about artworks, for instance, and emerging talents. There's a special tour for collectors. Artists and booths to watch include Kelly Akashi (Lisson Gallery), Henri Paul Broyard (Tyler Parks Presents), and Doug Aitken (Regen Projects).

—*Elena Clavarino*

*Frieze*

30 January, 2025

## FRIEZE

### Los Angeles: City of Artists

At this year's fair, artists including Doug Aitken and Lenworth McIntosh look to LA's past, present and future as a city led by community and creativity



'I don't make work about Los Angeles's ecology; I am a part of Los Angeles's ecology,' says artist Sterling Wells, based in Highland Park. At Frieze Los Angeles and exhibitions across the city, artists reflect on the personal and collective histories that weave the urban fabric of Los Angeles. LA-based artists also talk about how the recent fires have impacted their relationship to their city – and the importance of art-making to preserve, remember and cherish community and landscape.

In the Los Angeles fires, **Kelly Akashi** lost her home and studio in Altadena, including her archive and many works intended for her upcoming Lisson Gallery show. Working in glass, earth, stone and bronze, Akashi's latest sculptures explore patterns of regeneration found in nature: Akashi makes CT scans of seed pods before magnifying their forms in bronze. 'With the support of my incredible community I am continuing to work on my exhibition,' she says. The artist's first solo show with Lisson is set to open in its Hollywood space during Frieze Week.

*Kelly Akashi is presented by Lisson Gallery (London, Beijing, Los Angeles, New York, Shanghai) at Frieze Los Angeles. 'Kelly Akashi' is at Lisson Gallery, Hollywood, February – April 2025.*

# ARTnews

## Hammer Museum's Made in L.A. Biennial Names 27 Artists for Upcoming Edition in October



COURTESY HAMMER MUSEUM

The **Hammer Museum** in Los Angeles has named the 27 artists who will participate in its closely watched Made in L.A. biennial, which will open in October. The exhibition focuses on artists who work in the greater LA area.

Well-known artists like Carl Cheng, John Knight, Patrick Martinez, Will Rawls, Amanda Ross-Ho, Leilah Weinraub, and Pat O'Neill, the oldest artist in the show, will show their work alongside rising ones

like Widline Cadet, Gabriela Ruiz, Peter Tomka, Freddy Villalobos, and Ali Eyal, the youngest artist included.

The upcoming biennial is slightly smaller than the 2023 edition, which featured 39 artists, but around the same size at the 2020/21 edition, which included 30 participants. By comparison, the 2024 edition of the Whitney Biennial showed the work of 71 artists, while the current edition of Prospect.6 in New Orleans has 49 artists.

The exhibition's two curators, Essence Harden and Paulina Pobocha, did not announce a title for their exhibition. The focus for their show is to present an intergenerational group of artists who work in a variety of mediums. Featured here will be new work by Knight, a legendary conceptual artist; a new choreography by Rawls; and a stage play by Weinraub produced in collaboration with New Theater Hollywood.

“From the outset of this process, our primary objective was to look at art, and to see as much of it as possible,” the curators said in a joint statement. “We wanted to learn from artists and distill an exhibition from those experiences. While there are as many ideas circulating through the show as there are materials, an inquiry into one’s relationship to the city of Los Angeles animates much of the work we will present. Neither myth nor monolith, this city is many things to many people, and its cacophonous disorder is, perhaps, its most distinguishing feature.”

Now in its seventh edition, Made in L.A. has become known for significantly raising the profile of artists it has included, both those on the rise and underknown stalwarts of the scene. The biennial’s alumni include Lauren Halsey, rafa esparza, Christina Quarles, Luchita Hurtado, Huguette Caland, Kelly Akashi, Ishi Glinsky, Kang Seung Lee, Ryan Preciado, and Joey Terrill.

The 2025 artist list announcement comes as Los Angeles continues to battling multiple destructive wildfires, which have **impacted dozens of artists** working across the city.

In a statement, Zoë Ryan, the Hammer's new director, said, "Every two years, the Made in L.A. biennial offers a chance for local and international audiences to celebrate the incredible work being made by artists in this city. Los Angeles is still grappling with the terrible fires of the last few weeks but, as we look ahead to the fall, I hope this biennial can demonstrate the resilience of artists and this city."

*The Guardian*  
21 January, 2025

## Landmarks destroyed, masterpieces incinerated, communities razed: how the LA fires ravaged culture



📷 A sculpture in the ashes of a burned home during the aftermath of the Palisades Fire. Photograph: Scott Strazzante/AP

**Almost 200 artists in the Altadena neighbourhood have had their homes or studios burned down, while modernist buildings and irreplaceable collections have been destroyed**

**F**ires are a seasonal recurrence in the dry chaparral region of **Los Angeles**. Often fanned by the Santa Anas, gales known as the “devil winds,” they spark easily in the long, hot months of summer and autumn. But on 7 January, when those winds blew at 85 mph through areas parched from winter drought, a hurricane of fire swept into lower-lying - and densely populated - areas that had never seen such blazes

before. The flames incinerated thousands of homes and priceless cultural heritage, marking the worst natural disaster in LA history. The second largest city in the US and a global cultural capital - home to the Hollywood film industry and a rich contemporary art scene - may never be the same again.

More than a week on, with the Eaton fire 81% contained and the massive Palisades fire only 52% contained, the LA arts community is still taking stock of the losses. Altadena, a middle-class residential neighbourhood that is home to many artists, was particularly devastated by the Eaton Fire.

According to artist [Andrea Bowers](#), 190 artists have lost or suffered significant damage to their homes, studios, and work. That figure comes from *Grief and Hope*, a survey and relief fund Bowers launched on 9 January with several other arts professionals, including fellow artist [Kathryn Andrews](#), who lost her home to the Palisades fire. The tally continues to rise.

Leafy, suburban landscapes now resemble bomb sites, with little more than chimneys still standing among the smouldering wreckage. Photographs from the Altadena home, studio, and archive of [Paul McCarthy](#) show two of the artist's bronze sculptures scorched but otherwise intact, sentries for a house that is no longer there. McCarthy built the house in 1989 for his family, and in recent years, his daughter, gallerist Mara McCarthy, and son, artist Damon McCarthy, bought their own homes around the corner. All three are now gone.

McCarthy has since postponed his upcoming show at Hauser & Wirth in London. Many other artists have reported the loss of work slated for exhibitions. Painter [Alec Egan](#) lost two years of work that was scheduled to debut at LA's Anat Ebgi Gallery in February.

[Kelly Akashi](#) was busy preparing an exhibition for Lisson Gallery on 5 January when she received a notice from Southern California Edison that they would shut off the power in Altadena to prevent the spread of fires. She says she took her cat and a backpack crammed with family albums and a few personal items to the home of a friend, where the lights were still on, not knowing that it was the last time she would see her house and studio. "On top of everything, I lost almost the whole show," she said.

The scale of destruction has thrown a few surviving structures into stark relief. The early modernist home of novelist [Thomas Mann](#) so far remains unscathed, according to the German Ministry of Culture, who maintain it as

an artist residency. At time of writing, the home of architects Charles and Ray Eames has also avoided significant damage. At the Getty Villa, one of the world's largest collections of antiquities, an emergency team of staff have been battling blazes on the museum's hilltop campus with hand-held fire extinguishers. On 11 January, the same fire reached the vicinity of the Getty Center 10 miles away, though according to the Getty Trust both institutions remain "safe and stable".

But it may be in Altadena where the road to recovery is most uncertain. The area has a rate of Black home ownership more than double the national average, and many homes have been owned by the same families for decades. Amir Nikravan grew up in the neighbourhood and describes it as "a very open, very warm, incredibly diverse community". It was a relatively central neighbourhood that still had a laidback, rural feel. "Our whole block is gone, and my parents' block is gone," he said. "My parents are wondering, do they even want to rebuild in their 70s?" Nikravan teaches at ArtCenter College of Design, where he says half his department - including artists Diana Thater and Kelly Akashi - lost homes.

According to Nikravan, the worst losses were from his personal art collection, which comprises the majority of his assets and is not covered by insurance. "Most artists are collectors, and often have collections that are pretty fantastic, but unlike real collectors we can't necessarily afford \$2,000 a month to insure the work," he says.

Many households are also underinsured. Since 2019, the rate at which fire insurance policies were not renewed in California jumped by 30%, and in 2023, the state's largest insurers, State Farm and Allstate, announced that they would stop writing new policies for California properties. To make matters worse, artists paying mortgages for destroyed homes have had their livelihoods jeopardised in the middle of an industry-wide sales slump, notes Ariel Pittman, senior director at Various Small Fires gallery. "Several of us are workers in the art world and have been intimately aware of our colleagues quietly being let go, or in the case of freelancers, just not having enough work over the last year due to the market downturn," she says.

In recent years, Frieze art fair has emerged as a critical moment for local galleries and artists to make sales. Its organisers announced that it will open

as scheduled on 20 February at Santa Monica airport, less than four miles from the Palisades fire. “Our hearts are with everyone affected by the devastating fires in Los Angeles,” they said in a statement. “Since the fair’s founding six years ago, Frieze has been proud to support and be part of this vibrant community. The challenges the city is currently facing only strengthen our commitment to work alongside the community to rebuild and recover together.”

Donations have been pouring into GoFundMe pages and initiatives like Grief and Hope, which banked \$544,955 as of 20 January. On 16 January, a coalition of cultural organisations including the J Paul Getty Trust, Lacma, and the Hammer Museum launched a \$12m LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund.

Those in need “include young artists just out of school with no careers and massive student loan debt, artists young and old who lost all their archives and artwork; gallery and museum staff who make working-class wages and can hardly afford housing,” says Bowers. “They have lost everything and yet some are donating to each other. If they can do that, we can give more.”

Artsy

17 January, 2025

News

## Frieze Los Angeles 2025 will proceed as planned.

Casey Lesser



Exterior view of Frieze Los Angeles, 2024. Photo by Casey Kelbaugh. Courtesy of Casey Kelbaugh and Frieze.

Frieze confirmed on Friday that the 2025 edition of Frieze Los Angeles will proceed as scheduled on February 20–23, in the wake of the city’s devastating wildfires. Concurrent L.A. fairs Felix Art Fair and newcomer Santa Monica Post Office confirmed earlier this week that their events will take place.

“After careful consideration and extensive conversations with galleries, partners, and city-wide stakeholders, we can confirm that the sixth edition of Frieze Los Angeles will go ahead,” read a statement from Frieze. “Our hearts are with everyone affected by the devastating fires in Los Angeles. Since the fair’s founding six years ago, Frieze has been proud to support and be part of this vibrant community. The challenges the city is currently facing only strengthen our commitment to work alongside the community to rebuild and recover together.”

The fair noted that the decision was made in order to best support “the local economy and the arts community.” Frieze also stated that it is committed to developing initiatives to aid recovery efforts and has already signed on as a founding contributor to the LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund, “which supports recovery efforts and provides aid to those most affected. We invite everyone to join us in supporting these efforts by visiting Getty.edu.”

As Artnet reported on Thursday, the decision comes in the wake of a debate over whether the fair should take place, with local gallerists eager for the fair to move forward as planned, while some out-of-town participants hoped it would be postponed.

Alongside the announcement of Frieze Los Angeles proceeding, fair organizers also shared statements of support from over a dozen artists, gallerists, curators, museum directors — including Doug Aitken, Kelly Akashi, Tim Blum, Jeffrey Deitch, Michael Govan, Essence Harden, David Kordansky, and Zoe Ryan — and Santa Monica mayor Lana Negrete.

“I don’t want the economic impact of this to spread further and affect other artists,” said artist Kelly Akashi, who lost her home and studio to the fires. “I am here to celebrate other artists’ accomplishments and am personally not insulted by the promotion of their work. I want my community to be healthy, and need them to be supported so that they can extend that care to me and other people impacted by the fires.”

Essence Harden, who is curating Frieze Los Angeles’s Focus section for the second time this year, and is also a co-curator of the Hammer Museum’s 2025 Made in L.A. biennial, shared, “I love L.A.; it’s my home, and my life has been made possible because of the generosity, care, and people of this city. Frieze is an ecosystem of contractors, fabricators, artists, gallerists, collectors, institutions, non-profits, art handlers, small businesses, and a world of people who find financial and social support within it. There is a need and will here for art to still happen, for possibility to emerge amongst immense loss and grief.”

*Artnet News*  
17 January, 2025

artnet

Art World

## L.A. Artists Mourn What Was Lost in the Deadly Fires: ‘It Was a Little Paradise’

Artists share their experiences evacuating ahead of the Eaton and Palisades Fires—and returning to find their homes destroyed.



One of the McCarthy family homes destroyed in the Eaton Fire. Paul McCarthy's bronze sculpture, *Picabia Idol*, stands amid the smoking rubble. Photo by Alex Stevens, courtesy of Paul McCarthy studios.

On January 7, Los Angeles erupted into flames. Fueled by drought conditions and an intense Santa Ana wind event with gusts of over 90 m.p.h., the Palisades and Eaton Fires have devastated large swaths of the city, collectively burning over 12,000 structures to the ground—among them, the homes of artists, collectors, dealers, curators, and other art professionals.

The Palisades Fire ignited around 10:30 a.m. along the Temescal Ridge Trail in the Santa Monica Mountains, quickly engulfing nearly all of the Westside neighborhood of Pacific Palisades. (Both the hilltop [Getty Center](#) and the [Getty Villa](#) on the Malibu Coast have found themselves within the mandatory evacuation zone but are still safe, the [latter miraculously](#) able to beat back fire on its grounds the first day of the conflagration.)

Around 6:15 p.m., just over an hour's drive inland in good traffic, the Eaton Fire started burning in the San Gabriel Mountains. It spread rapidly, largely destroying Altadena, a historically diverse neighborhood with thriving Black and Hispanic communities.

The fires burned indiscriminately, incinerating nearly all in their path, including vegetation, businesses, schools, churches, and family homes. A report from the [Wildfire Alliance](#), a partnership with [My Safe L.A.](#) and the city's fire department, called the Palisades fire the most destructive in the state's history. Together, the fires have burned an area of about 60 square miles—slightly smaller than Washington, D.C., and reportedly claimed two dozen lives. For the affected communities, the loss is unfathomable.

As firefighters continued to work to contain the blaze, I spoke with artists who lost their homes and studios to the flames. Still reeling from the unexpected disaster, these artists each have their own individual stories. But common threads unite their experiences, from initial disbelief, to unthinkable grief, to appreciation of the outpouring of support from the art world and beyond.

There are too many artists affected by this tragedy for me to speak to them all. A partial list of others affected (and their GoFundMe pages if applicable) is as follows: [Rebecca Baron](#), [Erin Berkowitz](#), [Sula Bermudez-Silverman](#), [Seth Bogart](#), [David Bratton](#), [Brian Lee Clements](#), [Kevin Cooley](#), [Kenturah Davis](#), [Penelope Gazin](#), [Margaret Griffith](#), [Jeff Herring](#), [John Knuth](#), [Sma Litzsinger](#), [Daniel Mendel-Black](#), [Chris Miller](#), [Sunny Mills](#), [Francisco Mora](#), [Kate Mosher Hall](#) and [Rachelle Sawatsky](#), [Ruby Neri](#), [Jane Orr](#) and [Sam Richardson](#), [Andy Ouchi](#), [Cleon Peterson](#), [Christina Quarles](#), [Grayson Revoir](#), [Jean Robison](#), [Adam Ross](#), [Analia Saban](#), [Delbar Shahbaz](#), [Jill Spector](#) and [Bret Nicely](#), [Coleen Sterritt](#), [Dani Tull](#), [Emily Ulmer](#), [Patricia Valencia](#) and [Emmett Walsh](#), [Linda Vallejo](#), [Tara Walters](#), [Mark Whalen](#), [Joy Wong](#), and [Caroline Zorthian](#).

### **Kelly Akashi**



Artists Kelly Akashi, photographed in her Los Angeles studio before it was destroyed in the Eaton Fire. Photo by Brad Torchia, courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

It was the winds and the power outage that made Los Angeles native Kelly Akashi leave her 100-year-old Altadena home and studio for the night. To avoid being alone during the storm, she and her cat, Turnip, went to stay with a friend in Los Feliz.

“I thought, ‘just in case a fire breaks out, I better take things I’d be really upset leaving,’” Akashi said. “So I took my father’s photo album from when our family were interned in Poston, Arizona; some family heirlooms and jewelry; my computer and one notebook; and my passport and a little cash.”

Akashi, age 41, bought her home in May 2021. It formerly belonged to well-known L.A. artists Jim Shaw and Marnie Weber, and included their custom-built studio.

“It was a very big accomplishment for me to be able to purchase a home,” she said. “And I had been really excited to take on this part of Los Angeles art history and an artistic lineage I always looked up to.”

Once she moved in, other things about the neighborhood soon captured her heart, like her neighbor Bob, always on his porch greeting passersby.

Soon after the fire started, Akashi began to worry: “I started hearing the hardware store around the corner was on fire, but there was nothing I could do.” It was Bob who went back and confirmed that the entire block burned down.

Akashi’s house was filled with art—her favorite pieces of her own, and works by friends. In the studio, there was new work that was meant to be picked up on January 20 for Akashi’s debut show at Lisson Los Angeles. She was philosophical about the loss.

“My work is so much about mortality. I make unique casts of my body, and I’ve always thought that the way that this work will resonate will be very different when I pass away, and my body won’t be reproducible anymore,” Akashi said.

“Considering impermanence and these forces that are bigger than us, like time, aging, mortality has always been a part of the work. It’s a painful lesson, but it’s also very real,” she continued. “And I always feel like the power of art is to create space for these kinds of conversations that we want to suppress in our day-to-day life.”

As she wades into the uncertain waters of insurance claims and government assistance, Akashi is taking it step by step. In lieu of donations for herself, she has requested donations for Bob, which can be made on his [GoFundMe](#).

“There’s a lot of hope to rebuild in a way that reflects the values that Altadena organically grew into,” Akashi said. “We don’t want developers coming in buying all the property and turning it into a very different part of town.”



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

Art fairs // News

### Frieze will proceed with Los Angeles fair following deadly wildfires in the city

A fair spokesperson said the decision came after “careful consideration and extensive conversations with galleries, partners and city-wide stakeholders”



Left: a home along the Pacific Coast Highway that was destroyed by the Palisades fire. Right: visitors at the 2024 edition of Frieze Los Angeles. Palisades photo by Jim Ruymen/UPI Credit: UPI / Alamy Stock Photo. Frieze Los Angeles photo by Eric Thayer.

The organisers of the Frieze art fair said on Friday (17 January) that they will proceed with the 2025 edition of their Los Angeles fair (20-23 February), set to take place at Santa Monica Airport six weeks after deadly wildfires swept through the city.

“Our hearts are with everyone affected by the devastating fires in Los Angeles,” a Frieze spokesperson said. “Since the fair's founding six years ago, Frieze has been proud to support and be part of this vibrant community. The challenges the city is currently facing only strengthen our commitment to work alongside the community to rebuild and recover together.”

In addition to the spokesperson's comments, Frieze circulated a collection of statements by artists, dealers, curators and arts administrators based in or with ties to Los Angeles. Among them is the artist Kelly Akashi, whose home and studio in the Altadena neighbourhood were completely destroyed by the Eaton fire.

“I don't want the economic impact of this to spread further and affect other artists,” Akashi said. “I am here to celebrate other artists' accomplishments and am personally not insulted by the promotion of their work. I want my community to be healthy, and need them to be supported so that they can extend that care to me and other people impacted by the fires.”

The curator Essence Harden—who is co-curating this year's edition of the Hammer Museum's *Made in LA* biennial and returning to organise Frieze Los Angeles's Focus sector for emerging galleries—added in a statement: “I love Los Angeles; it's my home, and my life has been made possible because of the generosity, care and people of this city. Frieze is an ecosystem of contractors, fabricators, artists, gallerists, collectors, institutions, non-profits, art handlers, small businesses and a world of people who find financial and social support within it. There is a need and will here for art to still happen, for possibility to emerge amongst immense loss and grief.”

Frieze is one of the founding contributors to a \$12m relief fund launched earlier this week by local, national and global organisations, galleries and museums. The fair's spokesperson added: "Together with our participants and partners, we are developing initiatives to aid recovery efforts and will share more details soon."

The organisers of the LA Art Show [↗](#), which is marking its 30th anniversary this year, also confirmed on Friday that they will move ahead with their 2025 edition. The lineup of participating galleries is still being finalised in light of the wildfires, and organisers are working to identify a disaster-relief charity to support through a donation. They add that "we've had significant feedback from the community, galleries and artists that they feel it's important to move forward with that sense of 'community' being more important than ever".

Frieze Los Angeles and the LA Art Show's openings will come less than two months after a string of deadly wildfires swept through parts of Los Angeles. The fires' toll is still coming into full view [↗](#), but they destroyed more than 7,500 structures and killed at least 27 people while burning more than 28,000 acres—an area larger than the island of Manhattan or the entire city of San Francisco. The neighbourhoods most severely affected include Altadena, a historically Black area that is home to many artists and arts workers, as well as Pacific Palisades, a wealthy area where many collectors and celebrities lived.

Many artists' homes and studios, as well as art spaces, were either damaged or completely destroyed in the wildfires. Local, national and international organisations have launched funds and fundraising campaigns to provide relief for local artists, arts workers and organisations.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Hyperallergic*  
17 January, 2025

## HYPERALLERGIC

### LA Fairs Move Forward, Calling on Art World's Support

Frieze, Felix, and other shows will move ahead as planned in the wake of the fires as galleries told *Hyperallergic* that the need for financial support and community is greater than ever.



Visitors at Felix Art Fair 2024 admire Hair & Nails gallery's presentation (photo by Rigo Ramirez, courtesy Felix Art Fair 2024)

LOS ANGELES — As the wildfires that devastated large swaths of Los Angeles last week are gradually being contained, thousands of Angelenos are beginning to survey the damage and looking ahead at the long road to recovery. For both LA's art community and the international art world, there has been much discussion about the city's upcoming art fairs, which are scheduled to take place the third

week of February. Amid some concerns that moving forward with these events would be inappropriate or financially imprudent, other sources told *Hyperallergic* that the fairs would provide critical sources of support and solidarity.

Perhaps the biggest question lingering in the air was about the fate of the fair week's behemoth, Frieze, which tends to have a much larger proportion of international and non-local participants than the smaller fairs. On Friday afternoon, January 17, the fair finally sent an email announcing that its sixth edition, set to open February 20, would go forth as planned.

Felix Art Fair, which takes place at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel again this year, is also scheduled to move forward.

“We believe our purpose as a homegrown LA fair remains clear: to support the artists and galleries that make up our cultural fabric,” read an email sent to participants on January 13. The decision, the email continued, came from “a strong-willed determination to help heal, rebuild, and support the creative community of this city.”

The fair's organizers recently established the Felix Wildfire Fund for Grief x Hope to benefit victims, with 100% of donations going to artists and art workers impacted by the blazes, Felix co-founder Mills Morán told *Hyperallergic* via email.

Chris Sharp, founder of the Santa Monica Post Office fair making its debut next month, also confirmed to *Hyperallergic* that the show would be continuing as planned.

“LA needs this now more than ever,” Sharp said. “It’s an important moment to give people a sense that we’re rebuilding, that there’s something to show up for ... It’s crucial. A lot of these people depend on this period economically to make a living.”

LA's longest-running art fair, the LA Art Show, has confirmed that it will be returning to the LA Convention Center for its 30th anniversary edition. Representatives for the Spring Break Art Show have not yet responded to *Hyperallergic's* request for comment.

Hannah Hoffman, whose namesake gallery with locations in MacArthur Park and East Hollywood/Melrose Hill is participating in Frieze LA, echoed Sharp's sentiment, noting that the economic impact of art fairs — and the consequences of a last-minute cancellation — “extend far beyond the artists and galleries who are its most visible participants.”

“These fairs support a vast network of vendors, partners, and workers whose livelihoods depend on them during this moment of extraordinary uncertainty,” Hoffman told *Hyperallergic*. “If the fairs move forward, which it seems they will, we will need our community of collectors, curators, friends and peers to help make them a success.”

Artist Kelly Akashi, who lost her home and studio in Altadena in the Eaton Fire, was among the first to stress the economic and moral support the fairs could provide to affected artists.

“But my position, and I am making it clear to people, is [that] your duty is to your artists first. And everyone needs to be supporting current and future shows,” she wrote in a message to artist Mark Verabioff, which he shared on his [Instagram](#). “Capitalism doesn't give you a hall pass to chill, even when you lose everything.”

She repeated that conviction in a call with *Hyperallergic*, stating, “I don't want the economic impact to spread further and affect other artists. I'm here to celebrate other artists' accomplishments. I want this community to be healthy so they can extend that care to me.”

artnet

# Should Los Angeles Art Fairs Proceed Next Month? A Debate Rages—and More Juicy Art World Gossip

Frieze is staying mum, Felix is moving forward, and everyone is debating the right course of action.



Frieze Los Angeles. Photo: Roger Kisby/WWD/Penske Media via Getty Images

## SHOULD THE SHOW GO ON?

We are five weeks out from Los Angeles's annual art week, when 193 galleries will participate in three fairs: the marquee **Frieze Los Angeles**, which has booked 101 gallerists for its tent at the **Santa Monica Airport**; the main satellite, **Felix Art Fair**, which is scheduled to have 64 exhibitors in hotel rooms and cabanas at the **Hollywood Roosevelt**; and the scrappy newcomer, **Santa Monica Post Office**, which will have 28 galleries just around the corner from Frieze.

The disasters of the past week-and-a-half have thrown all of those events into question. Some 40,000 acres have burned, thousands of houses have been destroyed, artists have lost studios, works, equipment, and archives (the late writer Gary Indiana's vast library went up in flames), and at least 24 people have been killed. There are more important things than art fairs right now, of course. But for the art industry, whether or not they occur—and how they perform, if they do—will have major financial consequences.

For the first week, the fairs stayed quiet, and on Monday, a Frieze spokesperson said that the fair “was taking the necessary time to assess and determine the best course of action for all involved.” But that same day, Felix founders **Mills Morán, Al Morán, and Dean Valentine** told their exhibitors in an email that their show will go on as planned. “Knowing how deeply our community has been affected, the decision to

move forward with the fair is guided by a strong-willed determination to help heal, rebuild, and support the creative community of this city,” they wrote. “The feedback from local galleries has been overwhelmingly in favor of this decision and we hope to have your support as well. If you have any specific questions or concerns we would be more than happy to discuss them with you.”

Yesterday, the **Gallery Association Los Angeles** organized an online town hall that was attended by over 150 members of the city’s art community. There, Felix’s team confirmed its plans, and local dealer **Chris Sharp**, Santa Monica Post Office’s organizer, said that he is proceeding as planned. According to people on the call, industry leaders like **David Kordansky** and **Alex Logsdail** (**Lisson Gallery**’s chief) were vocal about how to move forward, and artist **Kelly Akashi**—who lost her home, studio, and inventory of art ahead of an upcoming solo show at Lisson—delivered a speech that summoned tears. The town hall’s agenda changed at the last minute, according to one tipster, after Frieze decided not to say anything publicly, though **Christine Messineo**, who leads Frieze’s American fairs, was dialed into the call.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Smithsonian Magazine*  
14 January, 2025

Smithsonian  
MAGAZINE

## Music History and Contemporary Art Destroyed in the Deadly Los Angeles Wildfires

An archive of scores by composer Arnold Schoenberg and the collections of countless contemporary artists have been lost in the blaze



The Eaton Fire has devastated the community of Altadena. [Public domain via Wikimedia Commons](#)

The wildfires still burning in Los Angeles have killed at least 24 people, razed thousands of homes and historic landmarks and destroyed countless treasured items—including creative works stored in the area.

Los Angeles' contemporary artists—painters, potters, sculptors and more—are also suffering the loss of creative works. As multidisciplinary artist Kathryn Andrews tells ARTnews' Karen K. Ho, "There are certain things that can't be replaced."

Like Larry Schoenberg, Andrews lives in Pacific Palisades. She evacuated her home before it burned down. This is the second time she's lost a house to wildfire: In 2020, the Bobcat Fire destroyed her home in Juniper Hills, north of Los Angeles. This time, Andrews lost her own "really lovely collection" of art, which included works by Rashid Johnson, Jim Shaw, Fredrik Nilsen and others. She'd built the collection over two decades.

The fires have razed countless local galleries, including Altadena's Alto Beta, which contained a ten-painting show by artist Mary Anna Pomonis when it burned down.

Painter Rachelle Sawatsky tells Cultured magazine that she lost her "entire archive of over 20 years of work as a painter." Artist Tara Walters, who lives in the Malibu Village neighborhood, tells Hyperallergic's Valentina Di Liscia, Matt Stromberg, Maya Pontone and Rhea Nayyar, "Everything is gone from my house. My car. My paintings inside. All my heirlooms. My wedding dress. Everything."

Kelly Akashi, an Altadena-based sculptor of glass and bronze, lost her home and studio, report the Times' Robin Pogrebin, Julia Halperin and Zachary Small. The building contained recent and archival work, including pieces she'd selected to display in her first exhibition at the Lisson Gallery later this month. Per the Times, "She had considered naming one of her recent works *Monument to Loss*. Now it is actually lost."

# ARTnews

## **Fires in Los Angeles Continue to Destroy Artists' Homes and Shutter Galleries**



A view of burnt down auditorium of the Eliot Arts Magnet academy and supermarkets in Altadena, Los Angeles, California.  
ANADOLU VIA GETTY IMAGES

The devastation of the wildfires in Los Angeles continues to grow, impacting galleries, artists, and art professionals across the city. Hurricane-speed winds and several months without much rain have contributed to the fires, which have damaged thousands of homes and killed at least 24 people.

So far, parts of the **grounds of the Getty Villa** have burned, and many artists, gallerists, and other art professionals have evacuated the city. The blazes have consumed **homes**, studios, and even **museums**. **Several fundraisers** have been started to help with recovery efforts.

On January 11, the footprint of the Palisades fire grew to the point that the location of the **Getty Center** was also part of a mandatory evacuation zone. But a day later, with the mandatory zone altered, the museum reported that it was “safe and stable.”

Artist Kathryn Andrews, who lost her home in the Pacific Palisades, has been continuing to collect names of other artists and art professionals whose homes were also destroyed as a result of the fires. They include artist Alec Egan, who lost his home, studio, and two years of nearly completed works for his forthcoming solo show at Anat Ebgi gallery. The show was set to open at the end of the month, but the gallery said all the works in it were burned in the fire.

“We are so grateful Alec and his family are safe and mourn with all who are now facing tragic losses and uncertainty,” the gallery **posted on Instagram**, noting that it was **selling posters from Egan’s 2022 solo show** online, with 100 percent of the proceeds going to the artist.

The Eaton fire was particularly devastating for artists in the community of Altadena, causing the destruction of the Eliot Arts Magnet Middle School and the Zorthian Ranch artist colony, which was founded decades ago by the late sculptor and craftsman Jirayr Zorthian. Two handymen told the **Los Angeles Times** that they and about a dozen artists escaped the fire; dozens of animals ran into the woods. A **GoFundMe** said the damage to the ranch included artwork by Zorthian, retaining walls, a collapsed stage, and a bridge.

**The New York Times also reported** the Altadena home of artist Diana Thater and conceptual artist T. Kelly Mason, as well as thousands of dollars in camera equipment belonging to them and an archive held in a temperature-controlled garage, were also completely destroyed. The Altadena homes, studios, and archives of Camilla Taylor, Kelly Akashi, Paul McCarthy, and Ross Simonini were also lost due to the Eaton fire.

Like Egan, many of the artists had been busy preparing for new shows: Taylor was preparing for three exhibitions this year; McCarthy had to postpone his upcoming show at Hauser & Wirth in London, and Akashi was scheduled to have her inaugural exhibition at Lisson Gallery in Los Angeles later this month. Prior to the fires, Akashi had considered naming one of her recent works “Monument to Loss.” That one was also burned.

The fire also burned down a work-in-progress that Thater had been commissioned to make for the reopening of the expanded Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2026.

The losses also included the library and archive of art and culture critic Gary Indiana, which was moved to Altadena on January 7, the day before the fires. After Indiana died in his East Village apartment in New York last October, the plan was for his books to become a core library for an artist retreat. “If they – the signed editions, the rare art books, the weird books, the books Gary treasured – had come a day later, there would have been no address to deliver them to, so they would have been saved. But on that Tuesday, unfortunately, there still was an address,” Colm Tóibín wrote as part of an essay on fleeing the Los Angeles fires himself for the ***London Review of Books***.

The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), whose scientists worked with artists for the PST Art presentation “Blended Worlds: Experiments in Interplanetary Imagination,” remains closed except for essential personnel due to the Eaton fire. The center for robotic planetary exploration and home of some of NASA’s most famous spacecraft evacuated an estimated 1000 JPL employees, and more than 150 lost their homes to fire, **according to a post on X from JPL director Laurie Leshin**. A fundraiser for a **Caltech and JPL Disaster Relief Fund** has been created.

The ***Los Angeles Times*** also reported the Zane Grey Estate in Altadena was **one of several notable homes** that were destroyed due to the fires. The estate was built by architects Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey in 1907 for Chicago business machine manufacturer Arthur Herbert Woodward. The large home was built of reinforced concrete; featured original cast-iron sconces, iron handrails and chandeliers; and was included on the National Register of Historic Places.

A range of galleries, from **Marian Goodman** to David Zwirner, are currently closed and will remain that way for the time being. But there is good news: some spaces are beginning to reopen. Pace and Perrotin, for example, reopened on January 11, and Hauser & Wirth will follow tomorrow.

LISSON GALLERY

*The New York Times*  
10 January, 2025

**The New York Times**

# Los Angeles Artists Mourn as Their Studios and Artworks Go Up in Smoke

Artists who lived and worked in Altadena and the Pacific Palisades are worrying about irreplaceable losses, and their livelihoods.



The artist Alec Egan's home was destroyed in the fire, and with it the artworks he had created for a show. Alec Egan

The Los Angeles painter [Alec Egan](#) had spent two years preparing work for a solo exhibition that was scheduled to open in late January at [Anat Ebgi](#) gallery on Wilshire Boulevard. Now every one of those canvases is gone.

“It’s terror and despair,” said Egan in a telephone interview from the Beverly Hills Hotel, where he, his wife and two young children had evacuated — the only hotel he said was open.

Egan is among several Los Angeles artists who lost their studios, their artworks — and in some cases their homes — in this week’s fires. Now many are picking up the pieces of their lives and worrying about whether they’ll be able to make a living anytime soon.

[Kelly Akashi](#), who makes haunting glass and bronze sculptures about the impermanence of the natural world, expected to return to her Altadena home and studio when she left and drove to a friend’s house on Tuesday evening. “You’re looking around like, what am I going to do, lug a bunch of sculptures in my Honda?” she said.

In the end the fire claimed Akashi’s home and studio, including archival work, recent sculptures and several pieces she planned to show at her inaugural exhibition at Lisson Gallery in Los Angeles later this month. She had considered naming one of her recent works “Monument to Loss.” Now it is actually lost.

Many Pacific Palisades residents have lost treasured artworks and family heirlooms. Some of the wealthiest collectors in Los Angeles are concentrated on the West Side of the city, which includes Pacific Palisades.

On Tuesday night as the wildfire swept across the lawns, a man hopped onto his bicycle and handed two paintings to a nearby NBC Los Angeles reporter, Robert Kovacik, for safekeeping. “Backyard’s on fire,” the bicyclist said in [a video](#) that has gone viral on social media. “I’m out of here.”

Among the celebrated artists in Altadena whose homes or studios known to have been damaged or destroyed by the fire was [Paul McCarthy](#), who lived in Altadena near his daughter, Mara, a gallerist, and his son, Damon, also an artist. “It’s the home I grew up in,” Mara said in a telephone interview from a friend’s house in Silver Lake. “Our whole family, our whole community, is devastated.” As a result of the fire, she added, her father had postponed his upcoming show at [Hauser & Wirth in London](#).

The artist [Ross Simonini](#) said he lived right down the street from Paul McCarthy. “We lost our home, my studio, all my art from — ever,” Simonini said by telephone from a rest stop off Interstate 5. He was on his way with his wife, infant and dog to stay with his father in Northern California. “It’s so horrific, seeing it now. I have an aerial shot from our neighborhood and six blocks in every direction, there’s nothing.”

*Vanity Fair*  
10 January, 2025

**VANITY FAIR**

## How the Los Angeles Fires Have Affected the Art World

At least dozens, if not hundreds, of artists have lost their homes, studios, and artwork in the Los Angeles fires. Galleries have been destroyed, and those still standing are closed for the moment. But members of the community are fighting the devastation with GoFundMe pages, community organizing, and free meals from favorite restaurants.



A view of burnt houses during Eaton wildfire in Altadena of Los Angeles County, California, United States on January 9, 2025. BY TAYFUN COSKUN/ANADOLU/GETTY IMAGES.

**T**hough the fires are still burning, we're starting to get an understanding of just how devastating the damage is for Los Angeles. In the arts-and-culture community, dozens of people, if not hundreds, have lost their homes, and in some cases decades' worth of artwork—artists lost their studios and personal holdings, while collectors lost their entire troves.

The artist **Kathryn Andrews**, who lost her home, has been on Instagram actively reporting on fellow artists who saw their houses or studios go up in flames in the different wildfires. In posts on Friday, she listed the following artists as having lost their homes or studios: **Analia Saban, Kelly Akashi, Daniel Mendel-Black, Kate Mosher Hall, Amir Nikravan, Christina Quarles, John Knuth, Salomón Huerta, Adam Ross, Beatriz Cortez, Asher Hartman, Alice Könitz, Molly Tierney, Marwa Abdul-Rahman, Sula Bermúdez-Silverman, Mark Whalen, Jean Robison, Rebecca Baron, Rachelle Sawatsky, Grayson Revoir, Camilla Taylor, Tara Walters, Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio, and Andy Ouchi**, as well as married couples **Diana Thater and T. Kelly Mason** and **Jill Spector and Bret Nicely**. These are just the ones Andrews was able to confirm—she added that she's aware “of a few others but [is] awaiting official confirmation before posting.”

The curator **Paul Schimmel** took to Instagram to announce that he had lost his home, and the dealer **John Cheim** did the same. On Friday, Blum & Poe cofounder **Jeff Poe** announced that his Malibu home had been destroyed. The artists **Ross Simonini** and **Alec Egan** told *The New York Times* that they'd lost their homes and studios—Egan had just completed a full show of work that was set to go on view at LA gallery Anat Ebgi later this month. The artist **Paul McCarthy** lost the Altadena home he'd lived in for decades, and his daughter, the dealer **Mara McCarthy**, told the *Times* that he would postpone his upcoming show with Hauser & Wirth in London. She also lost her home, as did her brother, **Damon McCarthy**.

The artist **Ruby Neri** and the artist **Torbjørn Vejvi** lost the home they'd shared with their daughter. **Martine Syms** posted on Instagram that her family's home of 40 years was gone. Designer **Alix Ross**, formerly half of the brand Online Ceramics, lost his home. The artist **Ariane Vielmetter** lost the home that had been in her family for generations—it was once the home of her mother, the prominent Los Angeles dealer **Susanne Vielmetter**. The Altadena gallery Alto Beta, founded by the artist **Brad Eberhard**, burned to the ground. Certainly, there are so, so many other artists and members of the arts community who have lost homes. The damage is utterly incalculable right now, and maybe will be for a long time.

And galleries throughout the city, even those far from the fire sites, are currently closed. Opening receptions scheduled for this weekend, at galleries such as Gagosian, Karma, François Ghebaly, David Kordansky Gallery, and Regen Projects, have been postponed.

And yet there is some reason to be hopeful, or at least grateful. The Getty Villa was surrounded by engulfing flames during the worst of the Palisades fire, but the J. Paul Getty Trust—which has the largest endowment of any museum on earth, with some \$8 billion in the coffers—said that the museum was able to escape with minimal damage and that its thousands of artworks were safe. Key to its survival were constant mitigation through year-round brush-clearing, as the museum knew that fire could come at any minute, and a war room set up Tuesday morning to direct the 16 staffers on the ground at the Villa. The galleries also have double walls, which help protect the 44,000-plus objects at the Villa, some of which are Greek, Roman, and Etruscan ruins dating back to 6,500 BC. And when the fires did reach the pedestrian gate, fire extinguishers were used to put it out in just a few minutes.

And the restaurants and bars that have served the cultural community for years are stepping up to help in a variety of ways. Jon & Vinny's, the Italian joint founded by collectors **Jon Shook** and **Vinny Dotolo**, is delivering pizzas to first responders, and Spago is offering free meals out of its Beverly Hills space.



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

# How to help artists and art workers devastated by Los Angeles wildfires

A range of art-world relief funds are trying to provide immediate aid



The artist Salomon Huerta in front of his house in Altadena (left) and his street in Altadena destroyed by the Eaton fire

Huerta: courtesy the artist. Fire damage: photo by Adriane Thome

Early numbers from the Los Angeles wildfires, which continue to burn amid high winds on Tuesday (14 January), are in: at least 25 people killed, upwards of 12,000 houses or residences lost and more than 40,000 acres consumed—an area larger than the city of

San Francisco. But what is harder to measure is the loss of vibrant, creative neighbourhoods, and the financial and emotional toll for so many people who have seen their homes reduced to ash and rubble.

Altadena in particular, devastated by the Eaton Fire, had been a thriving artists' community thanks to its racial diversity, relatively affordable housing and natural beauty. Picture backyard citrus trees and chicken coops. The list of artists there who have lost their homes or studios (or more often both) is staggering: Kelly Akashi, Martine Syms, Salomon Huerta, Ruby Neri, Diana Thater, T. Kelly Mason, Paul McCarthy, Christina Quarles, John Knuth, Camilla Taylor, Elizabeth Tremante, Beatriz Cortez and Kenturah Davis are just some of the most recognisable names.

As Huerta posted on Instagram this week: "Our magical neighborhood is gone. We are sad but so grateful for the many beautiful memories." Reached by phone at his sister's home in Van Nuys, he described frequent peacock sightings and hitting up his neighbours for coffee or wine instead of going to the store. "That part is hard to replace," he says.

But to replace essentials and things like art supplies, Huerta and his wife now have a GoFundMe page like many artists—sites that Carla magazine founder Lindsay Preston Zappas has aggregated into a fast-growing Google document. There are also some collective funds, created by new grass-roots groups and major cultural institutions alike, seeking to provide artists and art workers with short-term relief.

## **Grief and Hope**

This fund was created this week by a group of five artists and art professionals, including the Various Small Fires director Ariel Pittman, the artists Andrea Bowers and Kathryn Andrews (the latter of whom lost her home last week to the Palisades fire and a previous home to the Bobcat Fire of 2020). "The experience can be devastating in our field, because so many artists and art workers are freelancers or lack a reliable employment structure. And it's hard to make a comeback," says Andrews. Grief and Hope has already raised nearly \$300,000 toward its \$500,000 goal, with the aim of evenly distributing the first round of funds by the end of January to the artists and art workers—such as "kiln operators, studio assistants" and more, says Pittman—who meet very basic criteria for losses. The fund will also accept tax deductible donations exceeding \$10,000 directed through its non-profit sponsor, the Brick.

## **The Armory Fire Relief Fund**

A small, adventurous exhibition and education space in Pasadena, the Armory Center for the Arts has identified at least seven staff members and teaching artists who "have lost their homes, leaving them in urgent need of support. These individuals are the heart of our community, inspiring creativity and connection through their work at the Armory. Now, they need us to stand by them." The centre notes that all proceeds from

this fund will be used for short-term needs and be distributed directly to Armory staff and teaching artists.

### **Emergency Fund for ArtCenter community**

One of the area's leading art schools, the ArtCenter College of Design has created a relief fund asking for donations to help members of its community, including students, faculty and staff who have "lost their homes, businesses and life's work, or have been evacuated to temporary shelters".

### **The Huntington Disaster Relief Fund**

With full- and part-time staff of around 400 people working on some 207 acres, the Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens in San Marino is by many measures the biggest cultural organisation in the shadow of the Eaton Fire. Karen Lawrence, the president of the Huntington, published a letter online on 10 January noting that "so many of our staff, colleagues and community have lost their homes, have been displaced, have seen familiar and beloved landscapes razed". She has set up a disaster relief fund to accept donations "for impacted staff and collections". The funds will be allocated by the Huntington's trustees.

### **Getty Employee One-Time Relief Payment (Getty-funded, not crowd-sourced)**

When Covid-19 struck in March 2020, the Getty was slow to respond. This time, the world's wealthiest arts organisation (its endowment is around \$9.1bn) is moving faster. Getty president Katherine Fleming sent an email to staff on 13 January announcing that it is providing a "one-time tax-free disaster relief payment of \$1,000" for any full-time employees who have experienced financial hardship due to mandatory evacuation orders. In the same letter, she alluded to bigger plans "to work with several partners to create a programme to assist regional cultural workers and artists". Expect more details, she says, "in the week to come".

*ARTnews*

14 January, 2025

# ARTnews

## Tragedy Continues to Unfold for LA Arts Community, Frieze LA Assesses Event, Douglas Christmas Sentenced: Morning Links for January 14, 2025



A fire fighting helicopter drops water as the Palisades fire grows near the Mandeville Canyon neighborhood.

AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

### The Headlines

**DEVASTATION FOR LA ARTS COMMUNITY CONTINUES.** The ongoing wildfires in **Los Angeles** continue to destroy homes and historic, cultural buildings, including those of the city's rich art community, whose livelihoods are bound in the physical objects they make and sell, now turned to ash, reports Karen K. Ho for **ARTnews**.

Meanwhile **Frieze LA** is “assessing” whether to go ahead with the fair on February 20, according to **Artnet News**. “As the situation continues to unfold, we are taking the necessary time to assess and determine the best course of action for all involved,” a Frieze spokesperson said. Among those affected, artist **Alec Egan** has lost his home, studio, plus two years of nearly completed works for a forthcoming show at **Anat Ebgi** gallery. Others include artist **Diana Thater** and T. **Kelly Mason, Camilla Taylor, Kelly Akashi, Paul McCarthy**, and **Ross Smonini**. Taylor was preparing for three exhibitions, McCarthy has had to postpone his upcoming show at **Hauser & Wirth**, London, and Akashi was scheduled to have her inaugural exhibit at **Lisson Gallery** in LA later this month. **The New York Times** also reported an estimated 100,000 scores and parts by the 20th-century composer **Arnold Schoenberg** were destroyed. Additionally, the library and archive of art critic **Gary Indiana** was lost to the flames after it was moved to Altadena on January 7, the day before the fire, where it was due to become a library for an artist retreat. If Indiana’s rare art books and signed editions “had come a day later, there would have been no address to deliver them to, so they would have been saved. But on that Tuesday, unfortunately, there still was an address,” Colm Tóibín wrote in an essay for the **London Review of Books**. See below for personal accounts from artists who survived the fires.

## **The Kicker**

**LA ARTISTS ON LOSING EVERYTHING.** Santa Monica-based **Cultured Magazine** is in the thick of the unfolding LA wildfire disaster, and in their latest long read, it’s asked local artists to share what they’ve lost and experienced in their own words. Among the moving testimonies, here is a sample that bears repeating. “Since I thought we were leaving prematurely and out of an abundance of caution, we took nothing but a change of clothes and a toothbrush,” said **Andy Ouchi**, a multimedia artist. “I lost all of my archive, furniture I had made that I had hoped to pass along to my children, ... physical photographs pre-Internet that can’t be replaced along with negatives... everything.... Really the biggest loss of it all, though, is something that isn’t specific to art making or being creative—it’s the fact that our house became a quilt of memories of our children’s upbringing that has now been vaporized.” And this from **Ross Simonini**, an interdisciplinary artist and musician: “Beyond my family’s home, my studio, and my entire community, I lost nearly all the work I have ever made in the Eaton fire. That includes childhood drawings I made with my mom, the drawing that helped me believe I could be an artist, and several new bodies of work. I don’t think I will ever stop grieving that loss, but the loving response from the art community has already started transforming that grief into something else: a feeling of deep, human connection that I’ve looked for all my life. It only took losing everything to get it.”

*Artsy*

10 January, 2025

# A List of Resources and How to Support Artists and Art Workers Affected by the Los Angeles Wildfires



Photo by AP Photo/John Locher. © 2025 The Associated Press.

With over 10,000 structures lost and 10 lives tragically claimed thus far, the Los Angeles wildfires this week are among the most devastating in the city's history. Among those affected are countless artists and art workers who have seen their homes, studios, and businesses destroyed. Fires continue to burn, the risk of damage still remains, and many are still unsure of the state of the neighborhoods they'll return to.

As the city looks to rebuild, several mutual aid programs, fundraising accounts, and supply-donation sites have surfaced to assist the Los Angeles art world. Below is an ongoing list. If you have resources or relief efforts to add, please email us at [pitches@artsy.net](mailto:pitches@artsy.net) with the subject line “LA wildfire resources.”

## Fundraisers for individual artists and institutions

- [Alec Egan](#) (Anat Egbi is hosting a poster sale with 100% of proceeds benefiting Egan.)
- [Alto Beta](#)
- [Alice Könitz](#) and Artists Studios
- [Kate Hall and Rachelle Sawatsky](#).
- [Kathryn Andrews](#)
- [Kelly Akashi](#)
- [Kenturah Davis](#)
- [Kevin Cooley](#).
- [Liz Huston](#)
- [Margaret Griffith](#)
- [Martine Syms](#)

# ARTnews

## Numerous Artists and Art Professionals Have Lost Homes to the Ongoing Los Angeles Wildfires



A beach house is engulfed in flames as the Palisades Fire burns along Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, California, on January 8, 2025.

PHOTO BY AGUSTIN PAULLIER/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Thousands of acres have burned in Los Angeles due to the ongoing Palisades, Eaton, and Hurst fires, prompting mass evacuation orders, closures, as well as damages to homes, businesses, and landmarks. Numerous artists and arts professionals have been affected by the fires, with several uploading footage of the smoke and flames and posting about evacuations and the loss of their homes to Instagram and other social media platforms.

On Wednesday evening, a new 10-acre fire also started north of Hollywood Blvd in the hills near Runyon Canyon, prompting another evacuation order of an area which included several city landmarks, including the Chinese Theatre, Dolby Theatre, and The Hollywood Bowl. The city of Santa Monica also **issued a new evacuation order** on Wednesday afternoon for the area north of Montana Avenue between 11th St. and Pacific Coast Highway as a result of the Palisades fire.

Multidisciplinary artist **Kathryn Andrews**, who just launched the gender equality nonprofit The **Judith Center**, recently evacuated from her home in Pacific Palisades, which has since burned down. It's the second time she has suffered from a wildfire—in 2020, her home in Juniper Hills burned down in the Bobcat Fire.

“After the last fire, I had the equivalent of a writer’s block, a creative block. A lot of animals died in that one,” she told *ARTnews*. “It’s not just the loss of stuff, you know, it’s the loss of nature, it’s the loss of a community, it’s the loss of dreams. It has a very intense impact.”

“Last night on the news, I saw my neighborhood burning on CNN,” Andrews said. “It’s like, you have to start at zero again. It’s very time consuming. And there are certain things that can’t be replaced.”

In addition to her belongings, Andrews’ personal art collection, built over two decades, was in the Pacific Palisades home. It included a painting by Rashid Johnson, a portrait of her made by Jim Shaw, several drawings and a sculpture by Charles Long, a painting by Lesley Vance, multiple ceramic pieces by Peter Shire, a small sculpture by late German art curator Kasper König, a large photograph by Fredrik Nilsen as well as works by Gaylen Gerber, Evan Holloway, and Alex Olson.

“Just like a really lovely collection that’s all gone,” Andrews told *ARTnews*. “It’s not that those specific works have so much value in the marketplace. It’s more emotional value, or sentimental value. You can’t replace that.”

Andrews is far from the only artist to have suffered losses, as many lived or worked in the affected areas.

**Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio**, the recent **winner of the *ARTnews* Awards’ inaugural Emerging Artist of the Year award** for his “MOCA Focus” exhibition at MOCA LA, wrote on Instagram that he had evacuated his home after spending the day putting out a power line fire in his neighbor’s yard.

Other members of the art industry who evacuated Los Angeles included art adviser Kelly McGree, who previously worked at Simon Subal Gallery in New York; the artist Kelly Akashi, who is represented by Lisson Gallery; **painter Whitney Bedford**, represented

by Vielmetter Los Angeles and Miles McEnery Gallery in New York; and **painter John Knuth**, represented by Hollis Taggart in New York.

Sculptor and painter Ruby Neri, who is represented by David Kordansky Gallery, evacuated with her dog and cat but posted **an image on Instagram** that said she wasn't sure about her house.

## **Museums and Exhibitions Have Also Been Affected by the Fires**

**Several museums and art galleries closed** Wednesday in connection to or as a result of the fires, which have blanketed Los Angeles in thick smoke. The **grounds of the Getty Villa were also burned**, but the institution said its staff and collection were safe.

Local artist **Alex Israel** was scheduled to open his solo exhibition "Noir" at Gagosian Beverly Hills on the evening of January 9, but it has been postponed "until further notice," according to the gallery.

"All of my inspiration comes from this city that I love with all my heart. *Noir* celebrates our history and who we are. Let's unite around this place we love when we can gather again," the painter said in a statement that Gagosian posted to Instagram Stories.

The Frederick R. Weisman Museum of Art at Pepperdine University in Malibu cancelled its VIP/press preview for two exhibitions scheduled for January 10 due to the ongoing fires.

While the Fowler Museum at UCLA stayed open Wednesday, the institution postponed its press preview for an art exhibition on the native ecology of Southern California until January 23. The exhibition "Fire Kinship: Southern California Native Ecology and Art" will highlight "the importance of traditional burning as a land management practice of California Indians. Indigenous science and traditional ecological knowledge are deeply relevant in addressing the challenges we face today," according to an exhibition description.

Superchief Gallery has offered to serve as a base for collecting supplies such as air purifiers, N95 masks, clothing, phone chargers, pet food, and other items for LA fire relief on Thursday, January 9, starting at noon at 1965 South Los Angeles Street.

The gallery **said on Instagram** it would be hosting an art supply drive and night market on Saturday, January 11, and would continue collecting supplies then as well. "All material support will be given directly to victims of the fire from our community and through organizations working to help people directly," Superchief gallery wrote.

LISSON GALLERY

*Arte e Critica City*  
1 December, 2024

# arte\_e\_critica

## **GAM**

Via Palestro 16 – [gam-milano.com](http://gam-milano.com)

*Furta Series* **Kelly Akashi** *Converging Figures*

a cura di Bruna Roccasalva

13 settembre - 8 dicembre

Nuove produzioni in vetro, cera e bronzo plasmate per riprodurre elementi naturali, pensate appositamente per dialogare con gli spazi e la collezione del museo, ruotano attorno al concetto e al fenomeno della "riflessione".

*Collezionare*

1 December, 2024

# COLLEZIONARE

 IL PORTALE ONLINE DEI COLLEZIONISTI ITALIANI

## MILANO

### *Furla series - Kelly Akashi*

Presso la Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano, via Palestro 16. Orari: Mart - dom 10 - 17:30. Chiuso lunedì. Ingresso intero 5 euro, ridotto 3 euro fino all'8 dicembre 2024

Info: tel. 02 884.45943 [info@fondazione-furla.org](mailto:info@fondazione-furla.org) - [www.fondazionefurla.org](http://www.fondazionefurla.org)

# LISSON GALLERY

CAP 74024

1 November, 2024

## CAP 74024

#CAPeople

Kelly  
Akashi

Conversations on time, space,  
craft and music



Presented by  
Lisson Gallery

in  
collaboration with

#CAPeople

I met Kelly Akashi in Milan on the occasion of her solo exhibition "Converging Figures", curated by Bruna Roccasalva and powered by Fondazione Furla and Galleria d'Arte Moderna of Milan (GAM), for the sixth edition of the Furla Series program. The project presents a series of her new works designed specifically to dialogue with GAM's spaces and collection. Kelly Akashi is a Japanese-American artist, born and raised in Los Angeles, whose practice is distinguished by her ability to reconcile a conceptual approach with an attention to form and process. During our conversation, we talked about craft, time, space, and music.

Mirror Complex (Villa Reale), 2024  
Installation view of Furla Series - Kelly Akashi  
Converging Figures, 2024, GAM Milan  
Photography Andrea Rossetti, courtesy of Fondazione Furla

In the foreground: Elemental Entwine, 2024  
Over the fireplace: La lettrice (The Reader), 2024  
Installation view of Furla Series - Kelly Akashi  
Converging Figures, 2024, GAM Milan  
Photography Andrea Rossetti, courtesy of Fondazione Furla





Daisy Oracle for Weeping (after il bacio), 2024, Detail  
 Installation view of Furta Series - Kelly Akashi  
 Convergging Figures, 2024, GAM Milan  
 Photography Andrea Rossatti  
 courtesy of Fondazione Furia

I really loved your exhibition, your approach to the space and to the collection, Kelly.

You created a dialogue with GAM's architecture and its pre-existing artworks in a very delicate – but powerful – and poetic way.

Was this process a challenge for you?

Yes, it's a very big challenge. GAM is a place full of history, of memories, of presence of the artists, and of all the people who worked together in this space.

How have these presences, the architecture of GAM, the pre-existing crafts, paintings, masterpieces and stucco in the rooms inspired your work?

I have visited GAM twice before this exhibition. On my second trip, I've noticed the garlands in the last room. There's no exact repetition. Maybe the artisans used the mold, but then crafted each leaf, each flower petal individually. When I started looking at them, I realized that there were no identical materials in the garland. That was very inspiring. I'm very sensitive to perceiving each person who has touched these garlands and dedicated their contribution, it thus inspired my own work in the exhibition.

Yes, I did. For the work in the last exhibition room, I took the motif of the terrazzo in the floor, as well as the many mirrors that surround the space. I considered the patterns on the terrazzo as being absorbed into my artworks. In this way, when my artworks travel to or are exhibited elsewhere, they will always carry the history of this space with them. The rooms of GAM are full of 'presences', which I think are from the different designers and artisans, sometime unknown makers, who have put a lot of work in those spaces. I've studied contemporary fine art, but over the past ten years I've also studied different crafts and photography. Sometimes people forget that photography also has its own lineage of craft.

You have been inspired by the floor as well...

And these designers and artisans have a past, a personal story. Exactly. I'm always interested in how these people's way of thinking is captured by the objects they make. When you learn about any new production method, you can always see the thoughts behind the makers' choices. I always find it an amazing voice to read through objects and artworks. For me, there were both well-known and unknown makers engaged in this process.

Now that's talk about the craftsmanship. You put in the exhibition a series of hands, fingers... You remind me of what Richard Sennett calls the 'intelligent hand' in his well-known book "The Craftsman".



That book has been important to me and inspired me in contemplating not more contemporary ways in thinking about craftsmanship in general, and what craft is. That's why I said that, because Richard Sennett talked about craftsmanship as surgery, just like knowing craftsmanship as surgeons. Sometimes in contemporary art, there's a narrower view of what craft means. But for me, joining his his own history of craftsmanship in a way.



Libby Barrow, 2022  
Photography: Robert Longjohn  
Courtesy of the artist and Iwanit Gallery

Richard Sennett, *Book of David*  
Craftsmanship of Irony Series - Fully Visible  
Curatorial Program, 2024. DADA Museum  
Photography: Robert Longjohn, University of Pennsylvania Press



The hand, the touch, but also the view, of course, with the mirror, and their reflections ... Historically, mirrors used to be quite imperfect. Through the industrial processes, they became more and more perfect, but they are always a reflection or interpretation of imperfection. I think that's why reflections will be a nice keyword to keep in mind when seeing the exhibition.

And reflection captures different times and spaces in a very dynamic way. This is also related to your 'reflections' about the passing of time.

If we could visualize time, I reckon it as a spiral rather than a straight line. For me, that repetition is not only, of course, about movement, but also a way of thinking that folds in on itself. It's not about disregarding the past or the future, but allowing for openness and change while staying connected.

And what about present moment? I know it's very hard to make people feel the present moment. The candle works were one of my early sculptures that I attempted to do so, because the presence of candles is always transitional. By making those works that you see are suspended in time, I'm trying to get people to really feel the moment we are in.

«We always have our own choreography and rhythm while making artworks, because without that, none of those works would be made. We all work in chorus with each other. It happens in the exhibition, but also in the process of making.»



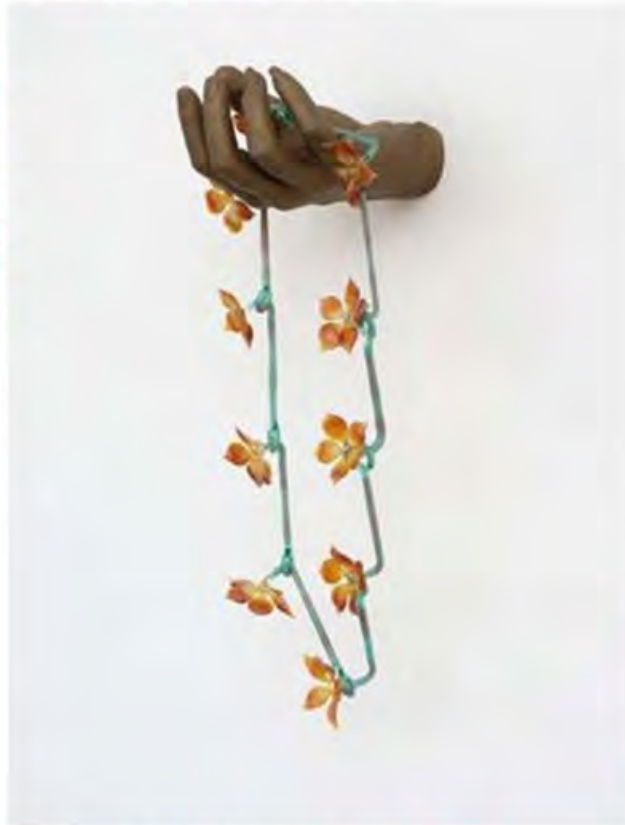
Fiori da Ballo (Floral Ball), 2004  
Installation view of Four Series - Kelly Ashby  
Concepting Figures, 2024, OAMF Milano  
Documentazione della Biennale Venezia, courtesy of Propagazione Futura

By following the exhibition route, visitor can feel a rhythm. Rhythm is often correlated to music.

Do you listen to music when you are working?

I don't really listen to music when I am working, mostly because I'm listening to the material that I am working with. Therefore, I'm not trying 'to go' somewhere else, but to stay focused on my creation and to stay with it, which is also something Richard Sennett talked about – to be

«Sometimes in contemporary art, there's a narrower view of what craft means. But for me, painting has its own history of craftsmanship in a way.»



Cosmos, 2023  
Photography Paul Salvesson  
Courtesy by the artist and Lassen Gallery

in conversation with the material and to be able to respond. I like to be very present when I'm creating, but I understand what you mean. I was trained as a pianist when I was young and I can completely relate to what you were saying.

All of your works, together, create a composition, with pause and repetitions. This brings us back to Sennett, and in particular to his book "Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation". Are there rooms for cooperation and collaboration in the creation of your work? In the workshop where the flowers were made, I worked with a team, because it was impossible to make those flowers by yourself. We always have our own choreography and rhythm while making them, because without that, none of those works would be made. We all work in chorus with each other. It happens in the exhibition, but also in the process of making.



Morletto Ritratto (Lace Portrait), 2024  
Installation view of Furto Series ... Kelly Akashi  
Converging Figures, 2024, GAM Milan  
Photography Andrea Rossetti, courtesy of Fondazione Furla



Contemporary / Figure in a landscape, 2018  
Installation view of Contemporary / Arts, Museo  
Contemporaneo, 2018, Galleria  
Pirella Göttsche, Milano, Italy

Contemporary / Figure in a landscape, 2018



## IL GIORNALE DELL'ARTE

### DA VEDERE, GIÀ SEGNALATE

**BAJ Baj chez Baj**, Palazzo Reale

[> 9 feb. '25, n. 454, ott. '24, p. 63]

**Jean Tinguely**, Pirelli HangarBicocca

[> 2 feb. '25, n. 454, ott. '24, p. 64]

**Meriem Bennani**, Fondazione Prada

[> 24 feb. '25, n. 454, ott. '24, p. 65]

**Picasso lo straniero**, Palazzo Reale

[> 2 feb. '25, n. 453, set. '24, p. 52]

**Saodat Ismailova**, Pirelli HangarBicocca

[> 12 gen. '25, n. 453, set. '24, p. 61]

**Kelly Akashi**, Gam-Galleria d'Arte Moderna

[> 8 dic., n. 453, set. '24, p. 62]

**Sculture di Lorenzo Bartolini**, Fondazione Luigi Rovati

[> 16 feb. '25, [ilgiornaledellarte.com](http://ilgiornaledellarte.com)]

**Ugo Mulas. L'operazione fotografica**, Palazzo Reale

[> 2 feb. '25., [ilgiornaledellarte.com](http://ilgiornaledellarte.com)]

**Gae Aulenti**, Triennale Milano

[> 12 gen. '25, n. 451, giu. '24, p. 59]

## STYLE MAGAZINE

MOSTRE di Michele Ciavarella

### Cento anni di surrealismo

DOPO LA MOSTRA, IL CENTRE POMPIDOU CHIUDERÀ PER CINQUE ANNI



Leonora Carrington, *Green Sea, 1942*. Nella mostra nel museo progettato da Renzo Piano e Richard Rogers nel 1977, sono esposte opere di molti donne del movimento, tra cui Remedios Varo, Shell Collaughoun, Dora Maar, Dorothea Tanning.

**NEL 1924, ANDRÉ BRETON** pubblica il *Manifeste du surréalisme* che fa nascere il «movimento artistico totale» che condiziona arti e culture per oltre 40 anni. Si capisce, allora, che un'istituzione effervescente come il Centre Pompidou di Parigi voglia celebrare i 100 anni del movimento con la mostra *Surréalisme*, fino al 13 gennaio 2025, che espone le opere dalla fondazione al 1969, la data supposta della «dissoluzione». Ma con questa grande esposizione il «Beaubourg» saluta i suoi affezionati visitatori prima della chiusura per i lavori di restauro che dureranno fino al 2030, quando riaprirà i battenti (nel frattempo, due

gallerie al Grand Palais accoglieranno opere e mostre). Allestita in un labirinto al cui centro è stata posizionata «la voce» di Breton che fa da guida, questa esposizione arriva in un momento storico molto simile a quello della nascita del movimento. Infatti, dice Didier Ottinger, curatore insieme a Marie Sarré, che «il surrealismo ha quella capacità di entrare in risonanza con l'arte e con le domande del nostro tempo. Nel corso della sua lunga storia, ha sempre fatto in modo di conciliare il "cambiare la vita" di Arthur Rimbaud e il "trasformare il mondo" di Karl Marx». Agendo sul campo politico e reagendo alle minacce sulla libertà.

#### ALTRE ESPOSIZIONI

##### Converging Figures La personale di Kelly Akashi

Fondazione Furla e Gam (Galleria d'arte moderna di Milano) per Furla Seves, fino all'8 dicembre, a cura di Bruna Roccavalisa. Le opere creano un dialogo con l'architettura e i capolavori custoditi nel museo.

##### Qualcosa che toglie il peso Mario Merz

La Fondazione Merz di Torino, fino al 2 febbraio 2025, presenta una selezione di installazioni, igloo, tavoli, tele e lavori su carta. Fulcro della mostra, la grande opera *Quattro tavoli in forma di fogli di neoprene* (1965).

##### Matisse invito al viaggio Una retrospettiva

Fino al 26 gennaio 2025, la Fondation Beyeler di Riehen/Basilea dedica all'artista Fauve un'esposizione costruita a partire dalla poesia di Charles Baudelaire invito al viaggio composta nel 1857.

Arte

1 October, 2024

# Arte



LE MOSTRE  
in Italia MILANO

IN QUESTA FOTO,  
l'installazione di  
Kelly Akashi  
*Converging figures*,  
2019, dialoga  
con alcuni dipinti  
della Gam. *Il Fiori  
da ballo*, 2024,  
vetro, acciaio.

## Le “convergenze” di Kelly Akashi

Le opere della scultrice in dialogo con dipinti e arredi della Villa Reale

DI LICIA SPAGNESI

«Non c'è arte senza rapporto con l'arte». Con queste parole il direttore del Polo museale milanese Gianfranco Maraniello introduce la mostra di Kelly Akashi (Los Angeles, 1983), sottolineando l'importanza per gli artisti contemporanei del confronto col passato: «Una dialettica che si rinnova tra continuità, differenze e piccole trasgressioni». Per la sesta edizione del programma *Furla Series*, le sale al primo piano della Gam accolgono venti sculture dell'artista americana di origine giapponese, per la maggior parte nuove produzioni, in dialogo con capolavori della collezione permanente, da Federico Faruffini a Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo. Una riflessione sulla caducità delle cose e sullo scorrere del tempo.

**VANITAS.** Il percorso prende le mosse dall'installazione *Converging figures* che dà il titolo alla mostra e che, come spiega la curatrice Bruna Roccasalva, anticipa «quella convergenza tra le opere dell'artista e il contesto che le ospita». Su un tavolo in legno, diviso

diagonalmente a metà, una sorta di **vanitas contemporanea** con vari oggetti e piccole sculture (ampolle in vetro soffiato, un ramo, una candela, banchi da seta, le dita di una mano in bronzo...) echeggia elementi e forme presenti nei dipinti di Segantini alle pareti (*Dea pagana* e *Angelo della vita*). Il gioco di rispecchiamenti e corrispondenze prosegue con il ritratto di Francesco Hayez di Antonietta Negrini

Prati Morosini. la riproduzione (opera di un artigiano locale) del merletto che adorna le maniche della nobildonna impreziosisce la scultura in bronzo e vetro che raffigura le mani dell'artista. *Grandi Fiori da ballo* (2024) in vetro soffiato e acciaio rievocano gli intarsi del pavimento, mentre nella Sala del Parnaso, circondato dai molti specchi che adornano le pareti, il cabinet *Mirror complex* (Villa Reale) esalta alcuni particolari dei decori della sala. ■

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**KELLY AKASHI. CONVERGING FIGURES.**  
Milano, Galleria d'arte moderna  
(tel. 02-88445943). Fino all'8 dicembre.



Biancoscuro  
1 October, 2024



## Kelly Akashi

*Nuovo progetto per Furla Series*

di *Roberta Mantovani*

Per la sesta edizione del programma **Furla Series**, **Fondazione Furla e GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano** annunciano **"Converging Figures"**, una mostra personale di **Kelly Akashi**, a cura di **Bruna Roccasalva**.

Si tratta della prima mostra dedicata all'artista da un'istituzione italiana, il progetto presenta una serie di nuove produzioni pensate appositamente per dialogare con gli spazi e la collezione del museo. **Kelly Akashi è un'artista americana di origini giapponesi, nata e cresciuta a Los Angeles, concilia un approccio concettuale con un'attenzione alla forma ed al processo.** Sempre eseguite con sapiente abilità manuale e profonda conoscenza dei materiali, i lavori di Akashi esplorano **concetti universali come il tempo e lo spazio, l'impermanenza del mondo naturale, la transitorietà del corpo umano e l'entropia.** Attratta da materiali come vetro, cera e bronzo, li plasma creando forme che riproducono elementi naturali come piante, fiori, conchiglie o parti del suo corpo. Accostate in composizioni poetiche dall'aspetto spesso fragile e prezioso, **queste forme familiari e stranianti al tempo stesso esplorano questioni esistenziali, incoraggiandoci a guardare le cose da una prospettiva diversa, più ampia e meno antropocentrica.** Il progetto che Akashi ha immaginato per Furla Series ruota attorno al concetto e al fenomeno della "riflessione", esplorato attraverso un percorso visionario che si snoda all'interno della collezione permanente, creando un dialogo e una sinergia con l'architettura e i capolavori del museo.

Furla Series è il progetto nato nel 2017 per la realizzazione di mostre in collaborazione con importanti istituzioni d'arte italiane, con un programma tutto al femminile pensato per dare valore e visibilità al contributo fondamentale delle donne nella cultura contemporanea. **Δ**



Kelly Akashi - Cosmic axis  
2022-2023, borosilicato lavorato a fiamma su piedistallo rotante in cemento colato, 195,6x55,9x55,9 cm.  
Courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery  
Ph. Pierre Le Hori

Kelly Akashi - Life Forms  
2022, bronzo fuso a cera persa, vetro soffiato a bocca, 71x19x17,5 cm.  
Courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery  
Ph. Marco Cappellotti



**KELLY AKASHI**  
**Converging Figures**  
13 settembre - 8 dicembre 2024  
GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna Milano

**INFO**

l.gam@comune.milano.it  
info@fondazionefurla.org

Da martedì a domenica 10.00 - 13.30

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# LISSON GALLERY

*Collezionare*

1 October, 2024

## COLLEZIONARE

### Le mostre d'arte in Italia

#### **MILANO NEW!**

*Furta series - Kelly Akashi*

Presso la Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano, via Palestro 16. Orari: Mart - dom 10 - 17.30. Chiuso lunedì. Ingresso intero 5 euro, ridotto 3 euro.

**dal 13 settembre all'8 dicembre 2024**

Info: tel. 02 884.45943 (biglietteria),  
[www.fondazionefurta.org](http://www.fondazionefurta.org)

*The Good Life*  
1 October, 2024

## ITALIA **The Good Life**

Primavera d'autunno



Mostre, festival, interventi monumentali su vecchi silos: per indagare il panorama espressivo contemporaneo, non c'è periodo dell'anno migliore.

di Guido Furbesco

### Milano

#### *A proposito di Kelly →*

Prima mostra dedicata da un'istituzione italiana a Kelly Akashi (artista di origini giapponesi, nata e cresciuta a Los Angeles, classe 1983). Le sue opere sono composizioni che appaiono spesso fragili e preziose, dall'ispirazione romantica, che combinano elementi naturali (come piante, fiori, conchiglie) e parti del suo corpo (con una predilezione per le mani). **Furla Series. Kelly Akashi** alla Galleria d'Arte Moderna fino all'8 dicembre



L'OPERA DI KELLY AKASHI, ARTISTA PROTAGONISTA DELLA MONOGRAFICA OSPITATA FINO A DICEMBRE ALLA GAG DI MILANO, SESTA EDIZIONE DEL PROGETTO FURLA SERIES.

LISSON GALLERY

*e-flux*  
13 September 2024

**e-flux**

Kelly Akashi: *Converging  
Figures*

Fondazione Furla



Kelly Akashi, *Mirror Complex (Villa Reale)*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery. Photo: Andrea Rossetti. Courtesy of Fondazione Furla.

For the sixth edition of the **Furla Series** program, **Fondazione Furla** and **GAM—Galleria d'Arte Moderna of Milan** present ***Converging Figures*** a solo exhibition by **Kelly Akashi**, curated by **Bruna Roccasalva**.

The first exhibition dedicated to the artist by an Italian institution, the project presents a series of new works designed specifically to dialogue with the museum's spaces and collection.

**Kelly Akashi** is a Japanese-American artist, born and raised in Los Angeles, whose practice is distinguished by her ability to reconcile a conceptual approach with an attention to form and process. Always carried out with great skill and a profound knowledge of materials, Akashi's works explore universal concepts such as time and space, the impermanence of the natural world, the transience of the human body, and entropy. Attracted to materials like glass, wax, and bronze, Akashi shapes them by creating forms that reproduce natural elements such as plants, flowers, shells, or parts of her own body, recording their physiological changes and the passage of time. Juxtaposed in poetic compositions that often look fragile and precious, these familiar yet alienating forms explore existential questions, encouraging us to look at things from a different, broader and less anthropocentric perspective.

The project ***Converging Figures*** revolves around the concept and phenomenon of “reflection,” explored through a visionary path that winds its way right through the GAM’s permanent collection. The works on display, mostly produced for the occasion, are created in response to the context where they are displayed, and they fit into it in a discreet and quiet manner, integrating harmoniously with their surroundings.

There are thus many paths taken by Akashi to “reflect” the context in which she exhibits, with works that physically reflect the surrounding environment thanks to special techniques that make them mirror-like, and others that reproduce details of architecture or of a number of masterpieces from the collection, such as the *Portrait of Countess Antonietta Negroni Prati Morosini* (1871–1872) by Francesco Hayez, *The Reader* (1864–1865) by Federico Faruffini, and *Faust and Margherita (The Kiss)* (1861) by Antonio Tantardini.

Through a constellation of works that are formally seductive and technically rigorous, the exhibition thus explores the sedimentation of various temporalities and the layering of knowledge, lives, and generations, while presenting us with the coherence and complexity of research that orbits around the themes of memory, time, and tradition, yet which constantly evolves and develops in terms of form, technique, and material.

**Kelly Akashi: *Converging Figures*** is the upshot of the collaboration between Fondazione Furla and GAM: a partnership begun in 2021 to promote annual exhibition projects providing a unique opportunity for past masters and protagonists of the contemporary scene to come face to face. **Furla Series** is the program promoted by Fondazione Furla and realized in collaboration with Italy's foremost museums, with an all-female program designed to valorize and showcase women's fundamental contribution to contemporary culture.



L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

*Vermilion*

10 September 2024

**VERMILION**

# American artist Kelly Akashi explores time and space. The exhibition at the GAM in Milan – Carlo Franza's blog

For the sixth edition of the program Furla SeriesFondazione Furla and GAM – Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano – announce "Converging Figures", a personal exhibition of Kelly Akashicurated by Bruna Roccasalva, open until December 8, ...

Written by: Jack Williams

**For the sixth edition of the program Furla SeriesFondazione Furla and GAM – Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano – announce "Converging Figures", a personal exhibition of Kelly Akashicurated by Bruna Roccasalva, open until December 8, 2024.**

The first exhibition dedicated to the artist by an Italian institution, the project presents a series of new productions specifically conceived to dialogue with the spaces and the collection of the museum.

**Kelly Akashi is an American artist of Japanese descent**, born and raised in Los Angeles, whose practice is distinguished by the ability to reconcile a conceptual approach with an attention to form and process. Always executed with expert manual skill and a deep knowledge of materials, Akashi's works explore universal concepts such as time and space, the impermanence of the natural world, the transience of the human body and entropy.

**Attracted by materials such as glass, wax and bronze, Akashi shapes them creating shapes that reproduce natural elements such as plants, flowers, shells or parts of his body, recording their physiological changes and the passage of time. Juxtaposed in poetic compositions that often appear fragile and precious, these familiar and at the same time alienating forms explore existential questions, encouraging us to look at things from a different perspective. different, broader and less anthropocentric.**



The project that Akashi has imagined for Furla Series revolves around the **concept and phenomenon of “reflection”** explored through a visionary path that winds through the permanent collection, creating a dialogue and synergy with the architecture and masterpieces of the museum.

The exhibition of **Kelly Akashi is the sixth edition of the Furla Series project** and is the fruit of the collaboration between Fondazione Furla and GAM, a partnership that began in 2021 to promote annual exhibition projects that offer a unique opportunity for masters of the past to meet with contemporary protagonists.

**Furla Series** is the project that since 2017 has seen Fondazione Furla committed to the creation of exhibitions in collaboration with important Italian art institutions, with an all-female program designed to give value and visibility to the fundamental contribution of women in contemporary culture.

**Kelly Akashi** was born in 1983 in Los Angeles, where she lives and works. She recently concluded a major solo exhibition, *Formations*, which traveled to the San Jose Museum of Art, the Frye Museum of Art in Seattle, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego (2022-2024), and was accompanied by the publication of the first comprehensive monograph on the artist. Other major solo exhibitions include: *Encounters*, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2023); *Cultivator*, Aspen Art Museum (2020); *a thing among things*, ARCH, Athens, Greece (2019); and *Long Exposure* curated by Ruba Katrib, SculptureCenter, New York (2017). She is the recipient of the MOCA Distinguished Women in the Arts Award (2024), the LACMA Art + Technology Grant (2022), and the Carolyn Glasoe Bailey Foundation Art Prize (2019). Her work is included in the permanent collections of major international institutions including: Brooklyn Museum, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and San Diego; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Frye Art Museum, Seattle; San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose; Cantor Arts Center, Stanford; CC Foundation, Shanghai; X Museum, Beijing; The Perimeter, London; David Roberts

*Arte e Critica City*  
10 September, 2024

## arte\_e\_critica

### **GAM**

Via Palestro 16 – gam-milano.com

*Furta Series*

**Kelly Akashi** *Converging Figures*

a cura di Bruna Roccasalva

13 settembre - 8 dicembre

Akashi utilizza vetro, cera e bronzo per realizzare forme di elementi naturali o parti del suo corpo, accostandole in composizioni dall'aspetto fragile e prezioso. Queste forme stranianti e familiari esplorano questioni esistenziali e una serie di nuove produzioni pensate per gli spazi della



Kelly Akashi, *Activity Table*, 2016. Foto Marten Elder.  
Courtesy l'artista e Lisson Gallery / GAM

GAM ruota attorno al fenomeno della "riflessione", attraverso un percorso che si snoda all'interno della collezione permanente creando un dialogo con l'architettura e le opere del museo.

*Amica*

1 September, 2024

## AMICA

AMICA È.  
ARTE

DI LETIZIA RITTATORE VONWILLER



**RI-FORME** - *Converging Figures* è un progetto di Kelly Akashi, artista americana di origini giapponesi, per la sesta edizione di *Furla Series* di Fondazione Furla: raccoglie opere in vetro, cera e bronzo pensate per dialogare con gli spazi che le ospitano, quelli della Gam, la Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano (dal 13/9 all'8/12). Tutte danno forma alla natura (corpi compresi) in un modo che invita a guardare le cose da altre prospettive.

*Casa Facile*

1 September, 2024

## CASA facile

| COSA C'È DI NUOVO |



### *News & Trend*

*mostra*

*Kelly Akashi, artista americana di origini giapponesi, nei suoi lavori esprime abilità manuale e conoscenza dei materiali. Attratta da vetro, cera e bronzo, li plasma creando forme che riproducono elementi naturali come piante, fiori, conchiglie (ma anche parti del suo corpo) per registrarne i cambiamenti fisiologici e il passare del tempo. Per la VI edizione del progetto Furla Series, 'Converging Figures', alla GAM di Milano dal 13/9 all'8/12. » [comune.milano.it/web/gam-galleria-arte-moderna](https://comune.milano.it/web/gam-galleria-arte-moderna) [cf]*





## IL GIORNALE DELL'ARTE

GAM-Galleria d'Arte Moderna

### Candele di cera fuse in bronzo

La californiana Kelly Akashi è la protagonista della sesta edizione delle Furla Series

di Michela Moro

I capolavori di Antonio Canova, Francesco Hayez, Pellizza da Volpedo, Tranquillo Cremona, Gaetano Previati e Giovanni Segantini, nei saloni della GAM-Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano, dal 13 settembre all'8 dicembre sono posti in dialogo con sculture di Kelly Akashi (Los Angeles, 1983), artista protagonista della sesta edizione delle Furla Series, progetto della Fondazione Furla curato da Bruna Roccasalva, che dal 2017 si focalizza su protagoniste femminili del contemporaneo in collaborazione con musei italiani. «Per essere la quarta collaborazione con la Galleria d'Arte Moderna, è la prima mostra ospitata al primo piano della collezione permanente, creando un dialogo tra arte contemporanea e opere dell'800», dichiara Bruna Roccasalva. È composta quasi interamente da nuove produzioni, create per dialogare con la collezione, con l'architettura e gli elementi decorativi dello spazio, dai pavimenti agli stucchi, di Villa Reale, di cui abbiamo scelto le sale più ornate. Il percorso inizia con «Converging Figures» (2019), che dà il titolo alla mostra e riassume la pratica dell'artista: Akashi esplora la manualità e l'attenzione al fare fisico, utilizzando una combinazione di sculture di materiali ed elementi diversi. «Kelly è molto contemplativa e interessata a dimensioni che trascendono una visione antropocentrica invece di focalizzarsi su temi femminili o femministi», aggiunge Roccasalva. «Il mio lavoro è passato attraverso diverse fasi e sperimentazioni, con



Kelly Akashi

materiali e tecniche diversi, precisa Kelly Akashi. Sono stata molto influenzata dagli studi fatti a Francoforte, un'apertura improvvisa rispetto a Los Angeles dove avevo vissuto. Inizialmente, ho lavorato con la fotografia, soprattutto documentaristica. Questo ha influenzato la mia pratica scultorea, che si concentra sulla testimonianza dell'impermanenza. Nel 2017, la prima mostra monodale ha rappresentato una sfida nell'approccio allo spazio, e segnato l'inizio

della mia esplorazione con il bronzo, la pietra e il vetro. Ho iniziato a fondere candele di cera in bronzo. Le sculture in cera possono essere delicate ed effimere, mentre quelle fuse in bronzo trasformano momenti fugaci in sculture permanenti, un processo che considero simile alla fotografia per la capacità di fissare momenti temporanei. Poi ho iniziato a utilizzare l'acqua, che trovo particolarmente eccitante per la sua materialità e per gli aspetti collaborativi che comporta, specialmente quando si lavora in gruppo per la soffiatura del vetro. Mi interessano le tecniche e i processi storici, come la creazione di specchi antichi in ossidiana o bronzo lucidato, e cerco di reinterpretare le intenzioni dei creatori del passato nei miei lavori contemporanei. Nel lavoro di Akashi è comparso anche il ricamo al tombolo, integrato al suo lavoro scultoreo. La dimensione dei lavori varia, ma la maggior parte delle opere è progettata in scala uno a uno con il corpo umano: se un'opera rappresenta una mano, sarà di dimensioni reali, in particolare quella dell'artista, elemento ricorrente nella sua pratica: «Le mani non mentono, scandiscono e raccontano il tempo che passa», afferma Akashi. «Tuttavia c'è un'installazione che rappresenta il cuore della mostra, situata nella sala da ballo, di scala maggiore rispetto alle altre opere», conclude Roccasalva. Questo contrasto tra lavori di dimensioni umane e installazioni più grandi contribuisce a creare una dinamica interessante e variegata all'interno della mostra» (cfr. [ilgiornaledellarte.com](http://ilgiornaledellarte.com)).

## L'OFFICIEL

### *inter*CONNESSI



La sesta edizione delle Furla Series presenta "Converging Figures" di Kelly Akashi, una mostra pensata per *dialogare* con il GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano.

Arrivano alla sesta edizione le Furla Series, da un'idea di Fondazione Furla e GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano. Il progetto, pensato per mettere a confronto artisti del passato e protagonisti dell'arte contemporanea, quest'anno presenta "Converging Figures" di Kelly Akashi, a cura di Bruna Roccasalva, la prima mostra dedicata da un'istituzione italiana all'artista americana di origini giapponesi, nata e cresciuta a Los Angeles. Un'occasione per presentare una serie di produzioni pensate appositamente per dialogare con gli spazi e la collezione del museo, come conferma la curatrice. «La scelta di Kelly Akashi è legata a una serie di fattori», spiega, «primo fra tutti la convinzione che la sua ricerca, che passa attraverso la fotografia analogica per approdare alla scultura, sia tra le più interessanti nel panorama artistico contemporaneo. A questo si aggiunge un presupposto per noi di Fondazione Furla da sempre fondamentale ovvero la capacità dell'artista di dialogare con il contesto istituzionale in cui espone». E sottolinea, «quest'anno, per la prima volta dall'inizio della nostra collabora-

zione con la GAM di Milano (iniziata nel 2017, ndr), abbiamo deciso di esplorare la possibilità di realizzare il progetto proprio all'interno degli stessi spazi che ospitano la collezione. Questa decisione implicava la necessità di dover individuare un artista che con le sue opere fosse in grado di inserirsi in modo armonico tra le maglie della collezione permanente del museo, e la natura del lavoro di Kelly Akashi rispondeva perfettamente a tale esigenza». Lo conferma anche l'artista i cui lavori esplorano concetti universali - il tempo, l'impermanenza del mondo naturale, la transitorietà del corpo umano... -, quando le chiediamo cosa vuole rappresentare con questo suo lavoro: «Mi piace usare il linguaggio come materiale per collegare oggetti ed esseri diversi, proprio come integro materiali e allestimenti nelle mie opere d'arte. Le figure possono comprendere varie forme, sia naturali che create dall'uomo, o anche forme di vita non convenzionali o speculative. La fusione di rappresentazioni del corpo umano con figure diverse, realistiche o astratte, è da tempo parte integrante della mia pratica. Questa



fusione mira a spostare la percezione degli spettatori su come le esperienze siano plasmate e possano estendersi al di là del nostro fisico individuale». E continua, spiegando come ha organizzato le opere in relazione allo spazio del GAM, e come dialogano con quelle presenti. «Le opere di questa mostra riflettono e rispecchiano materialmente e figurativamente la collezione. In alcune sculture ho usato sostanze chimiche per specchiare il vetro e riflettere l'ambiente e la collezione. In altri casi, ho assunto il ruolo di specchio interpretando e ricreando elementi di opere d'arte della collezione, come una rappresentazione dipinta di un merletto fatto a mano, una margherita scolpita nel marmo, e anche ornamenti floreali in legno e gesso intarsiati». L'artista usa infatti materiali come vetro, cera e bronzo, e li plasma riproducendo elementi naturali che siano piante, fiori, conchiglie o parti del suo corpo, e riflette su come il tempo agisca su di loro. E sono composizioni poetiche, fragili, che esplorano questioni esistenziali. Un progetto che Fondazione Furla ha pensato al femminile. Viene quindi da chiedere a Bruna Roccasalva se ha ancora senso dividere per generi. «Non dovrebbe, ma è una distinzione con cui ci scontriamo quotidianamente. La scelta istituzionale di un programma al femminile nasce proprio per andare nella direzione in cui una distinzione di genere

«LA FUSIONE DI  
*rappresentazioni* DEL  
CORPO UMANO  
CON FIGURE  
DIVERSE, *realistiche*  
O *astratte*, È DA  
TEMPO PARTE  
*integrante* DELLA MIA  
PRATICA».

possa non essere necessaria e non avere più senso, dunque proprio per colmare quel gap che, purtroppo, è ancora oggi una realtà con cui fare i conti. Nonostante siano stati fatti molti passi avanti, c'è infatti ancora molto da fare perché si possa parlare di una vera parità di genere nell'arte e non solo, e come istituzione lo strumento che abbiamo a nostra disposizione per accorciare quella distanza e per accrescere la consapevolezza su tale questione è il prodotto culturale che offriamo al nostro pubblico». La mostra "Converging Figures" si tiene dal 13 settembre all'8 dicembre 2024.

—Silvia Frau

IN QUESTA PAGINA DALL'ALTO E DA SINISTRA—Cultivator (2021), foto Paul Salvatori. Cosmic axis (2022-2023), foto Pierre Le Hors. Lily Forms (2022), foto Marco Cappelletti. Long Exposure (2021), foto Paul Salvatori. Triple Helix (2020), foto Pierre Le Hors. Tutte le foto sono courtesy dell'artista e della Lisson Gallery. NELLA PAGINA ACCANTO—Ritratto di Kelly Akashi, foto di Brad Torchio, courtesy dell'artista e di Fondazione Furla.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Finestre sull'Arte*  
26 August 2024

**Finestre** sull'Arte  
◊ THE BEST OF ITALIAN ART ◊

**In Milan, the first exhibition dedicated to Kelly Akashi by an Italian institution**

by **Redazione**, published on 26/08/2024

Categories: **Exhibitions** / **Disclaimer**

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From Sept. 13 to Dec. 8, 2024, GAM in Milan will host the solo exhibition of Japanese-born American artist Kelly Akashi. The exhibition is the result of the sixth edition of the Furla Series project, a collaboration between Fondazione Furla and GAM.

From Sept. 13 to Dec. 8, 2024, **GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano** will host the **solo exhibition** of Japanese-born and raised American artist **Kelly Akashi** (Los Angeles, 1983). *Converging Figures*, this is the title of the exhibition curated by Bruna Roccasalva, is the first exhibition dedicated to the artist by an Italian institution. Born out of the **collaboration between Fondazione Furla and GAM**, Kelly Akashi's exhibition is the sixth edition of the *Furla Series* project, a partnership begun in 2021 to promote yearly exhibition projects that offer an opportunity for the masters of the past to meet the protagonists of the contemporary.

New productions by Kelly Akashi designed specifically to dialogue with the spaces and collection of the Milanese museum will be on display for the occasion.

Akashi's works explore universal concepts such as time and space, the impermanence of the natural world, the transience of the human body and entropy. Drawn to materials such as glass, wax and bronze, Akashi models forms that **evoke natural elements** such as plants, flowers, shells or parts of her body, capturing physiological changes and the passage of time. These forms, often fragile and precious, are juxtaposed in poetic compositions that, while familiar, are also alienating. His works invite us to explore existential questions, encouraging us to view the world from a broader, less anthropocentric perspective.

For *Furla Series*, Akashi conceived a project centered on the concept of “reflection,” which unfolds through a visionary journey within the museum's permanent collection. This project creates a dynamic dialogue with the architecture and masterpieces present, establishing a synergy that enriches the visitor's visual and conceptual experience.



Image: *Converging Figures*, 2019, detail. Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery. Photo by Paris Tavitian.

LISSON GALLERY

*ARTnews*

26 August 2024

# ARTnews

## Three LA Museums Plan New Initiative to Share Mohn Collection Focused on Local Artists

BY **MAXIMILIANO DURÓN**

August 26, 2024 6:30pm



Luchita Hurtado, *Untitled*, 1971.

©THE ESTATE OF LUCHITA HURTADO/COURTESY THE ESTATE OF LUCHITA HURTADO AND HAUSER & WIRTH

One of the country's most important collections of art from Southern California will now have a new home—or, technically, three of them.

A trio Los Angeles museums—the **Hammer Museum**, the **Los Angeles County Museum of Art**, and the Museum of Contemporary Art—have agreed to jointly acquire some 350 works from LA collectors Jarl and Pamela Mohn.

The Mohns, who have appeared on the *ARTnews* **Top 200 Collectors list** several times over the past decade, are known for collecting in two distinct areas: historical works from the Minimalist and Light and Space movements and emerging LA-based artists. This gift, officially called the Mohn Art Collective: Hammer, LACMA, MOCA (MAC3), will draw from their holdings in the latter category, which they began nearly two decades ago. Typically, the Mohns have displayed these works in their New York residence.

In a statement, **Jarl Mohn** said, “Pamela and I are ecstatic to make this gift, not only to make these outstanding artworks by Los Angeles artists available to the public, but to do it in such a way as to foster collaboration among three of the city's most extraordinary museums in the spirit of this tight-knit community of artists.”

Some of the pieces in the gift have technically already entered the institutions' collections, but the lion's share of them, some 260 works in total, are new gifts. Artists from this portion of the donation include Kelly Akashi, Kathryn Andrews, Carmen Argote, Awol Erizku, Diedrick Brackens, Carolina Caycedo, Gisela Colon, Matt Connors, Beatriz Cortez, Karon Davis, Aria Dean, rafa esparza, Nikita Gale, Samara Golden, Todd Gray, Mark Grotjahn, Lauren Halsey, EJ Hill, Arthur Jafa, Deana Lawson, Rodney McMillian, Gala Porras-Kim, Amanda Ross-Ho, Paul Mpagi Sepuya, and Brenna Youngblood.



Analia Saban: *Draped Marble (St. Laurant, Bianco di Carrara)*, 2015.  
COURTESY TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY

The Mohns have already donated 80 works to the Hammer after each edition of its now closely watched Made in L.A. biennial. Those works, including pieces by Analia Saban, Zackary Drucker, Meleko Mokgosi, Liz Glynn, Anna Sew Hoy, Wu Tsang, Tala Madani, Huguette Caland, Daniel Joseph Martinez, and Luchita Hurtado, will now be shared by the three institutions.

The final 16 works that make up the MAC3 gift are drawn from the 2023 edition of Made in L.A. and were selected by the three museums together; Guadalupe Rosales, Teresa Baker, Luis Bermudez, Jackie Amézquita, Roksana Pirouzman, and Pippa Garner are among the artists whose work were acquired.

“The Mohns’ extraordinary gift is a profound commitment to the artists of today and a promise to future generations,” MOCA director Johanna Burton said in a statement. “The collection reflects the dynamic creativity and innovation that define our city. And this collaboration allows us to come together to continue supporting and showcasing the incredible talent within our local arts scene, ensuring that our artists’ voices are heard and that their works are seen around the world.”

These 356 works, however, are just a start. Each year, the three museums’ curatorial teams will choose works to add to the MAC3 collection; during Made in L.A. years, those additions will come directly from works included in the biennial. The Mohns have also established an endowment to fund these future purchases, as well as the ongoing care and storage of the MAC3 collection.



Guadalupe Rosales: *smok'd*, 2022.

PHOTO PAUL SALVESON/COURTESY THE ARTIST AND COMMONWEALTH AND COUNCIL

The Mohns are major philanthropists in Los Angeles, having given millions to various local arts institutions. In 2012, when the Hammer launched Made in L.A., the couple endowed the Mohn Award, a \$100,000 prize that goes to one participating artist. Additionally, they also gave the funds for two additional prizes, the Career Achievement Award and the Public Recognition Award, which come with \$25,000 each. (Mohn had initially proposed a \$100,000 prize to go to an LA artist as a shared initiative between these three institutions as well as the Getty Museum.)

“Jarl and Pamela Mohn’s passion and generosity for the artists of Los Angeles is simply unparalleled,” Hammer director Ann Philbin said in a statement. “Their support helped to launch the Made in L.A. biennial 12 years ago and continues to sustain the exhibition well into the future. They doubled down on that support when they created the Mohn Awards, which provides L.A. artists with a level of notoriety—and financial resources—to further their careers on a global scale.”

Over the past two years, they have also announced major gifts to two of the city’s smaller but influential art spaces. The Brick (formerly LAXART) received \$1 million in 2022 to aid in its \$5 million campaign **to relocate to a new home**, which just reopened. In May, the Mohns gave \$4.4 million, through their family trust, to help the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles secure the purchase of its \$5 million building in downtown LA.



Arthur Jafa: *Bloods II*, 2020.

©ARTHUR JAJA/COURTESY THE ARTIST AND GLADSTONE GALLERY

Over the past two decades, joint acquisitions by museums have been on the rise. The Whitney Museum, Tate, and the Centre Pompidou's purchase of a Bill Viola video is one of the earliest examples of such an acquisition partnership. Institutions like the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art have shared a William Kentridge installation since 2013, while SFMOMA and the Dallas Museum of Art agreed to split the ownership of a Walter De Maria sculpture in 2016.

In 2021, the Dia Art Foundation in New York and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston struck a deal to share Sam Gilliam's *Double Merge* (1968), one of the artist's most well-known examples of his unstretched abstract canvases. "It seems like a great way forward for all our institutions," Dia's director Jessica Morgan **told ARTnews** at the time.



Diedrick Brackens: *nuclear lovers*, 2020.

COURTESY THE ARTIST; JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY, NEW YORK; AND VARIOUS SMALL FIRES LOS ANGELES / TEXAS / SEOUL

Each of the three LA institutions has entered into such acquisitions before, though never on such a large scale. LACMA and MOCA went in on Chris Burden's *Hell Gate* in 2007; the Hammer and MOCA did so with Hito Steyerl's *Factory of the Sun* in 2017; and LACMA and the Hammer's agreed to share the print archives of LA publisher Edition Jacob Samuel in 2010. Additionally, in 2020, LACMA **jointly purchased** 21 prints by late Chicana photographer Laura Aguilar and a four-panel adobe painting by rafa esparza with another nearby institution, the Vincent Price Art Museum in Monterey Park, California.

"Only in L.A., a city that champions experimentation and out-of-the-box thinking, can such an unprecedented joint acquisition be made," LACMA director Michael Govan said in a statement. "Jarl and Pamela's generous gift to local museums is a testament to the wonderful friendship and collaboration our three institutions have fostered over the decades, and, more importantly, highlights L.A.'s stature as a vital hub of artistic creativity."

# LISSON GALLERY

*Flash Art*  
26 August 2024

## Flash Art

Things End, People Forget by Jay Ezra Nayssan



David Byrd, *Arising*, 1974. Detail. Oil on canvas. 48,3 x 61 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Matthew Brown Gallery, Los Angeles.

In 2022, I was invited by *Frieze*'s director, Christine Messineo, to curate a series of artists' projects, installations, performances, and talks along the coastal west side in response to the fair's move west to the Santa Monica Municipal Airport in February 2023. I took this opportunity to revisit some of my favorite texts on the City of Los Angeles at large, including *Mike Davis's City of Quartz* (1990), *Norman Klein's The History of Forgetting* (1997), *Chris Kraus's Video Green* (2004), *Peter Plagens's The Ecology of Evil* (1972), and *Jean Stein's West of Eden* (2016). I was inspired by Klein's "anti-tours" in which, as a professor at CalArts, he would take his students to vacant sites because Los Angeles tends to erase memory: "a movie studio, a warehouse, whatever." Klein explains that the buildings had been demolished because of LA's penchant for self-erasure. Thom Andersen got it all wrong — LA doesn't *play itself*; it forgets itself.

Over the last two decades, a robust number of these spaces, organizations, and initiatives have appeared and disappeared across Los Angeles. They have been responsible for the bold and vibrant “scene” that has caught the attention (once again) of the national and international, commercial, and institutional art communities. Admittedly, the recent loss of several spaces and projects over the past decade, such as the Chalet Hollywood, The Underground Museum, Paradise Garage, 356 Mission, and the Paramount Ranch art fair, has left an indelible mark on Los Angeles. But what remains is a vast and rigorous collection of spaces, organizations, and initiatives that have proven not only resilient to outside influences, market forces, and commercial trends but also diligent, agile, and exacting in their programming of visual art, literature, music, poetry, dance, and performance.

Long-established Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), founded in 1978, has paved the way for a number of small- and medium-sized nonprofit organizations by fostering artists who innovate, explore, and take risks. This year, LAXART reopens as The Brick under the directorship of Hamza Walker, debuting their new space with the group exhibition *Life On Earth: Art & Ecofeminism*. Similarly, the Los Angeles Nomadic Division (LAND), founded in 2009, has been committed to presenting contemporary art in LA’s public sphere, producing museum-quality public exhibitions and programming across Los Angeles. Since becoming director in 2019, Laura Hyatt has focused on uplifting artists whose community-based practices foster healing and deepen a shared sense of belonging and connection. On the summer solstice, LAND will work with artist Lita Albuquerque to restage her work *Malibu Line* (1978), a forty-foot-long pigment work embedded into the ground that traces the artist’s matrilineal lineage from Tunisia to Los Angeles. It will take place on the site of Albuquerque’s home, which burned down during the Woolsey Fire in 2018.

Beyond visual art, organizations such as REDCAT, Monday Evening Concerts, and dublab continue their groundbreaking and dynamic programming in historical and contemporary dance, music, theater, sound, and multimedia performance. This August, REDCAT continues its yearly New Original Works (NOW) Festival, which has been premiering work by a vibrant community of performance artists for twenty-one years. One of dublab’s many ongoing initiatives includes LOOKOUT FM, a West Coast terrestrial radio home for the broadcast of transmission art: experimental audio composition, modern serials, data sonification, radio plays, multi-day compositions, and radio-centric performances. The station functions as an exhibition space where radio art is presented without regard to constraints of time, structure, or commercial consideration. For the upcoming thirtieth anniversary of the Villa Aurora’s artist-residency program, dublab has installed an antenna on the roof of the historic home, where live broadcasts of the resident artists’ works will be made on LOOKOUT FM throughout the year.

Founded in 1939 by Peter Yates and Frances Mullen on the roof of their Rudolf Schindler-designed Silverlake home, Monday Evening Concerts is the world’s longest-running series devoted to contemporary music. Originally envisioned as a forum for displaced European emigres such as Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg during World War II, MEC has continued to make musical history for the last eight decades with early-career performances by such notables as Michael Tilson Thomas and Steve Reich. Since 2015, director Jonathan Hepfer has continued MEC’s legacy, pushing the organization into new frontiers with performances of David Hammons’s *Global Fax Festival* (2000), Wu Tsang’s *Moby Dick* (2022), and Julius Eastman’s *[Masculine] / Feminine* (1974). The upcoming season promises to be just as groundbreaking, with large-scale collaborations planned with Davóne Tines, Chaya Czernowin, Steven Schick, and Sarah Hennies, to name a few.

More than ever, and in spite of the caravan of large, “blue-chip” galleries arriving from the East Coast and overseas (and which I have conveniently left out of this feature), alternative modes of exhibition making and sharing abound throughout the city, largely run and managed by artists themselves who feel it’s necessary for the sake of their creativity. Following a collaboration with local nonprofit gallery JOAN for a project on David Hammons, artist David Horvitz will mount an exhibition of Arte Povera and Italian art from the 1970s in his garden-*cum*-project space later this year. Co-designed with landscape architect TERREMOTO, Horvitz’s garden is located next door to his studio and is “a kind of zen stone garden from the detritus of the city.” The garden was constructed using piles of concrete, rubble, and rebar from various sites around Los Angeles, including demolished buildings of LACMA, Ballona Creek, and the South Central Farm. It contains more than one hundred native plants and trees, including oaks, sycamores, manzanitas, wildflowers, roses, a juniper, and two plumerias from his grandmother’s house down the street.

Next year, the Mountain School of Arts, founded by artists Piero Golia and Eric Wesley in 2005, will complete its second decade. The school operates nomadically, is free of charge, and has no permanent faculty. The curriculum, what some have described as a perpetual field trip, has brought students from all over the world into dialogue with many local and international cultural leaders, thinkers, and artists such as Tacita Dean, Dan Graham, Simone Forti, Pierre Huyghe, Richard Jackson, Paul McCarthy, Henry Taylor, and Jeff Wall, offering students a critical, ingrained, and comprehensive experience of the Los Angeles arts community. After years of exhibiting architectural prototypes at institutions nationwide, from the Hammer to The Met, Lauren Halsey will realize her much-anticipated monument in South Central Los Angeles. Presented by the aforementioned Los Angeles Nomadic Division, the semi-permanent structure will be activated with a mosaic of programming, from dance competitions to after-school tutoring for local young adults, through Halsey's organization Summaeverythang Community Center.

In April and May, artists Dena Yago and Amy Yao carried out two projects at artist John Garcia's The Bunker, a subterranean observation shelter dating from World War II located on public government land in the Santa Monica Mountains. Visitors to the shows had to meet Garcia at the trailhead in Malibu and hike about a mile to visit the bunker, where artists like Lucy Bull, Sam Lipp, and Tschabalala Self have previously installed their works over the last several years. Over in Beachwood Canyon, mysterious artist Nora Berman recently opened Hissssss, a gallery of small works encased in her three pet snakes' tanks. Artist Joseph Geagan and his partner John Tuite, who started Gaylord Apartments in 2021 out of their high-rise Koreatown home, will open a show with Marie Angeletti this summer. The trio of artists Ramsey Alderson, Connor Camburn, and Emma Sims have recently opened P.E.O.P.L.E. with an exhibition by Pascal Siskin that is opening this summer.

At a time when it seems as though several commercial entities, international institutions, and media outlets have (once again) turned their attention to Los Angeles, as if it was some novel discovery, or even worse, a (fleeting) trend, it seems necessary to remind both the local and international art community of the way artwork *works* in this city. Most of the spaces, organizations, and initiatives mentioned above exist nomadically, whereas some don't even occupy any physical space. Those with some semblance of permanence or physical presence often operate out of personal and domestic spaces like bedrooms, gardens, and garages. More often than not, we are addressing and redefining notions of space, land, and our environment, working with not only *who's* already here (a lot of artists) but with *what's* already here (a lot of a lot). This is absolutely obvious, yet utterly unattainable and unmanageable, even by the most deep-pocketed, well-staffed museums, galleries, and art fairs. Rather than operate within the visual-commodity culture dominated by extraction economics, these spaces and artists work genuinely and inventively to *invest* in themselves, each other, and the city.

There is no guidebook to survival here, but what we do know is to not do what they're doing. Perhaps the way to survive, however, is to embrace and practice impermanence, which is, after all, the most "LA" quality of LA. Things end, people forget. Los Angeles doesn't need to teach that to the "art world" — the "art world" is already really good at that.

**Jay Ezra Nayssan** is an Iranian American born and raised in Los Angeles. He is a curator, writer, and founder of Del Vaz Projects, an arts nonprofit based in Los Angeles. Beginning in 2014 as an alternative exhibition space in Nayssan's home, Del Vaz Projects has expanded over the last decade into a curatorial platform, independent press, and artist production fund. As a curatorial platform, the organization provides opportunities to artists and the public not only out of Nayssan's home but also off-site in culturally significant sites such as Beyond Baroque, Villa Aurora, and the Thomas Mann House. In addition to the programming at Del Vaz Projects, Nayssan has organized exhibitions and programming for *Frieze*, Marc Selwyn Fine Art, and Hauser & Wirth.

In February 2025, Del Vaz Projects will open the exhibition "Earthshaker," featuring works by Ana Mendieta, Derek Jarman, and P. Staff. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue featuring contributions by writers Eva Hayward, McKenzie Wark, and Maxi Wallenhorst.

FOCUS ON LOS ANGELES is a project conceived by Flash Art.  
Photographer and Creative Direction: Alessio Avventuroso  
Editor-in-Chief: Gea Politi  
Production: Flash Art Studios  
Location: Los Angeles, USA

All images taken during Frieze Los Angeles, February 2024, by Avventuroso for Flash Art.

The project, titled "Against the Edge," brought the work of five different artists to five historical and culturally significant sites along the coast of Los Angeles. Contrary to what one might expect, the projects did not exclusively feature Los Angeles artists, nor did the artists need to have a relationship with the site in question. Taking a cue from Jean Stein's skill for recording oral history and joshing with its factual faultiness, I used these imago-sites as an opportunity to mix history, urban myth, anecdote, and personal memory to create a story of not only what's gone but what's left.

The projects included *Heirloom* (2022), an installation by Kelly Akashi at the home of exiled German writer Lion Feuchtwanger and his wife Marta, who arrived in Los Angeles and purchased the abandoned Villa Aurora in 1941, around the same time Akashi's family was forcibly relocated from Los Angeles and incarcerated at Poston, Arizona, following Executive Order 9066, which ordered the mandatory deportation of Japanese Americans from all over the country into internment camps. The work of Moroccan-born French artist Nicola L., "Nous Voulons Entendre" (1975), was installed at the home of other exiled Germans, Nobel Prize-winning author Thomas Mann and his family. Nicola's sensual functional sculptures, wall-sized paintings, and protest banners she called "Penetrables" rubbed against the hard and sterile lines of Mann's modernist home, where he would compose his anti-war messages; "softness as resistance."

Three video works (one of them being *So To Speak*, 2023) by Tony Cokes were installed throughout the library, foyer, and theater of Beyond Baroque, a nexus for artists and writers such as Wallace Berman, Jack Kerouac, Dennis Cooper, Simone Forti, Allen Ginsberg, Mike Kelley, and Patti Smith. Cokes's video *B4 & After the Studio Pt. 1* (2019), installed in the Beyond Baroque theater, drew uncanny similarities between the fate of Manhattan's East Village and Soho and LA's Venice Beach by examining the intertwined relationship between art, gentrification, and real estate speculation. For one night only, Jonathan Hepfer, creative director of Monday Evening Concerts (MEC), and a cast of notable figures from the worlds of visual art and music performed John Cage's *Speech* (1955) at the Merry-Go-Round building at the Santa Monica Pier, which we called "Action 3." This was in homage to Walter Hopps's curatorial coup titled "Action" (1955), in which he wrapped the Santa Monica Pier's carousel in a tarp and suspended paintings by Sonia Gechtoff, Craig Kauffman, Jay DeFeo, Richard Diebenkorn, and other California abstract artists while performing his own renditions of John Cage works.

||

At Del Vaz Projects, the nonprofit art organization I run out of my home in Santa Monica, we exhibited the work of late Los Angeles artist Julie Becker from her series "(W)hole" (1999), the first time the work was shown in Los Angeles since 2009. The installation consisted of a foam replica of a portion of the sidewalk of Sunset Blvd adjacent to the artist's home and studio; photo and drawing studies of her imagined Tiki bar-cum-space shuttle; and a video in which she hoists a miniature bank building into a hole in her studio floor. Perhaps no other visual artist has been better able to capture the fragility and precarity of life in Los Angeles than Julie Becker.

Unlike Norman Klein's "anti-tours," the sites that hosted "Against the Edge" still exist and are very much active. Their stories haven't necessarily been erased or forgotten; they just haven't really been shared. That's what provided me with the perfect theater to propose some new and imagined relationships between site and artist, history and fiction. The project took its name from an interview between artists Fritz Haeg and Doug Aitken in Aitken's book *The Idea of the West* (2011). In a collection of one thousand interviews, Aitken asked friends and colleagues, "What is your idea of the West?" Fritz responded: "To the American psyche: west equals movement, more space, resources, freedom... For those of us that do occupy this slim line along the Pacific Coast, we have a unique sense of limits. For everyone else, there's a vague sense for everyone else: no matter how much of a mess we're making here, there's more *that way*. But for us living against the edge, it's like. No, this is it. There's nowhere else to go."

A city against the edge, on the precipice, constantly forgetting, erasing, and reconstructing itself.

Perhaps the most dynamic, energized, and groundbreaking programming in Los Angeles today occurs in its alternative spaces, nonprofit organizations, and artist-led initiatives, which have understood how to navigate the fractured and inconstant nature of this city's psyche and harness it to support artists, experimental practices, and nontraditional forms of experience, viewership, and community engagement. To do this, and to do it with care, requires us to be extremely resourceful, exist deeply in the present, and operate on an intensely intimate scale.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Patch*

15 August 2024

**Patch**

## 'A Garden of Promise And Dissent' Breaks New Ground At The Aldrich

'A Garden of Promise and Dissent' is the debut exhibition unveiling The Aldrich's newly renovated campus and Sculpture Garden



Rich Kirby, Patch Staff

Posted Thu, Aug 15, 2024 at 3:48 pm ET



"A Garden of Promise and Dissent" is the debut exhibition unveiling The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum's newly renovated campus and Sculpture Garden, and also spanning the Museum's interior galleries. (The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum)

Aug. 15, 2024

*A Garden of Promise and Dissent* is the debut exhibition unveiling The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum's newly renovated campus and Sculpture Garden, and also spanning the Museum's interior galleries. This intergenerational group show features twenty-one artists exploring the animation of the "garden" as a site of personal expression (poetics) and collective action (praxis). Traditionally, gardens are symbols of beauty and contemplation, but they also serve as stages for environmental stewardship, civic engagement, and rebellion. *A Garden of Promise and Dissent* will be on view in The Aldrich's galleries from October 28, 2024 to March 16, 2025 and on the Museum's grounds from November 17, 2024 to November 2025.

The artists participating in the exhibition are Terry Adkins (1953–2014), Kelly Akashi\* (b. 1983), Teresa Baker (b. 1985), Alina Bliumis (b. 1972), Carolina Caycedo (b. 1978), Carl Cheng (b. 1942), Rachelle Dang\* (b. 1977), Anders Hamilton\* (b. 1992), Maren Hassinger\* (b. 1947), Hugh Hayden (b. 1983), Athena LaTocha\* (b. 1969), Gracelee Lawrence\* (b. 1989), Cathy Lu (b. 1984), Jill Magid (b. 1973), Suchitra Mattai (b. 1973), Mary Mattingly\* (b. 1978), Brandon Ndife\* (b. 1991), Max Hooper Schneider (b. 1982), Meg Webster\* (b. 1944), Faith Wilding (b. 1943), and Rachel Youn\* (b. 1994).

\*Artists who will have works that span the grounds from the Museum's façade to the rear Sculpture Garden.

Gardens offer solace, community, nutrition, and well-being; they provide safe spaces for dissent and empowerment; and they contribute to climate change mitigation, revitalization, and widen access to land use—supporting localized food resources and alternative medicine. Symbolizing growth, regeneration, and resilience, gardens reflect devotion and hope, yet can also reveal shared aspirations and failures, whether meticulously structured or anarchic.

Historically, gardens have embodied earthly edens across cultures—from medieval monastic and Japanese Zen gardens to Islamic designs—while also signifying capital and power. The artists in this exhibition radicalize the garden as a concept to confront the complexities of our relationship with nature on our increasingly fragile planet. Works spanning the galleries and grounds challenge the dichotomy between natural and built environments, integrating into the landscape or mimicking nature to provoke change, defy perceptions, or emphasize their essential interdependence by unsettling the gulf that exists between the two.

The exhibition will explore elements of a garden, from the commodification of vegetation and radical care practices to human interaction with nature, food, and technology, and cultural artifacts. Taken as a whole, *A Garden of Promise and Dissent* invites viewers to consider future gardens as alternative models for imaginative discourse and protest.

*InsideArt*  
1 August, 2024

## INSIDEART

### Arte e impresa, verso una nuova narrazione *Art and business: walking towards a new narrative*

Un'alleanza sempre più solida: l'esempio positivo di aziende italiane che hanno saputo stare al passo con i tempi, sostenendo la cultura e dando voce agli artisti

*An increasingly solid alliance: the positive example of Italian companies that have been able to keep up with the times, supporting culture and giving voice to artists*

Ludovico Pratini, Marco Bassan / founders Spazio Evema

**I**n un'epoca dove le istituzioni pubbliche hanno rinunciato a essere cinghia di trasmissione tra l'arte contemporanea e la società, poiché si dedicano principalmente alla conservazione di frammenti della storia dell'arte o alla promozione di artisti già affermati, in dialogo con il sistema, le aziende assumono sempre più il ruolo di mecenati d'arte. Una volta abbandonata la logica dominante della classica sponsorship, tipica degli anni Novanta e Duemila, ed entrate in un'epoca nella quale devono inevitabilmente mettersi in dialogo sia con il pubblico che con gli stakeholders, oggi l'arte sta diventando un nuovo strumento di branding

**I**n an era where public institutions have given up their role as a link between contemporary art and society as they are mainly dedicated to the preservation of fragments of art history or to the promotion of already-established artists, it is companies that are increasingly taking on the role of art patrons. Once the dominant logic of classic sponsorship typical of the 1990s and 2000s was abandoned and an era in which they must inevitably relate to both the public and their stakeholders, art is now becoming a new tool for branding and corporate positioning. Indeed, for those companies that understand that it is





Camilla Alberti, *The Adoubement. Ceremony for Extremophiles Bodies*, 2022, detail, Energie Contemporaine, photo Omar Golli

e di posizionamento aziendale. Per quelle imprese che capiscono che non è più sufficiente veicolare la propria narrazione aziendale in maniera monodimensionale, ma occorre cominciare a interpretare la complessità di quest'epoca, l'arte diventa un potente alleato. In questo scenario, gli artisti riacquistano una centralità e una responsabilità sociale poco percepita all'interno del sistema dell'arte, attraverso un dialogo alla pari con le aziende che lasciano loro una libertà di espressione e di critica fino a pochi anni fa inimmaginabile all'interno di un contesto corporate. In questa panoramica ci siamo concentrati su alcune best practices italiane, legate ad aziende che si sono alleate con l'arte contemporanea per affrontare alcune delle principali sfide industriali del presente, escludendo invece aziende che gemmano fondazioni o corporate collection o fanno sponsorship a grandi eventi. Questa ricognizione parte dalle residenze d'artista, spesso scelte per la loro capacità di sviluppare senso d'appartenenza aziendale e innovazione, grazie allo stretto contatto tra l'artista, gli operai e i ricercatori. Il caso più significativo è quello di Elica, che da oltre 17 anni porta avanti un progetto annuale per mettere in contatto artisti e dipendenti, al fine di realizzare opere ambientali che entrino a far parte del patrimonio aziendale. Altre realtà simili hanno recentemente sperimentato questo formato: la ditta tessile Ugolini con Valentina Furian, il Cementificio Colacem con Alice Paltrinieri in occasione della XXVII Biennale di Gubbio, la Gioiarnadi S.p.A. che ha invitato in occasione del proprio centenario dieci artisti nella sua sede, e tutte le aziende coinvolte recentemente nel progetto *Ultravioletto* come Venetian Gold, Plastopiave, Nord Resine, Masutti e Tecnodinamica. In altri contesti l'artista entra in azienda per modificarne gli ambienti di lavoro, soprattutto in situazioni industriali dove l'arte può rappresentare uno squarcio temporale, durante gli intensi orari di lavoro di industrie pesanti. Alcuni esempi recenti sono la Malagoli Aldebrando che accoglie un neon di Rytz Monet, Bolton che ospita un murale di Giulia Mangoni nel refettorio aziendale, Irinox con un lavoro in fabbrica di Matteo Attruia e la galleria in ufficio realizzata da Leonardo Assicurazioni con UNA Gallery. I premi di impresa continuano a essere uno strumento estremamente efficace per comunicare il proprio posizionamento attraverso l'arte contemporanea: primo fra tutti il premio MAXXI Bvlgari Prize - che si è conquistato negli anni la fama di Turner Prize italiano - e poi a seguire il premio Furla, il premio Cairo, Carapelli for Art, Artisti per Frescobaldi e Ala Art Prize, tra gli altri. Interessante è il Max Mara Prize for Women, per la collaborazione espositiva con la Whitechapel Gallery di Londra e il premio Arte Circolare, nato nel 2021 e promosso dal consorzio CONAI, che vede coinvolti ogni anno dieci giovani artisti italiani, chiamati a interpretare il tema dell'economia circolare; si tratta della prima iniziativa a livello internazionale dedicata esclusivamente ai temi della sostenibilità. Altri gruppi industriali invece si affidano allo sguardo di curatori per costruire progetti di mostre che possano indagare in maniera non convenzionale il proprio mondo. Tra questi citiamo Ghella, che per il secondo anno ha presentato al MAXXI *Nuove avventure sotterranee*, una grande mostra fotografica dove cinque artisti interpretano i cantieri e i paesaggi della ditta di costruzione, mentre ROAD, il distretto di innovazione di ENI che ospita la scuola per l'imprenditoria *ENI Joule*, ha da poco inaugurato *Energie Contemporanee*, una mostra negli spazi del Gazometro di Roma, in cui 17 artisti contemporanei emergenti indagano il futuro dell'energia, anticipando

no longer enough to convey their corporate narrative in a one-dimensional way but rather that they must begin to interpret the complexity of the modern times, art becomes a powerful ally. In this scenario, artists regain a central role and a kind of social responsibility - little perceived within the art system - through their relationship with companies that allow them a freedom of expression and criticism that was unimaginable within a corporate context just a few years ago. In this overview we have focused on some Italian companies that have used contemporary art to address some of the main industrial challenges of the present, leaving out companies that have set up foundations and corporate collections or that sponsor major events. This survey starts from artist residences, often chosen for their ability to develop a sense of corporate belonging and innovation thanks to the close contact between the artist, the workers, and the researchers. The most significant case is that of ELICA, which for over 17 years has carried out an annual project to put artists and employees in touch with each other in order to create installations that become part of the company's heritage. Other companies have recently experimented with this format: Ugolini textile company with Valentina Furian; Colacem cement factory with Alice Paltrinieri on the occasion of the 27th Gubbio Biennale Exhibition; Gioiarnadi S.p.A., which invited ten artists to its headquarters on the occasion of its 100-year-anniversary; and all the companies recently involved in the Ultravioletto project such as Venetian Gold, Plastopiave, Nord Resine, Masutti, and Tecnodinamica. Other times artists enter the company to modify its offices and work environments, especially in industrial contexts where art can represent a temporal gap during the intense working hours. Some recent examples are Malagoli Aldebrando, which hosts a neon piece by Rytz Monet; Bolton, which hosts a mural by Giulia Mangoni in the company canteen; Irinox, with a piece by Matteo Attruia in the workshop; and the office art gallery created by Leonardo Assicurazioni with UNA Gallery. Awards also continue to be an extremely effective tool to communicate one's positioning through contemporary art: first of all, the MAXXI Bvlgari Prize - which has earned itself a reputation as the Italian version of the Turner Prize - and then the Furla Prize, the Cairo Award, Carapelli for Art, Artists per Frescobaldi, and the Ala Art Prize, just to mention a few. Particularly interesting are the Max Mara Prize for Women for the exhibition collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery in London as well as the Circular Art Award, born in 2021 and promoted by CONAI, which involves ten young Italian artists every year called upon to interpret the theme of the circular economy; this is the first international initiative dedicated exclusively to sustainability issues. On the other hand, other industrial groups rely on curators to build exhibition projects that can investigate their world in an unconventional way. Among these we should point the spotlight on Ghella, which has presented a new edition of *Nuove avventure sotterranee*, a large photographic exhibition where five artists interpret the construction sites and landscapes of the construction company, on display at the MAXXI; and ROAD, the ENI innovation district that hosts the ENI Joule school for entrepreneurship, which has recently inaugurated *Energie Contemporanee*, an exhibition at the Gazometro in Rome where 17 emerging contemporary artists investigate the future of energy, anticipating the challenges that humanity will have to face in the



le sfide che l'umanità dovrà affrontare nel prossimo futuro. Altra tipologia di collaborazione tra arte e industria è legata alle aziende che invitano attivamente gli artisti all'interno della loro produzione industriale, come Mutina, Ily e Alcantara, che promuovono collaborazioni con grandi artisti internazionali, come Maurizio Cattelan o Francesco Clemente, realizzando attraverso i loro prodotti progetti d'artista. Samsung invece, con la sua Art Room, mette a disposizione degli artisti tecnologie innovative per produrre opere che entrano a far parte di una gallery virtuale. Due menzioni internazionali vanno a Hyundai e Swatch: la prima ha preso il posto d'onore all'interno della Turbine Hall della Tate Modern e ha promosso la realizzazione di opere legate a una nuova produzione automobilistica commissionate ad artisti emergenti, tra le quali l'italiana Camilla Alberti. Swatch invece è partner storico della Biennale, e continua a coinvolgere artisti internazionali nella realizzazione di orologi d'artista, concentrandosi sulle ultime generazioni. Oltre ai grandi progetti rivolti alla comunicazione esterna è interessante menzionare quelle aziende che investono nel potere trasformativo dell'arte per far crescere internamente i propri dipendenti o clienti. La divisione salute di AXA ha dato vita al *Contemporary World Observatory*, un'analisi dei principali megatrend del futuro attraverso il potere anticipatorio degli artisti del presente. Per concludere grande risalto va dato alle istituzioni come Fondazione CDP, che stanno adoperandosi per attivare il tessuto industriale delle aziende partecipate di Cassa Depositi e Prestiti a contaminarsi con l'arte contemporanea. È il caso del progetto *He Love Art*, un primo capitolo di una strategia che ha coinvolto multinazionali del calibro di Webuild, Terni, Snam, ENI, Ansaldo, TIM, Open Fiber e CDP Immobiliare nella progettazione di opere d'arte che hanno raccontato l'industria italiana all'estero, e nel futuro mira a intensificare lo scambio di know-how tra artisti e aziende attraverso progetti capillari sul territorio italiano.

*near future. Yet another type of collaboration between art and industry is that of companies – like Mutina, Ily, and Alcantara – that actively invite artists into their industrial production and promote collaborations with major international artists such as Maurizio Cattelan or Francesco Clemente, creating artwork through their products. Then there's Samsung which, with its Art Room, provides artists with innovative technology to produce pieces that become part of a virtual gallery. Two international mentions go to Hyundai and Swatch: the former sits at the place of honor inside the Turbine Hall of the Tate Modern, promoting the creation of pieces related to a new automotive production commissioned to emerging artists including Camilla Alberti, while the latter is a historic partner of the Biennale Exhibition and continues to involve international artists in the creation of its special range of watches, focusing on the latest generations. In addition to the large projects aimed at external communication, it is interesting to mention those companies that invest in the transformative power of art to help their employees or customers grow and evolve. The health division of AXA has created the Contemporary World Observatory, an analysis of the main megatrends of the future through the anticipatory power of the artists of the present. Finally, great emphasis must be given to institutions such as the CDP Foundation, which are working to encourage companies owned by Cassa Depositi e Prestiti to open themselves up to contemporary art. One such push is the He Love Art project, the first chapter of a strategy that includes multinationals like Webuild, Terni, Snam, ENI, Ansaldo, TIM, Open Fiber, and CDP Immobiliare in the design of works of art that tell the story of the Italian industry abroad. In the future, it also aims to intensify the exchange of know-how between artist and companies through widespread projects in Italy.*

*Amica*

1 April, 2024

# AMICA

AMICA È.  
**MODA** DI GABRIELLA BENSA

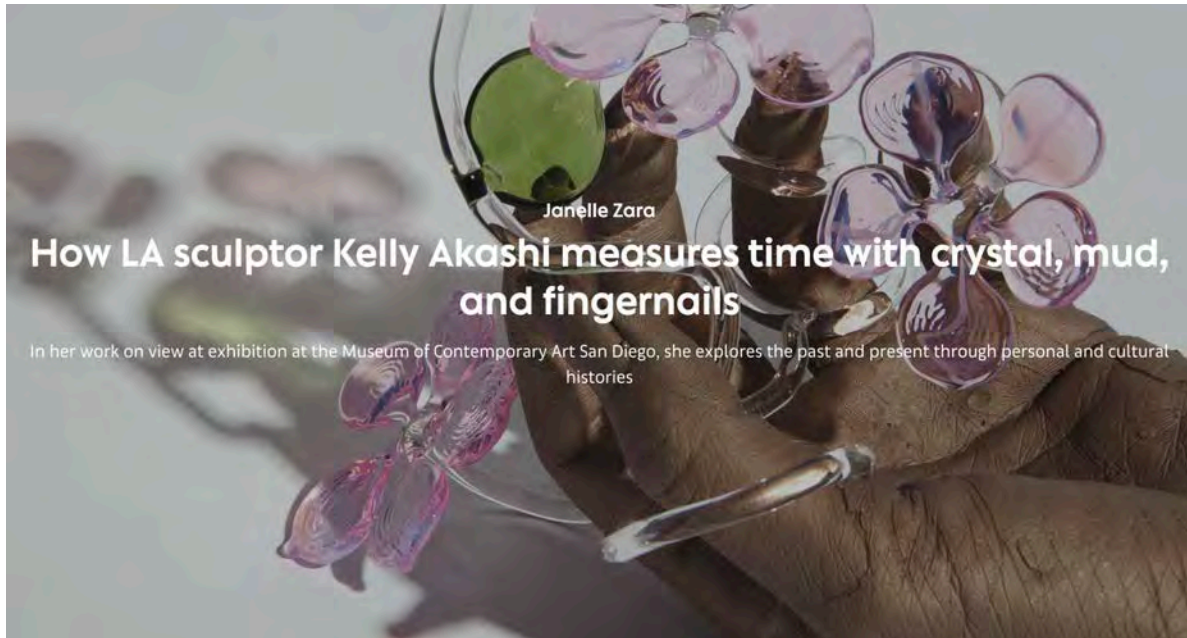


## *ASPETTANDO KELLY*

Con il suo approccio concettuale e la sua abilità manuale, a settembre Kelly Akashi, artista americana di origini giapponesi, sarà protagonista della sesta edizione di *Furla series*, progetto promosso da Fondazione Furla con la Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano. In mostra, anche produzioni pensate ad hoc.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Art Basel*  
25 September 2023



Janëlle Zara

## How LA sculptor Kelly Akashi measures time with crystal, mud, and fingernails

In her work on view at exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, she explores the past and present through personal and cultural histories

'Our existence is precarious,' the artist **Kelly Akashi** tells me in her suburban Los Angeles studio. She is not speaking mystically or sentimentally but matter-of-factly: In the grand scheme of geological time, she explains, a human lifespan equates to the blink of an eye.

Akashi's sculpture is fundamentally about different modes of time- and record-keeping and the ways that different materials (primarily cast metals and hand-blown glass, but recently also carved stone, rammed earth, and rocks) store memories on a biological, geological, and molecular level. These themes resound in 'Formations', a traveling survey exhibition of her work from the last decade that originated at the San José Museum of Art and is on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego until February 18, 2024.



Kelly Akashi. Photograph by Paul Salveson.

# LISSON GALLERY

Throughout the exhibition, Akashi's hands appear in various materials and poses; cast in bronze and laid out on deceptively pillowy cushions of blown glass, or cast in lead crystal and poised gingerly on smooth but otherwise ordinary stones. In *Alternating Currents* (2020–21), bronze versions of her hands, with fingernails of dramatically different lengths and with various cracks and fissures, loosely clutch a double helix of colorless, vine-like glass. Since 2015, the artist has been casting her hands as they age, imperfections and all, 'sort of like a mini timeline,' she says. Fingernails, like hair, she adds, 'are a material the body produces that offer a measurement of time.'



Kelly Akashi, *Being as a Thing*, 2019.

Akashi was born in Los Angeles in 1983. As an undergraduate student at Otis College of Art and Design, she specialized in photography, a medium that had seemingly lost its relevance by the time she graduated in 2006. 'Everyone was so excited about the potential of digital that there was an assumption that darkrooms would be dead within 10 years,' the artist explains. She briefly dabbled in painting as a potential alternative, but it was sculpture that presented many of the joys she initially found in the darkroom. The artist found that making molds and subsequently sculptures of living things – not only her hands, but also the occasional plant or frilly cluster of oyster mushrooms – was like taking a photograph, freezing a fleeting moment in the subject's life. Plus, she adds, 'mold-making is very much like making a negative into a print,' with a similarly tactile procedural choreography.



Left: Kelly Akashi. Photograph by Marten Elder. Right: Kelly Akashi, *Eat Me*, 2016.

# LISSON GALLERY

In the 18 years since, Akashi has come to think of her artistic trajectory as a spiral rather than a straight line, tethered in orbit around the themes of lineage, memory, and accumulation, but perpetually expanding in terms of forms and techniques. She regularly brings new materials into her practice, engaging in a dialogue with each new medium; a meditation on what images the material might elicit in her mind or what forms its inherent structural properties are best suited for.

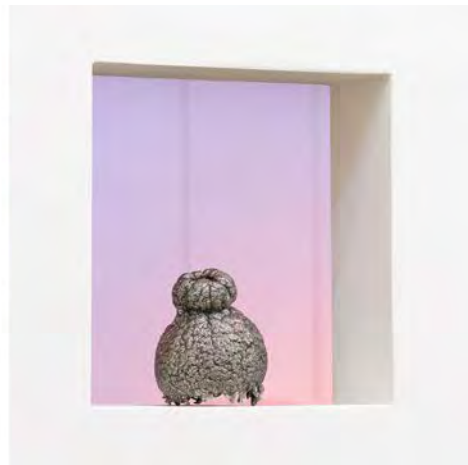
'Forcing materials to have a premeditated form leaves more room for accidents, chaos, and entropy to enter the work,' she says. 'My authorship is contingent on the material's ability to do its own thing, and my allowing it to speak its own language.'

The softness of alabaster, for example, carves nicely into doughy amorphous shapes, and for *Triple Helix* (2020), she blew clear, crystal quartz into the shape of a bell because of the material's 'amazing resonance.' 'It's so structurally stable that when you strike it,' she explains, 'it vibrates at a consistent rate, which is why it's used in timekeeping devices.' The bell, suspended over an accompanying table supporting eight small-scale, voluptuous glass vessels that represent a family of women, presents lineage as a reverberation – a temporal echo that resounds through generations.



Kelly Akashi, *Glass Study (Image 5)*, 2014.

A 2021 project included in 'Formations' stems from Akashi's visits to the former Colorado River Relocation Center in Poston, Arizona, where her late Japanese American father had been interned as a child during World War II. He never spoke with her about his ordeal directly, and so she went in search of 'evidence of the past.' The first result was 'Witness', a series of gelatin silver photographs of trees standing stoically in the arid brush and bronze casts of their fallen branches. 'I thought of the trees as witnesses from my father's generation still standing during my generation,' she says. Akashi also took rocks from the site to create her 'Inheritance' series: Her hands, cast in translucent green and red lead crystal and outfitted in costume jewelry she inherited from her grandmother, rest gently on the stones. The 'Witness' and 'Inheritance' works are exhibited on large rectangular pedestals of rammed earth, where clearly delineated layers of sediment embody the passage of time.



Left: Kelly Akashi, *Transmission (detail)*, 2019. Right: Kelly Akashi, *Be Me (Japanese California Citrus)*, 2016. Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.

# LISSON GALLERY

Despite the personal and familial resonance of these sculptures, Akashi carries no sentimental attachment to the objects themselves, even as they're acquired by collectors. 'I can't have these conversations without relinquishing some control and allowing them to go out in the world,' she says. 'So I let go, and let other people share them.' The work retains its memory, regardless of where it might land.



Kelly Akashi, *Inheritance*, 2021. Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.

'Kelly Akashi: Formations' is on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego until February 18, 2024.

Janelle Zara is a freelance writer specializing in art and architecture. She is the author of *Masters at Work: Becoming an Architect* (2019). She lives in Los Angeles.

Published on September 26, 2023.

Caption for full-bleed image : Kelly Akashi, *Cultivator (Hanami)* (detail), 2021.

# LISSON GALLERY

*The San Diego Union Tribune*  
24 September 2023

VISUAL ART

## Sculptor delves into memory, geology and family history in 'Formations' at MCASD



Contemporary sculptor Kelly Akashi photographed with her work. Akashi is featured in the solo show, "Formations," at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla through Feb. 18. (Courtesy of MCASD)

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

For any serious visual artist, there comes a time when they begin to consider their legacy — what they're leaving behind.

Speaking with Kelly Akashi from her Los Angeles studio, one gets the sense that this concept is something she's always considered. After all, her first artistic love was Nan Goldin, the iconic photographer best known for documentations of the LGBTQ community, the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, and, more recently, her outspoken criticisms of art institutions accepting funds from Big Pharma donors.

“I really came to photography as a teenager,” says Akashi, recalling the time, more than two decades ago, when she first saw Goldin's work in *Spin* magazine. “I really fell in love with the practice and wanted to become a photographer. I was very much interested in the documentary style of work.”

In essence and in practice, this is precisely what Akashi has become: a documentarian.

Sure, her work checks other style-based boxes: sculpture, conceptualism, mixed-media, craft and even nature-based art. These are all concise and convenient terms that have been used to describe her work. But when walking through “Formations,” the recently opened exhibition of Akashi's work at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla, this idea of documentation becomes even more palpable.

# LISSON GALLERY



“Being as a Thing,” a hand-blown glass and hair sculpture featured in “Kelly Akashi: Formations” at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla through Feb. 18. (Courtesy of MCASD)

Yes, the exhibition is a retrospective in spirit, collecting over 10 years worth of the artist’s work in one place, and works as a brilliant showcase of one of the most prodigious contemporary artists working today.

Yet, with its fluid mix of sculptures, installations, photographic works and mixed-media installations, “Formations” also works as a visceral, almost conceptual record of the artist’s physical body, explorative psyche and varied artistic proclivities.

“In terms of the impressing, I always wanted to do it in different ways,” Akashi says, referring to her sculptural casting process. “To show and communicate it to people in different ways. Using different methods to look at this much more difficult conversation that’s hard to pin down. Not only how materials or things impact each other, but how we as people are impressed upon and how we impress upon other people in the world. I tend to think of all this stuff as a metaphor for that.”

The “stuff” in question could both refer to her body of subsequent works, but also to Akashi herself.

# LISSON GALLERY



“Cultivator (Hanami),” a 2021 bronze cast of the artist’s hand with hand-blown glass flowers, featured in “Kelly Akashi: Formations” at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla through Feb. 18. (Courtesy of MCASD)

A good portion of the work she produces, and perhaps what she’s best known, are her hypnotic sculptural casts of her hands. Cast over a decade in varying materials — such as bronze (“Life Forms [Poston Pines]”), stainless steel (“Swell”), and, most recently, lead crystal (“Inheritance”) — the hands work not only as a document to her evolution as an artist, but one that is also showcasing the ways in which her body changes over time.

“There was always some kind of geologic aspect to the candles,” says Akashi, referring to early experiments with visual art in which she made candles and wax casts to later be used to create bronze pieces. “A kind of geology did kind of build up. This history built up through the wax strippings, and then that expanded to my body. My initial entry point to that was that I was thinking about my fingernails and how they’re like these little geologic formations on the body. I wanted to capture that but when I did my first cast in wax, I realized that cast was a record of my mortal body, chronicling my body as it ages.”

# LISSON GALLERY



Artist Kelly Akashi works with a gas flame in her Los Angeles art studio. (Courtesy of MCASD)

Akashi references her early days attending Otis College of Art & Design in Los Angeles to study anachronistic methods of photography, such as slide film processing.

“For me, bronze casting became another version of that,” says the L.A. native. “When I was making the candles, melting them and then casting them in bronze, it was very interesting to me because while the original object is no longer there, the result could be something like a relic of that original thing.”

Akashi goes on to explain that it was these initial hand casts that made her want to explore other “non-human representations of existence.” For example, she began working with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles, specifically looking into extinct species that had shells. With these pieces, she says she wanted to artistically explore the “evidence of life that is left behind.”

With this, Akashi says the work began to naturally take on a much more existential, almost fatalistic outlook, almost as if the art itself was subtly asking her to examine her own life and that of her ancestors. Some of the new work in “Formations” examines her family’s history and, more directly, her father’s incarceration in a Japanese detention camp during World War II.

# LISSON GALLERY

“I began to think of my own life in different ways, my family’s life,” Akashi says.

“Things that are inherited and that lead me to begin works that revolved around my father’s time in this internment camp. It was always this visible sediment in my family’s history that I knew existed, but was never unpacked.”



“Inheritance,” a 2021 stone from Poston, lead crystal hand and grandmother’s ring by Kelly Akashi for the exhibit “Kelly Akashi: Formations” at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. (Courtesy of Kelly Akashi)

These new works include new casts, one of which includes a brooch from her grandmother, as well as a series of photographic works (“Witness”) from a “pilgrimage” she took to the location of the former Poston Internment Camp in Yuma County, Az. Akashi refers to these pieces as her own “psychological work,” extensions of her own mental health journey and how the traumas within her own family may have affected her. In working with stones, for example, it offered a convenient parallel to what she describes as the “sediment” that had built up when it came to her family’s history.

Akashi’s father passed away when she was 21 years old and she had to learn about his experience in the camp from other relatives.

“These things do persist in different ways,” said Akashi. “It’s about exploring not knowing about this thing that affected you greatly and how you work to incorporate that.”

# LISSON GALLERY



"Eat Me," a 2016 multimedia sculpture featured in "Kelly Akashi: Formations" at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla through Feb. 18. (Courtesy of MCASD)

# LISSON GALLERY

It's certainly easy to view these pieces, along with the past works showcased within "Formations," as the beginning of an important personal and artistic legacy.

Having already exhibited in a number of notable galleries and institutions ("Formations" is a traveling exhibition, first shown at the San Jose Museum of Art and then the Frye Art Museum in Seattle), Akashi sees her trajectory not as a straight line, but rather similar to the prehistoric shells she's drawn inspiration from in the past; circular, concentric and a startling precise documentation of life itself.

"It's amazing to see all the work together," Akashi says. "The thing I reflect on a lot, at least in terms of whether it feels validating or not, is that I've always allowed myself the space to not have a practice that has a single trajectory to it. Whether it's the materials or the finished piece, it's meandered a bit as it grows. So what's been validating to me is to see the work come together over that number of years. I see the works that came before, but it's just an early instance of me desiring to make these connections within my work."

## 'Kelly Akashi: Formations'

**When:** On display through February 18. Hours, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursdays-Sundays

**Where:** Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, 700 Prospect St., La Jolla

**Phone:** (858) 454-3541

**Price:** Free-\$25.

**Online:** [mcasd.org](http://mcasd.org)

Combs is a freelance writer.

*Cultured*

19 September 2023

ART

## How Nan Goldin Kicked Off Artist Kelly Akashi's Strange and Wonderful Career

This fall, the artist's far-reaching practice will be on view in two West Coast exhibitions.

WORDS

**Catherine G. Wagley**

PHOTOGRAPHY

**Brad Torchia**

September 19, 2023



When the world shut down, Kelly Akashi took up stone carving. It was the spring of 2020, and the meditative, outdoor process felt well-suited to an era of isolation. Now, slabs of calcite, sandstone, and marble rest on sawhorses outside her studio, a converted garage in the unincorporated city of Altadena, just northeast of Los Angeles.

Inside, there is more evidence of Akashi's omnivorous appetite for craft traditions, which she uses to make art that manages to be both precise and indeterminate. A floor-to-ceiling shelving unit occupying a full wall of Akashi's studio holds an array of colorful, pristine glass and bronze objects—snake-like tubes, yawning blossoms, and several expressive replicas of her own hand, a motif in [her work](#).

# LISSON GALLERY



Many of these pieces will never appear in exhibitions. “I try to be careful not to make any of my studies too precious,” explains Akashi. Some of them end up archived in labeled boxes, a record of the experiments that go on to inform completed artworks. “I always say the best time to make work is when I don’t have a bunch of deadlines,” she notes. “It’s really nice when there’s just no goal.”

In a moment when crushing economic pressures in most international art centers force artists to become results-driven, Akashi’s insistence upon open-endedness feels especially optimistic, as it underscores art’s ability to unfurl less direct, but still potent, modes of meaning-making. Her circuitous way of working defines “Formations,” the first major exhibition of Akashi’s work, which opens at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, in September. (It originated at the San José Museum of Art in September 2022 and then traveled to the Frye Art Museum in Seattle.)

# LISSON GALLERY



# LISSON GALLERY

The show spans the past decade of Akashi's career and treats her materials—photography, wax, bronze, glass, earth, fossils, medicine, plant matter—as part of a constellation. In fact, the exhibition feels so coherent that it could be mistaken for a single installation. The golden rope Akashi has used for years drapes over walls, anchoring delicate-looking bronze body parts and glass orbs. Casts of flora bisect slabs of earth, or grow out of dirt mounds on the floor. Human hair extends from glass bowls. "It's not this linear, dry narrative," says Akashi. "It's meandering. But meandering paths create a lot of volume, and loop back on themselves."

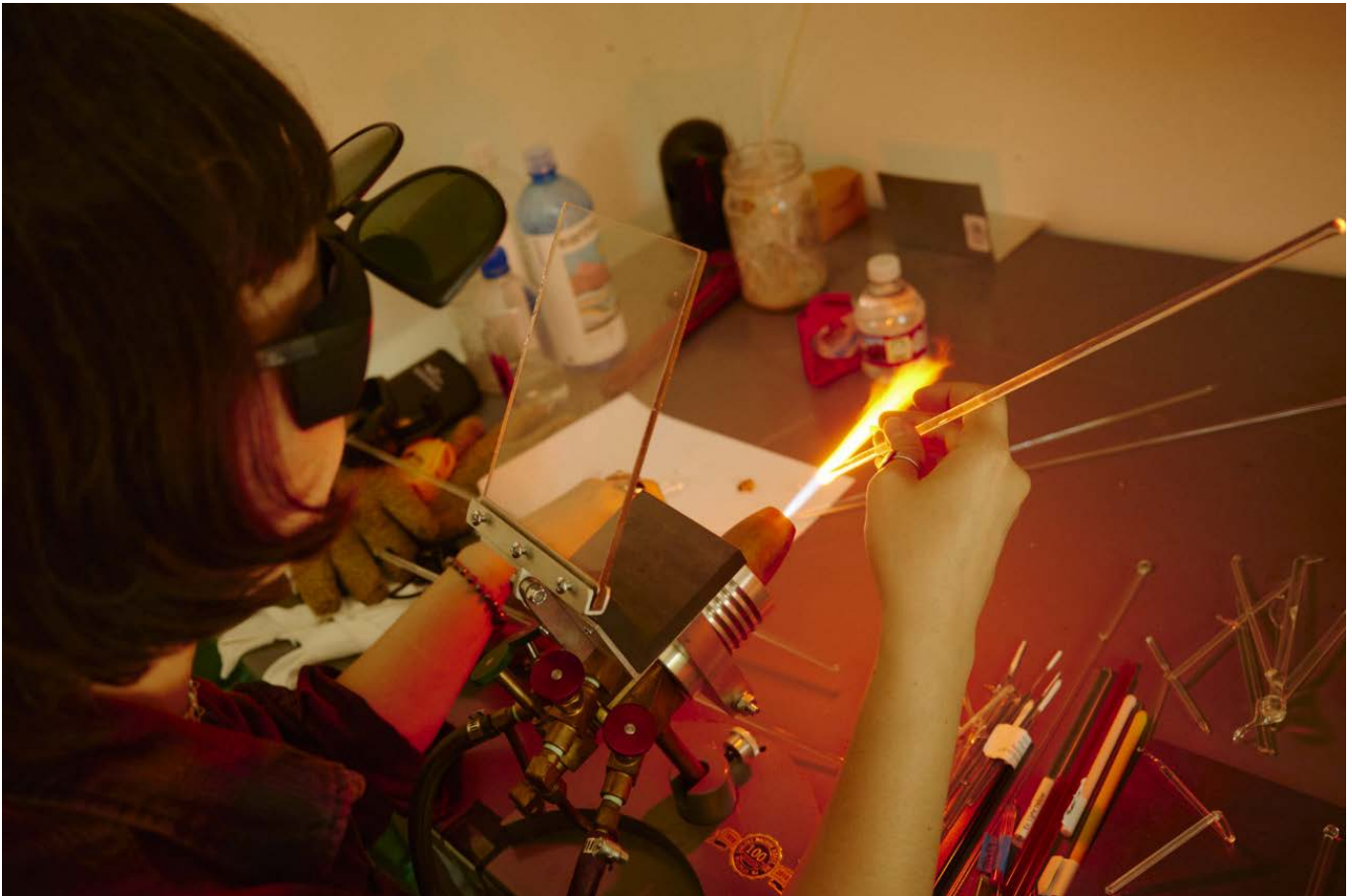
Akashi's family has deep roots in Los Angeles: Her grandfather ran a business in Little Tokyo, and her father grew up in Boyle Heights before the Japanese American family was forcibly interned during World War II. She grew up around the paintings her mother made in college, though when asked why she became an artist, Akashi often cites a 1996 copy of *Spin* magazine that featured photographs by Nan Goldin. "There is an insistence on stories and relationships," Akashi explained of Goldin's appeal in a 2022 interview with fellow artist Julien Nguyen, featured in the "Formations" exhibition catalog.



# LISSON GALLERY

This pivotal encounter with contemporary photography led her to study the subject at Otis College of Art and Design, where she graduated in 2006. But, as she told Nguyen, “At some point, I started realizing maybe it was never really about photography.” Like Goldin, Akashi was interested in collecting, archiving, and connection-making; photography was just one way to pursue these urges.

By the time she received an MFA from the University of Southern California in 2014, Akashi had begun working with wax, bronze, and glass. The wax came first—during her first semester of graduate school, when her mother taught her candle making—and led her to make wax replicas of her own hands. A friend who worked at a foundry offered to cast them in bronze free of charge. “It’s a terrible thing he did for me,” she jokes, “because now I’m hooked.”



Glass came next, and over the years, Akashi has taken multiple trips to Pilchuck, an epicenter of the American studio glass movement. She spent the summer of 2022 learning glass-blowing techniques in Murano, Italy, a hub for glassmaking since the 1200s. For Akashi, these ways of working are all extensions of the same impulse: to explore time and our inability to control it.

The sculpture *Pincer*, 2017, included in “Formations,” consists of a pearl-hued, shell-like basin with small glass balls interrupted by disembodied bronze fingers at the bottom. This work helped Akashi begin to grapple with nonhuman perspectives and inspired her to research fossils. She has always used her own figure—through casts of body parts and materials collected from her life—as a threshold. With *Pincer*, she started to think about how to “situate the human timeline on these other timelines that are just as valid.”

# LISSON GALLERY



In 2020, she traveled to Poston, Arizona, to visit the remains of the camp where her father had been interned in the 1940s. She knew that internees planted trees during their time there. "They're these last witnesses of that time," she says. "That's why I wanted to go there initially, to see if there were any trees." There were, and she made bronze casts of the branches she collected. In "Formations," these sculptures lie across large pedestals of rammed dirt, intended to make viewers feel like they are immersed in the earth.

Over the past year, Akashi has become increasingly interested in outer space. So when Shamim M. Momin, director of curatorial affairs at the University of Washington's [Henry Art Gallery](#) in Seattle, asked if she wanted to collaborate with any department at the university for an exhibition, "Encounters," opening the week after "Formations," Akashi suggested astronomy.

In collaboration with astrophysicist Tom Quinn, she has been working on a simulation that shows the merger of the Milky Way and Andromeda galaxies, which scientists predict will happen in approximately 4.5 billion years. In the simulation, the galaxies cross each other and then, propelled by gravitational forces, sling back and meld. "It's so romantic and horrifying at the same time," she says. "There's something about getting people to see things that aren't for us. They're just things happening in the universe."

*"Formations" will be on view from September 21, 2023 through February 18, 2024 at MCASD. "Encounters" will be on view from September 20, 2023 through May 5, 2024 at Henry Art Gallery in Seattle.*

LISSON GALLERY

*ArtAsiaPacific*  
3 July 2023

# New York: Kelly Akashi

BY JENNIFER S. LI

## **Kelly Akashi: Infinite Body**

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery



Installation view of **KELLY AKASHI**'s "Infinite Body," at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, 2023. Courtesy Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.

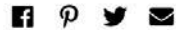
*Galerie Magazine*  
5 June 2023

## 7 Must-See Solo Gallery Shows Across the U.S. in June

From the centenary celebration of master photographer Richard Avedon at Gagosian in New York to Betty Woodman's crossover ceramics at David Kordansky Gallery in Los Angeles

BY PAUL LASTER

JUNE 5, 2023



Crossing the country from coast to coast to find the best gallery exhibitions in America each month, *Galerie* has selected our favorite one-person shows to add to your curated list of cultural outings at the start of summer. From the rediscovery of the under-known art of Cathy Josefowitz at Hauser & Wirth and the centenary celebration of master photographer Richard Avedon at Gagosian in New York to the transcendental paintings of emerging artist Zoe McGuire at Library Street Collective in Detroit and the crossover ceramics of the masterful Betty Woodman at David Kordansky Gallery in Los Angeles, these are the not-to-be-missed solo shows in June.



Kelly Akashi, *Cosmic Axis*, (2022-2023).

PHOTO: COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY

# LISSON GALLERY

## 2. Kelly Akashi at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

A Los Angeles-born and based multidisciplinary artist, Kelly Akashi is best known for her representational sculptures imaginatively created in bronze and glass. Exhibiting internationally even before completing her MFA at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles in 2014, Akashi creates intimate pieces that convey a poetic sensibility, a true love of materials and a willingness to take chances in a continuous embrace of experimentation.

Returning to the city for her second New York solo gallery show since her groundbreaking exhibition at the Sculpture Center in 2017, Akashi has beautifully constructed two types of presentations on Tanya Bonakdar's two floors. Featuring engaging tableaux of bronze body parts and organic glass forms with found and natural objects on packed-earth pedestals in a dramatically lit gallery on the ground level and a gorgeous crystal and bronze bust of a female nude and a glass orb sprouting delicate flowers on a rotating concrete base in the two rooms above, her exhibition—appropriately titled “Infinite Body”—is pure enchantment. *Through June 10*

*Art in America*  
17 May 2023

## Kelly Akashi on Creating “Sublimely Offensive” Sculptures and What Happens When Your Medium Becomes Obsolete

By *Emily Watlington*  May 17, 2023 11:20am



Kelly Akashi: *Vesica Piscis*, 2022-2023.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

# LISSON GALLERY

*Wads of chewing gum are stuck to the shiny, smooth surfaces of Kelly Akashi's elegant glass botanical sculptures, sharply undercutting their preciousness. These sculptures, like casts of various parts of the artist's body, are littered throughout her current show, "Infinite Body," on view at Tanya Bonakdar in New York through June 10.*

*Other sculptures—delicate and glassy, hearty and crystalline—sit on plinths that are made of dirt, yet perfectly rectangular. Upstairs, she's showing photographs made from an astrophysics archive. As art-science crossovers proliferate in the art world, Akashi's stunning work stands apart as it cultivates wonder, humility, and awe for the beauty and complexity of the natural world. Below, the Los Angeles-based artist discusses how curiosity and chaos inform her approach.*



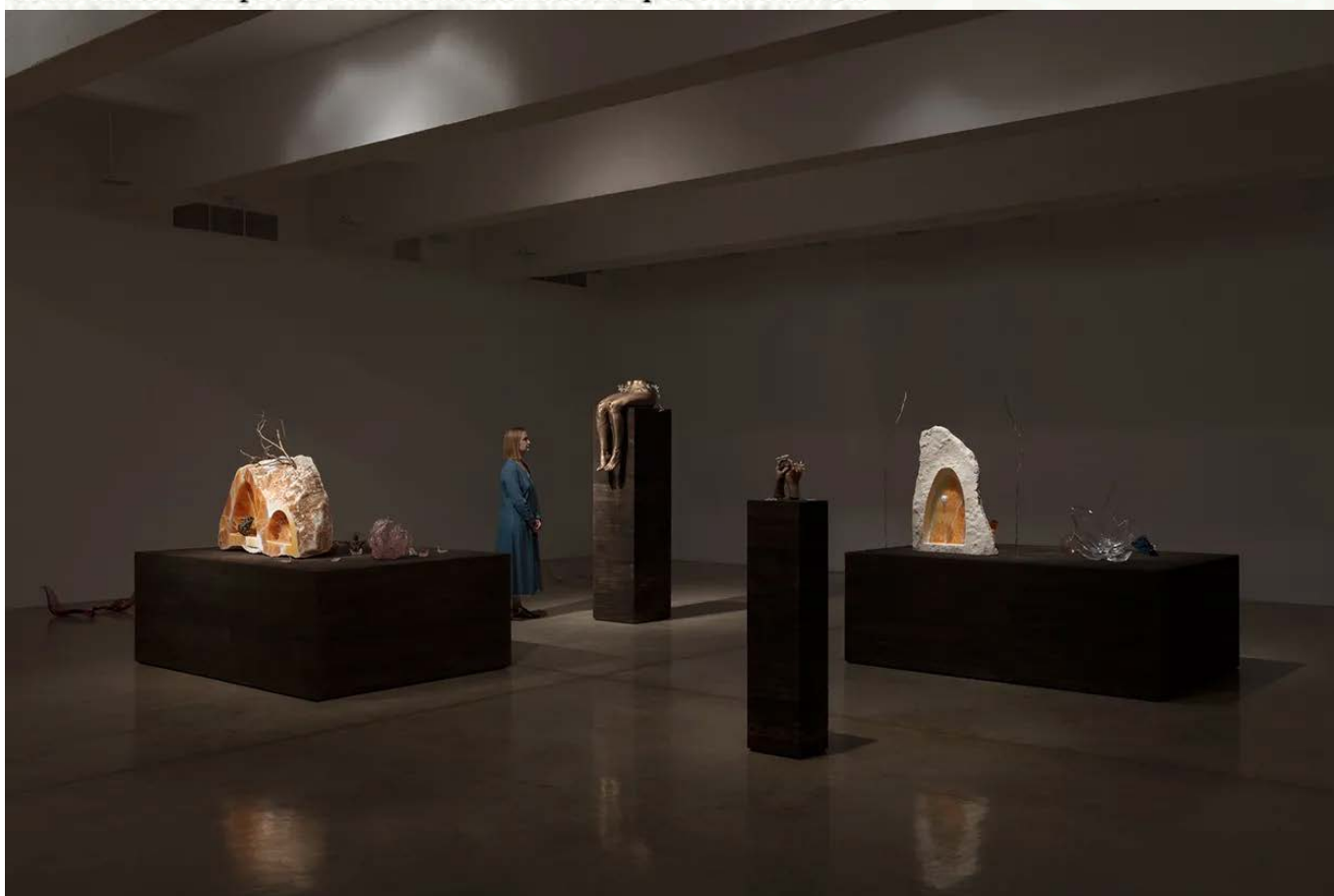
**Kelly Akashi: Seismogram, 2023.**

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

# LISSON GALLERY

A lot of people pointed to the wads of chewing gum and asked me, is that bronze? Is that glass? But no, it's just gum! I was drawn to the idea of mastication, and to having this unnamed material—saliva—as a crucial component. I tried to choose pieces of gum that had visible tooth marks, impressions of the body. Actually, I had a nice chat with [artist] Haim Steinbach, who also shows with the gallery, and he called the gum “sublimely offensive.” I thought, well that’s a nice summary; I think I’ll borrow the term.

The plinths are rammed earth, an ancient building technique where you use tools to stamp and pound dirt and Portland cement into layers. The cement works as a binder; without it, the dirt would just crumble once it dried. With this and other materials, I wanted to play with ideas of permanence. The gum might seem like the most temporary material in there, but in actuality, it might be the most archival material I’ve ever used. Some of these sculptures feature a broken friendship necklace as well.



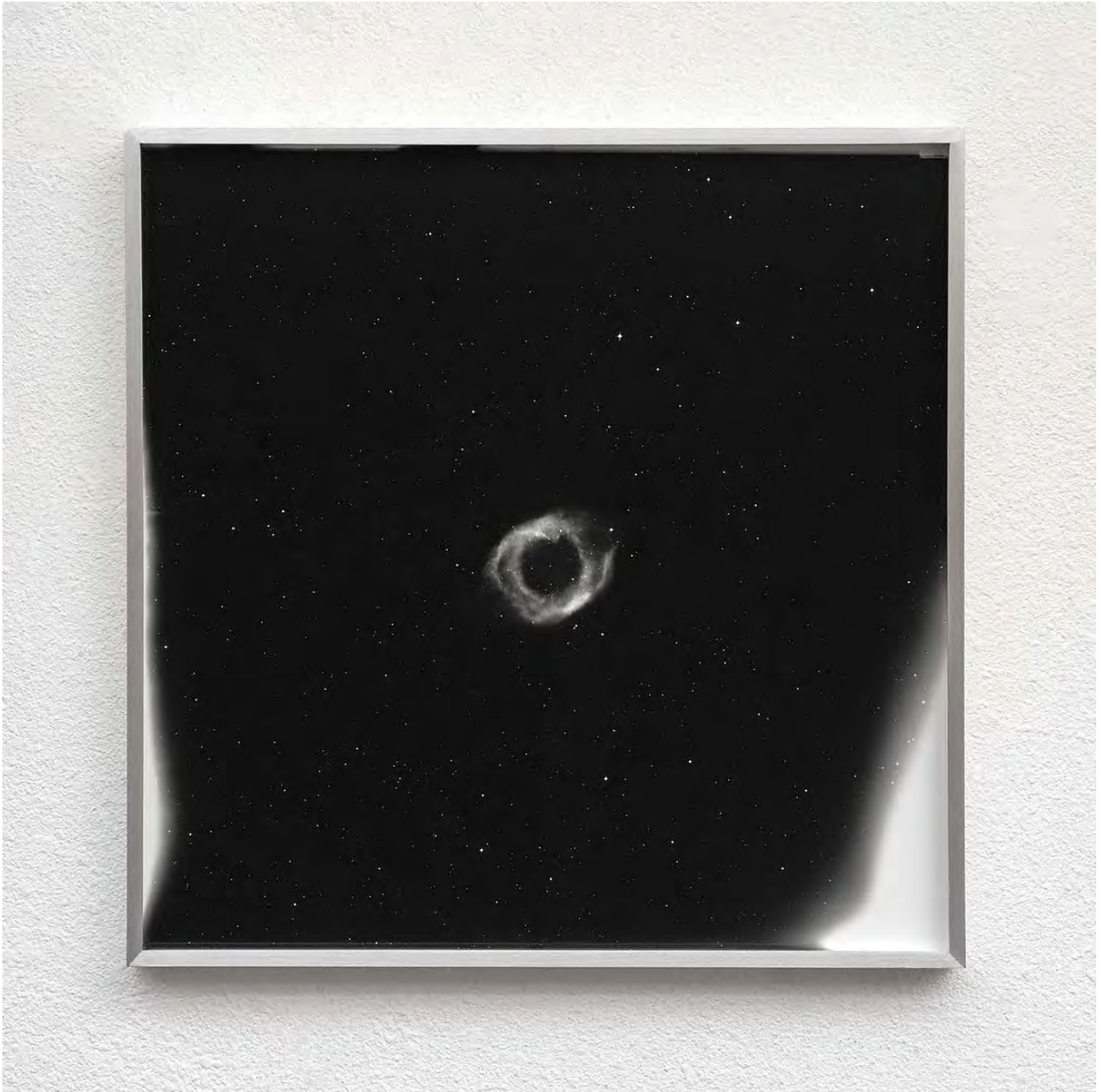
View of Kelly Akshi's 2023 exhibition “Infinite Body” at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

I was trained in photography, which got me thinking about time, and how to make fleeting moments permanent. But as my practice has grown, I’ve been playing with longer timescales and different ideas about permanence, trying to get outside of the human perceptions of duration. My first step into deep time involved working with fossils. Now, in this show, I’m working with images of different objects and phenomena in outer space—these exist on their own timescale, too.

In the galleries upstairs, I’m showing images taken by researchers using telescopes. I made contact prints of these from glass-plate negatives housed in an astronomy archive in Pasadena. They have 100 years of glass-plate negatives, and someone made copies that I was allowed to borrow and take into the dark room. When you make a contact print, you lay the negative directly on the paper; you don’t use the overhead enlarger.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi: *NGC 7293; Plate No. CD 2023*, 2023.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

I trained in the dark room, in analog, chemical-based photography. I graduated in 2006; and by now, that equipment barely exists any more. So I was forced to figure out what was important and meaningful to me about that way of working. I really liked the idea of creating such a direct image. And, some aspects of those processes are similar to making molds and casts.

In the archives, I was initially trying to find images of phenomena in outer space that I thought would mirror different kinds of interpersonal relationships on Earth. There's one photograph of a galaxy merger, which occurs when a larger galaxy latches onto a smaller galaxy and starts to pull it into one of its arms. It's also known as galaxy harassment.

# LISSON GALLERY



View of Kelly Akshi's 2023 exhibition "Infinite Body" at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES

I used to always say that I liked materials I could have conversations with, and I still believe in that. But more and more, I'm starting to think about my process as containing both control and chaos. I've realized more and more that I'm using control to figure out how to talk about that entropy with other people through sculpture. I'm not premeditating a form and then executing it precisely—there's always an engagement with chaos.

My work is often about encouraging people to look at things in broader, less human-centric perspectives. It's not about forgetting about humans entirely, but considering where humans fit in a much bigger system. I'm after that feeling of being humbled and experiencing wonder at the same time. I'm not trying to convince anybody of anything, but I do I have a certain sensibility, or a particular approach to existence, that I am trying to get across in the works.

—As told to Emily Watlington

LISSON GALLERY

*Artillery*

16 February 2023

# PICK OF THE WEEK: Kelly Akashi

Villa Aurora

by Lauren Guilford | Feb 16, 2023



Kelly Akashi, "Heirloom," 2022 (detail). Image courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

I crouch down to get a closer look at Kelly Akashi's blooming burial mound and ponder what it might feel like to photosynthesize. An undulating imprint of the artist's body bulges beneath the landscape like a bloated corpse. Seedlings sprout through a blanket of crocheted flowers cast in bronze, emerging from the crevices of its latticed shell, tendrils thrusting out and reaching toward the sun like tiny hungry green fingers. Akashi's installation at Villa Aurora, a 1920's Spanish style home turned artist residency, considers reciprocal cycles of birth and death, growth and decay, past and present. Built into the Villa's lush garden overlooking Pacific Palisades, the earth installation "Heirloom" is an emergent micro landscape, a flowering sarcophagus resembling an archeological dig of sorts, unearthing the past, which fertilizes the present, considering the relationship between the body and earth to imagine possibilities for a resurgence of life amidst the ruins. Akashi's budding gravesite reminds me of a mushroom burial suit in its consideration for life after death and the understanding that mutual flourishing is an endeavor that requires multispecies cooperation.

In a playful intervention with the architecture of the space, "Fractured Thigh Tooth" depicts an uncanny stone resembling a limp tooth or a severed torso resting languidly in the shallow pool of a fountain. There is something softly magical about this odd geological creature; it behaves like a fossilized soul that dwells in the water, creeping through the pipes, silently germinating the surrounding environment.

*Los Angeles Times*  
7 January 2023

## I've been sucked into a TikTok hole. Here are some faves

BY CAROLINA A. MIRANDA | COLUMNIST

JAN. 7, 2023 8 AM PT

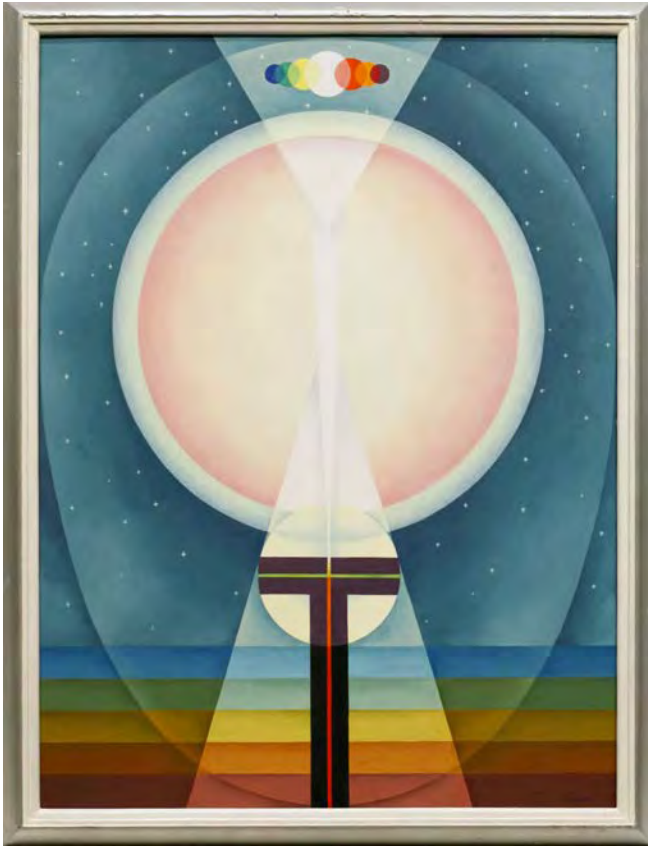


Welcome to 2023 and Kevin McCarthy Groundhog Week. I've been marking the anniversary of the Jan. 6 insurrection by listening to Rachel Maddow's absorbing podcast "[Ultra](#)," about a '40s-era white supremacist plot to overthrow the U.S. government that involved sitting members of Congress. ([L.A. figures prominently](#) — yikes! — including [a La Crescenta Park](#) that was the site of Nazi rallies.) I'm **Carolina A. Miranda**, arts and design columnist at the Los Angeles Times, and I'm here with all the tawdry history and essential arts news:

### In the galleries

At **LACMA**, a new exhibition puts a spotlight on the **Transcendental Painting Group**, a small group of New Mexico artists who, in the late 1930s, put [a distinctive spin on abstraction](#). "As its name suggests, transcendental painting was a spiritual pursuit — not religious, but spiritual," writes Times art critic **Christopher Knight**. "The aim was to register the unadorned soul on canvas, crafting a painting to provide a viewer the opportunity to experience communion with it."

# LISSON GALLERY



Emil Bisttram, "Oversoul," circa 1941. (Los Angeles County Museum of Art)

At **Deitch Los Angeles**, contributor **Chris Campion** reports on [a sprawling show](#) that gathers the work of **Rammellzee**, the prolific New York artist who shaped hip-hop and graffiti and ran with '80s-era stars such as **Jean-Michel Basquiat**. At the heart of the exhibition are 21 of his Garbage Gods pieces, elaborate outfits that the artist would don for performances.

Frequent Times contributor **Leah Ollman** recently spent some time with L.A. artist **Uta Barth**, the subject of a retrospective at the **Getty Museum**. Barth is part of a generation of artists who have helped [push the boundaries of photography](#) — into something that goes beyond representation, capturing shifts in mood, light and perception. The show, writes Ollman, "is an environment, an experience. Quiet, yet assertive, it demands stillness, contemplation, patience."

# LISSON GALLERY



Uta Barth in her Mar Vista studio. (Jay L. Clendenin / Los Angeles Times)

Artist **Kelly Akashi** is also the subject of [a museum retrospective](#) — at the **San Jose Museum of Art**. Contributor **Sharon Mizota** describes works that blend elements of the body with other natural or handmade objects: “Glass vessels may have breasts, sprout hair or dangle perilously from ropes. A bronze cast of her own hand presses lightly on a deflating glass globe or gingerly cradles a thorny thistle. Candles that suggest body parts or mutant slugs curl across a shelf and transform as they burn.”

Venice-based artist **William Tunberg** has spent a lifetime [perfecting wooden cubes](#) and other objects that employ **marquetry** in their production. The centuries-old technique assembles pieces of wood veneers, often tinted different colors, to create designs. “Old marquetry takes constant care,” he tells contributor **Yusra Farzan**. “It’s always cracking and moving around.”

*Los Angeles Times*  
30 December 2022

## How L.A. artist Kelly Akashi's work evokes tangled feelings about impermanence



Artist Kelly Akashi among her works inside her studio in Altadena. (Mariah Tauger / Los Angeles Times)

BY SHARON MIZOTA

DEC. 30, 2022 1:26 PM PT



Kelly Akashi gives new meaning to the phrase “learning by doing.” The Los Angeles-born artist was initially trained in photography but has since taken up candlemaking, glassblowing, bronze casting, and, most recently, stone carving. Her sculptures and photographs evoke tangled feelings about time, impermanence, bodies and our relationship to nature. For her, these lofty themes are rooted not in philosophy or religion, but in the process of making things — and the “conversations” with materials that result.

Akashi, 39, is enjoying her first museum retrospective at the [San Jose Museum of Art](#). (It’s on view through May 21, then travels to the Frye Museum in Seattle and the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego.) Dressed casually in a brown T-shirt and jeans with large holes in the knees, she is friendly and welcoming as she sits for a chat in her studio, a converted garage in a quiet Altadena neighborhood.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

On a large table to her right are two bright red sculptural pieces cast from her own body: an armless torso and an abdomen with legs dangling as if it has also just sat down for a break. Akashi's work often combines such casts with other natural or handmade objects, mixing "fine art" materials like marble and bronze with "craft" media like glass or candles. Glass vessels may have breasts, sprout hair or dangle perilously from ropes. A bronze cast of her own hand presses lightly on a deflating glass globe or gingerly cradles a thorny thistle. Candles that suggest body parts or mutant slugs curl across a shelf and transform as they burn.

Her photographs also employ unusual combinations of materials; for one series she used glass objects, arranged only by feel in total darkness, as "negatives" to create color images that resemble nebulae or blood cells.



Artist Kelly Akashi holds a work in progress. (Mariah Tauger / Los Angeles Times)

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Although her works might appear spontaneous, Akashi says they are the cumulative result of many carefully considered decisions. “I don’t tend to do a drawing of a finished form,” she says. “I do different steps in the process, and then I want to see what that leads to.” She admits that sometimes the result is failure, like a glass work that shatters or a piece that isn’t ready for prime time. “You don’t know if it’s going to end up in a show or like, in the garden,” she laughs.

Her eyes light up when she talks about her latest fascination: stone carving, which she picked up during the pandemic. She describes how carvers are often attuned to what the stone is telling them, but in addition, “I realized I was projecting things into the stone, and then it’s sort of showing me something in my own mind,” she says. “That’s the kind of material conversation that gets me really excited to continue with a medium.”

Moving outside to a concrete patio lined with tall bamboo, Akashi lifts, with some effort, a lump of dull, pinkish stone about the size of a large baby. “To be frank, there’s, you know, physical limitations in stone carving that I need help with because I don’t have the physical strength,” she says, “but I’m trying to bulk up so it doesn’t matter.”

# LISSON GALLERY



A finished work by Kelly Akashi. (Mariah Tauger / Los Angeles Times)

She notes that chiseling and sanding away at stone is a much slower process than working with other media. “You obviously can’t really add something back, so there’s a lot of looking that happens,” she says. “Looking at it from different perspectives, looking at different light, especially when you’re outside: different times of day, different times of year that will reveal things that you didn’t see last month or the year before.” She carries the pink baby over to a garden hose and sprays it with water. Suddenly the dull, matte rock transforms into a luminous, fleshy mass crisscrossed with thick, white, tendon-like bands.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

This respect for the process reflects her faith in craft traditions: strains of knowledge passed from one generation to the next through conversation, teaching and demonstration. She studied photography at Otis College of Art and Design and received her master of fine arts from USC but didn't learn other craft techniques until later, when her mother taught her to make candles. "That was the first time I really entered a way of making where I was consciously thinking about the fact that it was an oral history," she says. She also enrolled in a glassblowing class at Santa Monica College, where she noticed that visiting lecturers, unlike those in art school, always gave a demo after their talk. "There's things you learn from seeing somebody work that they could never explain," she says.

This kind of intergenerational transmission took on new significance in June 2020 — the early days of the pandemic — when Akashi began making trips to Poston, Ariz., where her Japanese American father was incarcerated with his family during World War II. "It was, like, a weird time to be in that region because everything was shut down, so it was very isolated," she says, but "that gave me the time to maybe have the slowness to work with these topics and these locations."

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

She began by photographing the mostly barren site, thinking about the passage of time on a larger scale. She was drawn to the trees around Poston, which were likely planted by Japanese American prisoners who were farmers and knew how to coax life from the desert. “For me, the site became maybe this connective tissue,” she says, “Geological time is so vast that when my father was there, and when I went to visit that site, it’s a very short amount of time, actually.”

Making this connection was especially important because Akashi’s grandparents and father didn’t speak much about their wartime experiences and had passed away before she began the project. She does have some family photographs taken in the camp, some of which include trees. She selected several of these to reproduce in the exhibition catalog alongside images shot during her visits. Tree branches and pine cones from Poston have also found their way into her sculptural work as bronze casts, witnesses to the incarceration and the decades that have unspooled since.

“I’ve been thinking a lot about mystery,” she says, “and how to keep space for that.” Perhaps personal histories left untold are not unlike conversations with stone that only reveal themselves over time. “The memories of people before us are kind of embedded in our tissue,” she says, adding that you might think “you have no access to those people, but maybe, somehow, they are a part of you or you are hearing them.”

# LISSON GALLERY

*Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles*  
13 December 2022

Contemporary  
Art Review

# .la

## (L.A. in Venice, Italy) Kelly Akashi at Barbati Gallery

December 13, 2022  
Text by Vanessa Holyoak



**Kelly Akashi, *Life Forms* (2022).**  
Handblown glass and lost-wax  
cast bronze, 18.25 × 9 × 6.75  
inches. Image courtesy of the  
artist and Barbati Gallery.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Last spring, Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi traveled to Venice, Italy, and its neighboring island Murano to produce a new body of work for *Life Forms*, the inaugural summer exhibition at Barbati Gallery. Situated inside the Palazzo Lezze, the space offered a cooling refuge in the heart of the baking Campo Santo Stefano. Murano is renowned for its innovative role in the history of European glassmaking, and Akashi worked with the local glassblowing community to produce some of the handblown glass sculptures included in her exhibition. The sinuous, meandering forms of these sculptures take advantage of glass's ability to molt, curl, and mimic the natural world, particularly the vibrant biodiversity of its flora.

Akashi's sculptures place human beings within the context of these nonhuman agents, implying a cohabiting and leveling of lifeforms—in the artist's work, hands and figures coexist with plant-inspired iconography, coalescing into a system of support and interdependence. This notion is paralleled by her partnerships with local artisans—within a community of glassblowers in which knowledge-sharing is a tenet, teamwork is indispensable, and collaboration is intrinsic. By following the medium of glass to one of its historic epicenters, Akashi's show works to undermine the idea of “mastery,” instead embracing humility and curiosity by seeking ongoing nourishment from process, material, and community.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Modeled after the Palazzo's floor, the slab of terrazzo included in *Floret* (all works 2022) aptly modeled Akashi's collaborative prowess. The hefty, elevated slab became a table that supported five handblown glass objects produced with the aid of master glassblower Matteo Tagliapietra. They incorporated techniques that are traditional to Murano glassblowing, such as murine and merletto, to create unique patterns based on plant cell specimens. In a nod to Venice's famed boating culture and canal-lined architecture, local boating rope tethered these spherical "florets" together into a cross-pollinated ecosystem of forms.

On the dimly-lit first floor, Akashi literally draped the human form with florals. The Palazzo's foyer was flanked on either side by wall-mounted bronze casts of the artist's hands—a motif she returns to frequently across her oeuvre—holding shapely glass bulbs like floating offerings (*Life Forms*). At the center of the space, a relief of a human body was draped in knit bronze, like a bespoke weighted blanket. Titled *Heirloom*, the bronze blanket was constructed from an intricate and layered process: Akashi cast the blanket using hand-crocheted flowers and "knit" the form together through meticulous welding. The piece recalls Ana Mendieta's *Siluetas* (1973–80), a series of earthworks in which the artist imprinted her body into various natural landscapes, their hollow silhouettes sometimes filled with fire, water, or flowers. In *Heirloom*, the human form is inseparable from its floral shroud—the bronze flowers contour the body, whose defining human characteristics are hidden from view.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

On the gallery's upper level, sparse scenes throughout each of the light-filled rooms further imagined human connections to the nonhuman world while also engaging in collaborations with the built environment. Tucked into a shelf in a small room was *April 2022 – Scarpa Graveyard; Murano (Matteo); Buona Pasqua Giudecca; Pearl*, a bronze cast of the artist's hand delicately holding materials culled from various areas in Venice: a cloth leaf, a green and black glass flower, a single white pearl, and pieces of rocks and broken-off edifices laid atop one another like geological strata. The bronze hand functions as a vessel for items gleaned from the city, creating an unassuming archive that inflects Akashi's experience with local cultural memory. Contrasting the built environment with the natural world thus highlights human intervention in nature on a city-wide scale.

## L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Glass is, in some ways, the ultimate teacher—we can bend it to our will, but the final results are beyond our control, mirroring our attempts to control nature. This illusion of control is becoming increasingly apparent in the context of the Anthropocene, in which hyperobjects of our creation, like climate change, exert forces that threaten to wreak havoc on both natural and manmade spaces. In this way, Akashi's recent works hinge on disparate yet interconnected forms of collaborative knowledge. Turning to tradition to participate in a communal lineage of craft, while also gleaning insight from the vast intelligence of the natural world, *Life Forms* took shape as a timely feat of collaboration. Thus, these collaborations—between humans and across species—are now all the more essential, as we belatedly recognize that ours is a shared world, shaped by the same forces, entwined by a collective fate.

# LISSON GALLERY



**Kelly Akashi, *Floret* (installation view) (2022). Terrazzo, handblown glass, carved and polished onyx, flame-worked borosilicate, carved and polished selenite, rope, and iron, 47.25 x 59 x 94.5 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Barbati Gallery.**



**Kelly Akashi, *Time Twine (Red Poppy)* (installation view) (2022). Handblown glass, sand-blasted stainless steel, and rope, 47.25 x 58 x 12.75 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Barbati Gallery.**

*ARTFIXdaily*  
16 November 2022

ArtfixDaily Artwire™



## San José Museum of Art Announces 41 New Acquisitions by 27 Artists

SAN JOSE, California / November 16, 2022

[ARTFIXdaily.com](https://artfixdaily.com)) The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) is pleased to announce the acquisition of 41 works by a diverse roster of 27 artists for its permanent collection. Acquired through purchase and gifts from generous donors from July 2021 to June 2022, SJMA continues to build momentum in its collecting strategy focusing on gender parity, cultural diversity, and artistic innovation, while proactively acquiring socially relevant contemporary art.

“We are incredibly thrilled with these new additions to the permanent collection and this year’s acquisitions are exceptionally timely and monumental,” said S. Sayre Batton, Oshman Executive Director, SJMA. “I thank the Acquisitions Committee and curatorial team for their thoughtful strategy and their dedication to the Museum’s mission. I am especially grateful for our supporters and donors who entrust SJMA to care for and present these works to the people of San José and Silicon Valley.”

# LISSON GALLERY



Felipe Baeza, *Emerging in difference*, 2022. Ink, graphite, glitter, interference powder, twine, acrylic and cut paper collage on paper, 78  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 51  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Museum purchase with funds provided by Kimberly and Patrick Lin, Geraldine and Marco Magarelli, and Yvonne and Mike Nevens, 2022.11. © Felipe Baeza. Courtesy Maureen Paley, London.

*San Jose Museum of Art*

This year's acquisitions include a significant representation of California artists. Bay Area artists include Shiva Ahmadi, Jean Conner, Ala Ebtekar, Nicole Phungrasamee Fein, David Huffman, Hung Liu, Tony May, and Livien Yin. Many of these artists' homegrown works address recent national and global events. Ahmadi's video animation *Ascend* (2017) memorializes the life of Kurdish-Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi (2012–15), whose post-mortem image was widely-circulated in headlines and brought urgent

attention to the Syrian civil war's refugee crisis. Huffman's Afrofuturist-inspired painting and collage *AHMAUD* (2021) honors the memory of Ahmaud Arbery and victims of anti-Black violence. Livien Yin's *After Washerwoman's Lagoon* calls attention to the lasting effects of anti-Asian sentiment and laws in the San Francisco Bay Area landscape from the late nineteenth century to the present. Los Angeles-based artists include Kelly Akashi, rafa esparza, Catherine Opie, Eamon Ore-Giron, and Analia Saban.

# LISSON GALLERY

Significant large-scale works include Felipe Baeza's *Emerging in difference* (2022), currently on view in *The Milk of Dreams*, the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia; Huma Bhabha's *Receiver* (2019), a towering 8-foot sculpture; Magdalena Abakanowicz's *Crowd No. 2* (1988); Sam Durant's *Proposal #2 for Monument at Altamont Raceway, Tracy, CA* (2003); and Tom Friedman's *Fuck It* (2002).

Additional artists include Chie Fueki, Paul Landacre, Dinh Q. Lê, John O'Reilly, Patricia Piccinini, Liliana Porter, Alyson Shotz, and Rose B. Simpson. To learn more about recent acquisitions at SJMA, go to our collection database at [sjmusart.org/embark](https://sjmusart.org/embark).

## **SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART**

The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) is a modern and contemporary art museum dedicated to inclusivity, new thinking, and visionary ideas. Founded in 1969 by artists and community leaders, its dynamic exhibitions, collection, and programs resonate with defining characteristics of San José and the Silicon Valley—from its rich diversity to its hallmark innovative ethos. The Museum offers lifelong learning for school children and their educators, multigenerational families, creative adults, university students and faculty, and community groups. SJMA is committed to being a borderless museum, essential to creative life throughout the diverse communities of San José and beyond.

SJMA is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San José, California. The Museum is open Thursday 4–9pm; Friday 11am–9pm; and Saturday through Sunday 11am to 6pm. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and free to members, college students, youth and children ages 17 and under, and school teachers (with valid ID). Admission is free from 6–9pm the first Friday of every month. For more information, call 408.271.6840 or visit [SanJoseMuseumofArt.org](https://SanJoseMuseumofArt.org).

# LISSON GALLERY

ARTFORUM

17 October 2022

INTERVIEWS

## KELLY AKASHI

On eternity, internment, and the memory of touch

October 17, 2022 • As told to Juliana Halpert



View of “Kelly Akashi: Formations,” 2022, San Jose Museum of Art, 2022. Photo: Benjamin Blackwell.

“Formations,” Kelly Akashi’s ongoing exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Art, surveys the past eight years of the Los Angeles–based artist’s practice, mounting a menagerie of bronze-cast, hand-blown glass, carved-stone, and 3-D–printed sculptures in addition to an array of chromogenic photograms, Cibachrome crystallographs, and silver gelatin prints (not to mention the occasional accoutrement of family heirlooms and human hair). Amid all this processual prowess, attention is also paid to the more mysterious operations of memory, time, the human body, and their mutual imprint on one another. Always an alloy of the organic and inorganic, the tactile and the intangible, Akashi’s practice extracts meaning from the ore of object relations, striking at the heart of our attachment to things.

**PEOPLE OFTEN BRING UP** the idea of the “memento mori” with regard to my practice. But I found a Japanese term that, I think, fits much better: *mono no aware*. It refers to a wistful awareness of impermanence—the “pathos of things.” It’s central to *hanami*, the Japanese custom of venturing out to enjoy the brief season of cherry blossoms. That’s why I named one of the casts of my hand *Cultivator (Hanami)*, 2021, and why it clutches a cluster of glass cherry blossoms. And *Long Exposure*, 2021, a cast of my entire body, is littered with petals from flowers that slowly decay. I want everything to somehow contain both a single instant, a moment, and an eternity.

# LISSON GALLERY

“Formations” is decidedly nonchronological. I don’t see my practice as isolated bodies of work; I always try to keep my mind on the greater lifelong practice. So it’s been exciting to see similar themes and questions arise in works that were made years apart, sharing rooms together in conversation.

The “Witness” series from this year is my newest work in the show, and they’re the first straight photos I’ve exhibited in a very, very long time—that is, if you could say that I’ve *ever* shown straight photographs. I printed them by hand in the darkroom with someone who has a lab here in Los Angeles. I’ve gone to the darkroom pretty regularly throughout my life, but when I first returned after the pandemic shutdowns, it was surprising to feel how my body had held onto the memory of other darkrooms. You can’t see anything in color darkrooms, and I was reaching for light switches that weren’t there, imagining that the processor was in one corner when it was in the other. The body’s memory is so strong. I’m very comfortable in complete darkness—it’s not a big deal for me. I can see in this whole other way, through touch and memory.

These photographs were taken in Poston, Arizona, where my father, his parents, and his siblings were interned during World War II. They had to leave their Boyle Heights home—and my grandfather’s business in Little Tokyo—and had no idea how long they would be gone. The artist David Horvitz, who is also Japanese American, told me that the trees that still stand on these sites were most likely planted by the people interned there. Many of the interned Japanese Americans came from agricultural backgrounds, and apparently, they built ponds, cultivated the land, had harvests, and added these trees. The trees, along with some barracks and an adobe brick schoolhouse, are all that remain, and they won’t live forever.



Kelly Akashi, *Cultivator (Hanami)*, 2021, flame-worked borosilicate glass, bronze, 9 x 10 x 4".

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

In addition to photographing the trees, I cast some of their fallen branches in bronze. It's nice having both the prints and sculptures in the show because I've always thought about bronze casting's relationship to photography. There's a positive, original referent—the subject—that gets made into a negative mold or cast, and then recapitulated as another positive. I used the lost-wax bronze casting process for the branches, which involves creating a model of the object in wax, then dipping and rolling it in silica slurry and grain for days, letting it dry each time, and repeating it over and over. After its shell becomes thick and hardens, it gets put in an oven so all the wax melts away from the inside, which is why it's called "lost-wax" casting. The bronze is then poured into the resulting shell. Both in sculpture and photography, I've always been most devoted to the idea of directness. Casting these branches, and my hands, and my body—often with molds that can only be used once—seems like the least amount of translation between subject and object. One original, one reproduction.

Sometimes bronze casting can create imperfections, but I love that. You can, of course, fix areas on a cast where texture is lost, or where the shape changes. But isn't a natural flaw in the process more "direct" than all the consequent repairs and fixes that make it more "faithful"? I always relate this idea back to a quote in Barthes's *Camera Lucida*, about wanting "just an image" that is a "just image." I'm into the endless pursuit of a just image. To me, the flaws in the process often have more meaning than an illusion of wholeness.

I think that my interest in these processes has to do with conceptions of time, too. I started thinking about geological time when, back in 2015, I started CT-scanning shells from extinct invertebrates that are millions of years old. It makes the time between my father's lifetime and my own seem very short. Part of the reason that I wanted to visit Poston, Arizona, is because, to that land, my father's internment was basically yesterday. A minute ago, even. Juxtaposing and combining these vastly different time lines makes me reflect on existence in a different way. I see how my fingernails change across all the casts of my hands; they look like little geological formations on my body. Each work really is a marker of a single mortal moment.

— *As told to Juliana Halpert*

*Picture this Post*  
25 September 2022

## San Jose Museum of Art Presents KELLY AKASHI: FORMATIONS Exhibit Review — Artist Memorializes Nature and Family History in Bronze, Stone, and Glass

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Posted on September 25, 2022 by [Lily LeaVesseur](#)

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# LISSON GALLERY

Bronze casts of the artist's hands intertwine with rope, grasp objects, and squeeze into orbs of glass that respond to their touch like viscous liquid. Delicate glass flowers curl between her bronze fingers, and silky lengths of hair stream through the holes of colorful glass-blown vessels. Replicas of plant matter, including tumbleweeds and tree branches from sites of Japanese internment, scatter and reach alongside those of her physical form.

Intimate details of Kelly Akashi's body and personal history are on display through her works, where transient moments of time and motion are made permanent through immutable materials. We see the fine lines of her skin and varying lengths of her fingernails recorded in bronze; heirloom jewelry from her grandmother displayed on her lead crystal hands; and a visual representation of the rhythm of her heart, translated from an EKG to the undulations of a walnut wood pedestal.



# LISSON GALLERY



She frequently borrows imagery and forms from concepts of botany, biology, and geology, copying or abstracting them into quietly colorful artworks that comment on the natural world, the passage of time, and our place within both.

In *Witness*, a series of black-and-white photos from 2020, we see barren trees and barracks from the Poston Relocation Center in Arizona, where Akashi's father was interned during World War II. Their title refers to the trees' role in her family history: botanical witnesses to her father's experience as an internee. Other objects from the site are scattered throughout the exhibit: small stones pool in the palm of her lead crystal hand, alongside her grandmother's jewelry; two bronze tumbleweeds at the entrance tangle together, their sharp branches simultaneously beckoning us forward and keeping us at bay.

# LISSON GALLERY



KELLY AKASHI: FORMATIONS at San Jose Museum of Art Depicts Natural World and Passage of Time

While works like *Witness* feature straightforward representations of natural subjects, others require slightly more viewer interpretation. In *Triple Helix*, we see a collection of seven multi-colored glass vessels, each curved in the suggestion of breasts and hips. Petals grow from their necks, reaching out in soft pinks, crimson reds, and clear glass, and a single rope snakes between them, connecting and encircling their bases. Other works, such as *Body Complex*, feature disparate objects grouped within shelved wooden frames: medical illustrations of human organs lay flat beneath hanging X-rays of sea shells; above, a bronze hand clutches an onion as it sinks into a blown glass orb.

# LISSON GALLERY



Though each piece is engaging enough as a standalone work of art, the most interesting aspect of the exhibit, in this writer's opinion, is how the materials play off of each other and the space around them. Akashi's collected works force us to contend with multiple opposing concepts: realism and abstraction; motion and stillness; intimacy and detachment; permanence and transience. How much you read into, between or around the works is up to you. But there is an intriguing sense of tension and dichotomy, in this writer's view, that is worth investigating if you consider the exhibit as a whole. When you step out of Akashi's bronze and glass vision and back into the sunlight, you might find that this feeling lingers with you more than any single work.

# LISSON GALLERY



*Kelly Akashi: Formations* is recommended to viewers interested in biology, geology, or botany, and artwork that engages with existential concepts such as time, lineage, and physical presence. It is also recommended to those with an interest in artwork that explores the Japanese American experience, specifically internment and its intergenerational reach.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Square Cylinder*  
23 September 2022

## Kelly Akashi @ San Jose Museum of Art

SEPTEMBER 23, 2022

by **Kristen Wawruck**



**Weep, 2020, bronze, stainless steel, and water, 62 x 96 x 96 inches**

# LISSON GALLERY

*Formations*, the first major survey of Kelly Akashi's work, provides a glimpse of the artist's personal cosmology in a distinct visual language composed of memories, earthly wonders, and fragments of herself. The word "cosmos" usually pertains to the universe, but its origin in Greek also defines it as the ordering of things. Both meanings manifest and rub against each other in this sweeping exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Art with crafted objects that ask: how can we mark our time on earth—our cosmos, in all its contradictions, in forms that are both fraught and tender? This show compiles Akashi's answers, capturing the full breadth of her deep curiosity and prolific output over the last ten years.

The exhibition's first gallery offers an encounter with ideas about land, displacement, dispossession and methods of reclamation and resilience.

*Conjoined Tumbleweeds* (2022), a set of delicately intertwined branches cast in bronze, serves as a sentinel for groupings of sculptures that mine and memorialize her family's history as prisoners in Poston, Arizona. The internment of Japanese-American citizens—an act of racial carcerality on American Indian reservations—remains undiscussed in nativist WWII histories and often within the families it traumatized, Akashi's notwithstanding. A descendent looking for traces of these stories in physical form might find nothing but rubble remains at the sites of these camps, as the artist did in her trips to Poston over the last two years.



**Cultivator (Hanami), 2021, glass, bronze, 9 x 10 x 4 inches**

# LISSON GALLERY

Akashi unearths these stories and portrays them in sculptures that ruminate on Japanese-American identity, presenting three groupings of works on rammed earth pedestals whose faint scent permeates the show. At a little lower than waist-high for the average adult, the plinths of dirt meet us halfway—a height deliberately chosen by Akashi so that we, the viewers, don't dominate the objects on view. Each supports cast models of Akashi's hand, running throughout the exhibition as stand-ins for the artist. In these, hands formed of leaden crystal or bronze come adorned with her grandmother's jewelry, as with *Inheritance* (2021); wrapped in glass cherry blossoms in *Cultivator (Hanami)* (2021); or gripping bronze pine cones cast from trees Japanese-Americans planted in the desert for a reprieve from the sun. The latter appear in *Life-Forms (Poston Pines)* (2021). Trees, of course, mark the passage of time, as do fingernails and hair, both of which can be seen in *Being as a Thing* (2019). Other organic forms include *Be Me (Japanese-Californian Citrus)* (2016), a jaunty sumo orange crafted in stainless steel that captures an emblem of Japanese-Californian hybridity, and *Conjoined Weeds* (2021). The latter replicates weeds from the artist's garden; they sprout from her hand, a bronze-and-copper symbol of endurance, even though they are generally viewed as invasive and unwanted.

All these objects display Akashi's extensive knowledge of traditional craft techniques, like lost-wax casting, glassblowing, ropemaking and stone carving. Seen in the context of a de-skilled art world, Akashi's *re-skilling*, to borrow a term from Jenni Sorkin's catalog essay, stands as a refreshing act. Her absolute mastery of these techniques also sets her apart from many of today's craft revivalists. Akashi displays her prodigious bronze casting skills in *Weep* (2020), a colossal (62 x 69 x 69-inch) organ-like sphere that releases a slow, steady drip of water into a reflecting pool, literally manifesting the emotions implied by the title. To address the lacuna of documentation from the camps in her family's collections, Akashi creates her own archival records of the site, ensuring an inheritance of memory going forward.

# LISSON GALLERY



**Body Complex, 2019, red oak, hand-blown glass, stainless steel, stereolithography 3D print, ortho litho prints in walnut frames, found medical illustrations, whipping twine, and cut onion, 49 x 72 x 11 inches**

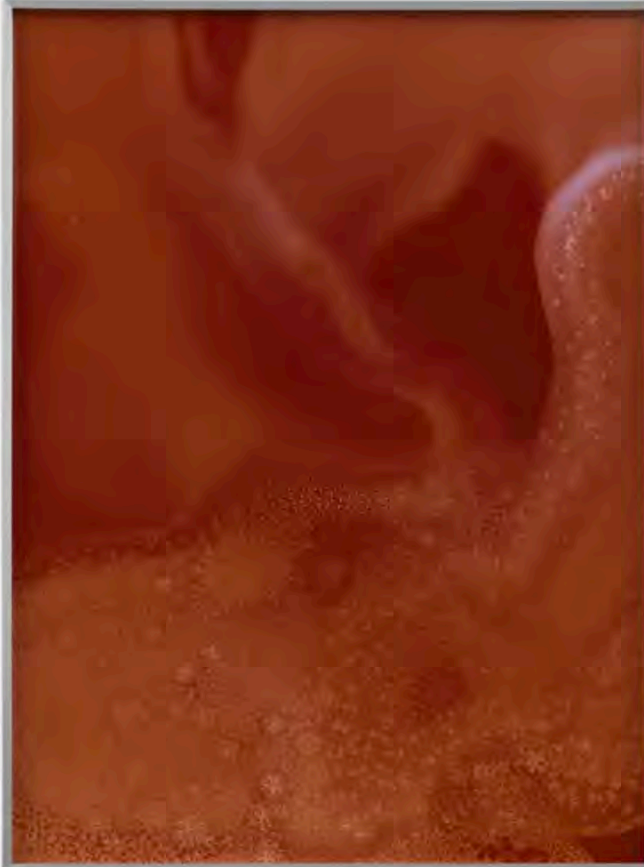
Elsewhere in the show, Akashi defines her own order of things by interrogating collections and displays. *Body Complex* and *Spirit Complex* (both 2019), for example, function as twin cabinets of erotically charged treasures laden with biomorphic glass vessels alongside coiled ropes and representations of spiral shells. By placing a cut, sprouting onion on top of the former, Akashi takes one of nature's perfect geometric forms and uses it to introduce ephemerality and disrupt the grid, the age-old organizing device.

Nearby walls carry the exhibition's title series, *Formations* (2021): photograms of enlarged crystals that Akashi grew, which also note time marked by chemical reactions. Together, these objects and images lend the room the feel of a natural history museum. Yet despite the overall lack of anything natural, save that single onion, Akashi's works destabilize and feminize any such hierarchies.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Triple Helix* (2020)

best exemplifies Akashi's re-ordering. A group of anthropomorphic glass vessels sits in a circle atop a granite-and-steel pedestal. Several of these female torsos, topped with crowns of petals and human hair, call to mind wombs and ancient fertility figures, as well as more contemporary feminist icons like Niki de Saint Phalle's *Nana* sculptures.



*Formation*, 2021, cibachrome crystallograph, 40 x 30 inches

These ladies speak to a long-repressed history of matriarchal social structures. At the same time, the title suggests that perhaps these instincts are encoded across generations. Within Akashi's cosmos, these meditations on the pre-colonial past help reveal the structures of the present more clearly.

*SF Chronicle Datebook*  
3 September 2022

## ART & EXHIBITS

# Kelly Akashi creates art that explores her family's internment

If you need to be convinced that art hits different in person, go see “Kelly Akashi: Formations” at the San José Museum of Art.

The artist's first major museum solo show, which opens Saturday, Sept. 3, showcases 43 bronze and glass sculptures, installations and photographs. Newly commissioned work centering on Akashi's family history of internment during World War II also joins a well-chosen retrospective of her work since 2014.

Deep craft knowledge of glassblowing, bronze casting and analog photographic processes inform Akashi's work, testifying to her fascination with the *longue durée*, or geological time – a major theme of the exhibit. The intricate mixed media sculptures placed at stomach height punch the gut first before inviting the mind to meditate on interconnected existence. If it sounds lofty, it is. But it's also down to earth – literally.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The exhibition opens with two larger-than-life cast bronze tumbleweeds growing out of a circle of dirt set ahead of large rammed-earth plinths. Smelling of dirt, the plinths serve as pedestals for an array of strikingly personal objects that speak to our attempts to understand our brief moment within the larger scale of geologic time.

Born in 1984, the Los Angeles-based artist and third-generation Californian has spent her career thinking about how to materialize time and what she calls “the gap,” the space of longing. Trained in analog photography – with a bachelor’s degree from Otis College of Art and Design in 2006 and a master’s in fine arts from the University of Southern California in 2014 – Akashi expanded her artistic practice to other mediums when she realized it was photography’s connection to time that most interested her. Her initial forays into candle making (a craft she first learned from her mother) led to bronze casting and eventually to glassblowing, which Akashi sees as a material having “strong memory.”

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

SJMA's exhibit is the first time Akashi directly addresses her family's history at the Poston, Ariz., internment camp by the California state border under Executive Order 9066 that created the Japanese American incarceration in 1942. Her father, though only 8 years old at the time, was deeply affected by the experience. Nevertheless, "it wasn't something my family wanted to talk about," Akashi told *The Chronicle*. "It was this very major part of my family's history that I don't really know a lot about."

Though neither Akashi nor curator Lauren Shell Dickens planned for the exhibit to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the order, "Kelly Akashi: Formations" contributes a contemporary art exhibition to a handful of shows focusing on the Japanese American incarceration, including two still on view – one at the Japanese American Museum of San Jose, the other at the Museum of Sonoma County.

With photographs of the camp, bronze casts of tree branches collected at the site and mixed media sculptures, Akashi seeks her family's history. Archival records are scarce, but a friend of Akashi's mused that any trees at the abandoned camp site would have been there from the time of the incarceration. So, in January 2021, she began visiting Poston, where she gathered items that now appear in her sculptures.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Three individual sculptures, each titled “Inheritance,” combine a stone from Poston, a lead crystal hand Akashi cast from her own hand, and pieces of her grandmother’s jewelry. Resting on the stone, the glass hand is supported by the rock as its fingers look like they’re reaching down to touch the stone underneath its palm. The green ring inherited from Akashi’s grandmother underscores the loss of memory even while it makes memory present.

“A lot of people’s families have hidden stories: things you know but you don’t know and you don’t have access to them anymore,” said Akashi. “For me that journey is very personal to figure out how you want to access it. It’s hard to materialize. So I’m trying to materialize it.”

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Akashi's interest in the interactions of the universe, how movement from one material body affects another and the visualization of time appeared in earlier works like 2019's "Transmission," in which a stainless steel cast of her hand reaches upward into a reactive glass bowl that bends in response to her probing fingers.

Indeed, as Akashi plumbs the technological subtleties of various craft mediums (she's been studying Venetian Murano glassblowing), the goal remains the same.

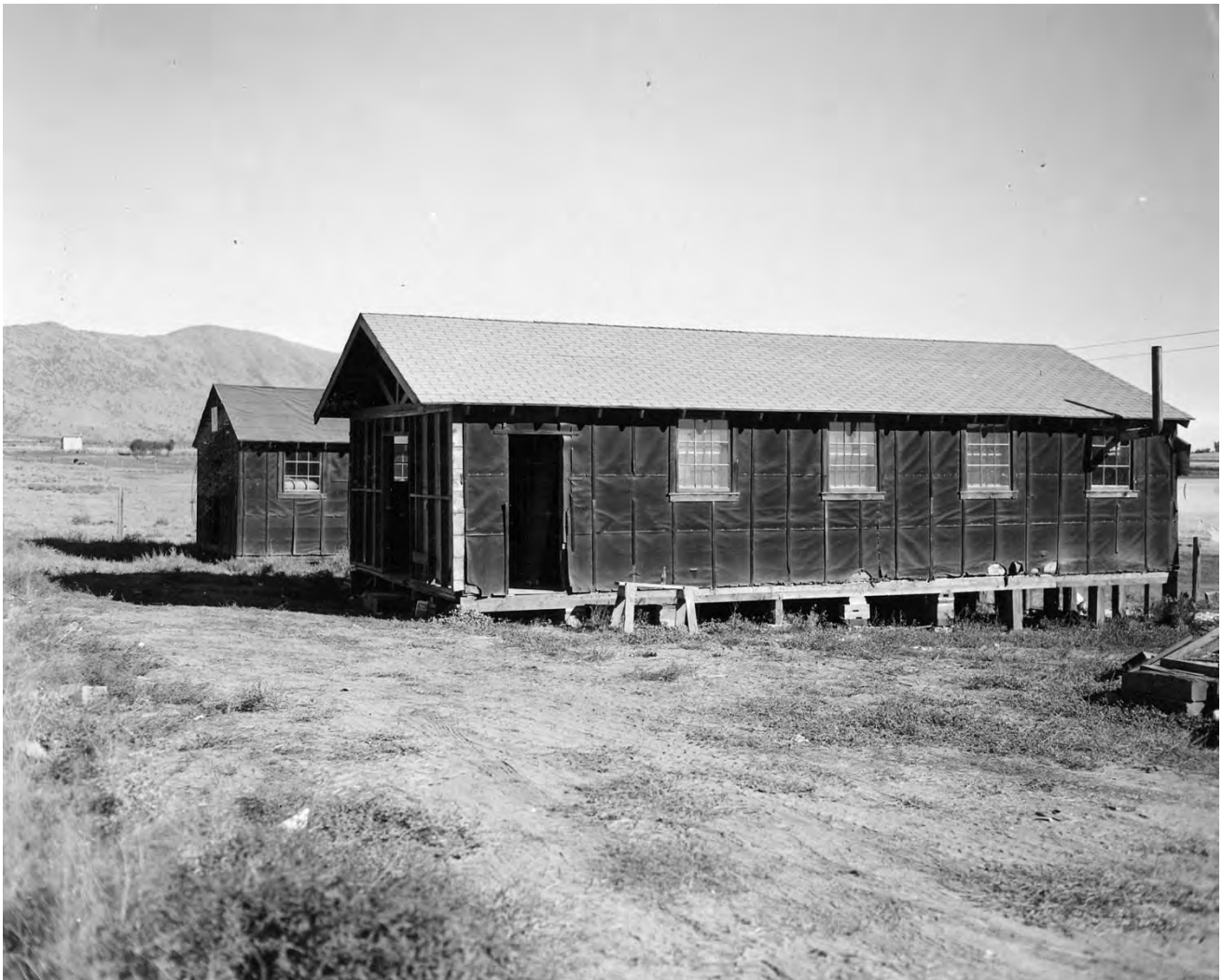
"All these tools are different ways to get this thing that's incredibly immaterial and slippery," said Akashi. "I'm trying to come at these immaterial concepts from all these different angles. ... What does it mean to exist in the world and impact other people and things and those things to impact you?"

The South Bay doesn't get enough credit for its art scene. SJMA has a track record of highlighting artists just before their careers hit new heights. With "Kelly Akashi: Formations," the museum once again has its finger on the pulse.

*AsAmNews*  
3 September 2022

ASIAN AMERICANS

# Artist's showcase reflects family's history in Japanese internment camps



*Photo of Japanese Internment Barracks via OSU Special Collections & Archives via [Wikimedia Commons](#)*

# LISSON GALLERY

BY ALLYSON PANG SEPTEMBER 3, 2022

Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi debuted her first major museum solo showcase at the San José Museum of Art on Saturday. The showcase will run from September 3, 2022, through May 21, 2023.

According to the [San José Museum of Art \(SJMA\)](#), “Kelly Akashi: Formations” contains an overview of decades of work. It includes her newest work “Conjoined Tumbleweeds (2022),” which explores the impact of her father’s imprisonment at an internment camp in Poston, Arizona.

“It wasn’t something my family wanted to talk about,” Akashi said to the [SF Chronicle Datebook](#). “It was this very major part of my family’s history that I don’t really know a lot about.”

The exhibition contains 43 bronze and glass sculptures, installations and photographs, [according to the SF Chronicle Datebook](#).

The third-generation Californian earned her bachelor’s degree from Otis College of Art and Design and a master’s in fine arts from the University of Southern California. Akashi trained in analog photography and became interested in photography’s connection to time.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The concept of time has since become a key element of her artwork.

Akashi is drawn to “old-world craft techniques,” stated the SJMA. These techniques include glass blowing and casting, bronze and silicone casting, rope making and candle making.

“Akashi uses a familiar language of craft—of skilled experience and material knowledge—in a way that draws from tradition, but reveals internal encounters, juxtapositions, and relationships that push towards transformation,” SJMA Senior Curator Lauren Schell Dickens said in a [press release](#).

The SF Chronicle Datebook stated that Akashi viewed materials as having “strong memory.”

In January 2021, Akashi began visiting Poston after a friend brought up the possibility of trees at the abandoned camps being there during incarceration. Since then, Akashi visited the sites to gather items that now appear in her artwork.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

“A lot of people’s families have hidden stories: things you know but you don’t know and you don’t have access to them anymore,” Akashi told [SF Chronicle Datebook](#). “For me that journey is very personal to figure out how you want to access it. It’s hard to materialize. So I’m trying to materialize it.”

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*ArtFix Daily*  
28 June 2022

ArtfixDaily Artwire™

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# San José Museum of Art to Present Kelly Akashi: Formations, the Artist's First Major Touring Exhibition

SAN JOSE, California / June 28, 2022



Kelly Akashi, *Inheritance*, 2021. Poston stone, cast lead crystal, heirloom (grandmother's ring), 6 x 8 x 6 inches.

*Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.*

# LISSON GALLERY

(ARTFIXdaily.com) **Updated August 30, 2022:** From September 3, 2022 through May 21, 2023, the San José Museum of Art (SJMA) will present the first major touring museum exhibition of Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi (born 1983, Los Angeles). Organized by senior curator Lauren Schell Dickens, *Kelly Akashi: Formations* presents an overview of nearly a decade of work, including glass and cast bronze objects, multipart sculptural installations, and photographic work. It also includes a newly commissioned body of work that explores the inherited impact of the artist's father's imprisonment in a Japanese American incarceration camp in Poston, Arizona during World War II. The exhibition will debut at SJMA and then travel nationally.



Kelly Akashi, *Be Me (Japanese California Citrus)*, 2016.  
Lost-wax cast and polished stainless steel, 5.75 x 4.25 x 4.5 inches.

*Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Galler...*

“Since its founding, SJMA has provided a platform for emerging artists. We are honored to present Kelly Akashi’s first touring museum exhibition and encourage deeper exploration of her work and unique practice,” said S. Sayre Batton, Oshman Executive Director, San José Museum of Art.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Originally trained in analog photography, Akashi is drawn to fluid, impressionable materials and old-world craft techniques, such as glass blowing and casting, candle making, bronze and silicone casting, and rope making. She often pairs hand-blown glass or wax forms with unique and temporally specific bronze casts of her own hand, each a unique record of the slow-changing human body. Akashi's interest in time—embedded in the materiality of many of her processes—has led her to study fossils, geology, and botany, locating humankind within a longer geological timeline. Drawing on scientific research and theoretical inquiry, she explores fundamental questions of existence—about being in the world and being in time—cultivating relationships among a variety of materials and subjects to investigate how they actively convey their histories and potential for change.

“Akashi uses a familiar language of craft—of skilled experience and material knowledge—in a way that draws from tradition, but reveals internal encounters, juxtapositions, and relationships that push towards transformation. In one sense, you could say she's encouraging a material empathy—looking at stones as witnesses to human trauma—while she's also looking to interactions with materials, to geologic records, to make sense of her own history, as a human, and as a Japanese American,” said Lauren Schell Dickens, senior curator, San José Museum of Art.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Hybrid Life Forms*, 2019–21. Lost-wax cast bronze, 3.5 x 7.5 x 9.5 inches.

*Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.*

The newly commissioned *Conjoined Tumbleweeds* (2022) is a monumental bronze cast of intertwined plants collected from Poston, Arizona—the former site of an incarceration camp for Japanese Americans where the artist’s paternal family, along with thousands of others, were relocated and imprisoned during World War II. It is presented with a variety of sculptures from throughout Akashi’s career on rammed earth pedestals, such as *Be Me (Californian—Japanese Citrus)* (2016), a stainless-steel cast of the cultivated fruit whose hybrid identity reflects the artist’s own heritage. The title “Be Me” is given to an ongoing group of works: an empathetic entreaty to dissolve boundaries between object and viewer, self and other. Particular subjects, weeds, flowers, shells, as well as traditional craft forms—footed vase, candle cup—reoccur, each encompassing particular morphologies and lineages in botany, paleontology, and histories of craft.

*Cultivator* (2022) was acquired by the Museum for its permanent collection. Cast from the artist's own hand, *Cultivator* gently supports glass-blown flowers modeled after endangered California species. Nine native plants are currently growing in the work, including Morning Glory, Yerba Buena, Chinese Houses, Parry’s Larkspur, 'Select Mattole' Humboldt County Fuchsia, 'Serpentine Night' Stream Orchid, Redwood Keckiella, Torrey’s melicgrass, and Snapdragon Skullcap.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Akashi's interest in thinking about cultivation, botanical time, and their relationship to self could first be seen in *Local Weed* (2017). The artist has an ongoing series of weed sculptures from the weeds in her backyard, drawn from life with meticulous tracings and entombed through lost-wax bronze casting. The exhibition will also include several large multifaceted sculptures—called “Complexes”—which incorporate their own systems of display. Evocative of scientific specimen tables, cabinets of curiosities, and domestic display furniture, these complex and detailed arrangements reveal the tenuous frailty of systems of classification and order.

## **CATALOG**

The exhibition catalog—the first scholarly monograph on the artist—will feature essays by Lauren Schell Dickens, Ruba Katrib, Dr. Jenni Sorkin; and a conversation between Akashi and painter Julien Nguyen. The book will also feature a special photography project by Akashi, created specifically for this publication.

# LISSON GALLERY

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in 1983, Kelly Akashi holds an MFA from the University of Southern California (2014) and a BFA from Otis College of Art and Design (2006); she also studied at the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste—Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The artist's work was featured in the 2016 edition of the Hammer Museum's biennial, *Made in L.A.* Other notable group exhibitions include *TITLE*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit (2017); *LA: A Fiction*, Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, France (2017); *Take Me (I'm Yours)*, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Jens Hoffmann, and Kelly Taxter, Jewish Museum, New York (2016); and *Can't Reach Me There*, Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2015). Winner of the 2019 Carolyn Glasoe Bailey Foundation Art Prize, the artist will have a residency and solo exhibition at the foundation in Ojai, California. Other residencies include ARCH Athens (2019) and Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, California (2019). Akashi's solo exhibition *Long Exposure* was curated by Ruba Katrib at the SculptureCenter, New York (2017), and her first solo New York gallery exhibition was held at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery in February 2020. Kelly Akashi's work can be found in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; CC Foundation, Shanghai; M WOODS, Beijing; The Perimeter, London; David Roberts Art Foundation, London; and Sifang Museum, Nanjing, China, among others.

*Metro Silicon Valley*  
30 August 2022

## Kelly Akashi: Formations Held at San Jose Museum of Art

By Grace Stetson

Aug 30, 2022



HANDCRAFTED Kelly Akashi's art makes use of materials like hand blown glass and bronze. Photo Credit: SJMOA

History often contains hidden beauty, informing our understandings of the world. Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi uses those understandings of the world to create “materially hybrid work,” incorporating old-world crafting such as glass blowing, candle-making and silicone casting with analog photography. In her new major exhibition *Formations*—on display at SJMA through May 21—Akashi’s works will sit alongside her newly commissioned series, telling the story of her family’s imprisonment in Japanese-American camps during WWII. The free opening celebration will take place during San Jose’s First Friday festivities.

# Kelly Akashi: *Formations*

San José Museum of Art



Kelly Akashi, *Inheritance*, 2021. Poston stone, cast lead crystal, heirloom (grandmother's ring), 6 x 8 x 6 inches. Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.

Kelly Akashi is known for her materially hybrid works that are compelling both formally and conceptually. Originally trained in analog photography, the artist is drawn to fluid, impressionable materials and old-world craft techniques, such as glass blowing and casting, candle making, bronze and silicone casting, and rope making. Encompassing a selection of artworks made over the past decade, Kelly Akashi: *Formations* is the first major exhibition of the artist's work, and will feature a newly commissioned series in which Akashi explores the inherited impact of her family's imprisonment in a Japanese American incarceration camp during World War II.

Through evocative combinations that seem both familiar and strange, Akashi cultivates relationships among a variety of things to investigate how they can actively convey their histories and potential for change. She often pairs hand-blown glass or wax forms with unique and temporally specific bronze casts of her own hand, each a unique record of the slow-changing human body. Akashi's interest in time—embedded in the materiality of many of her processes—has led her to study fossils and botany, locating humankind within a longer geological timeline.

The exhibition catalog—the first scholarly monograph on the artist—will feature essays by SJMA senior curator Lauren Schell Dickens, Ruba Katrib, Dr. Jenni Sorkin; and a conversation between Akashi and painter Julien Nguyen. The book will also include a special photography project by Akashi, created specifically for this publication.

*Hyperallergic*  
30 May 2022

Art

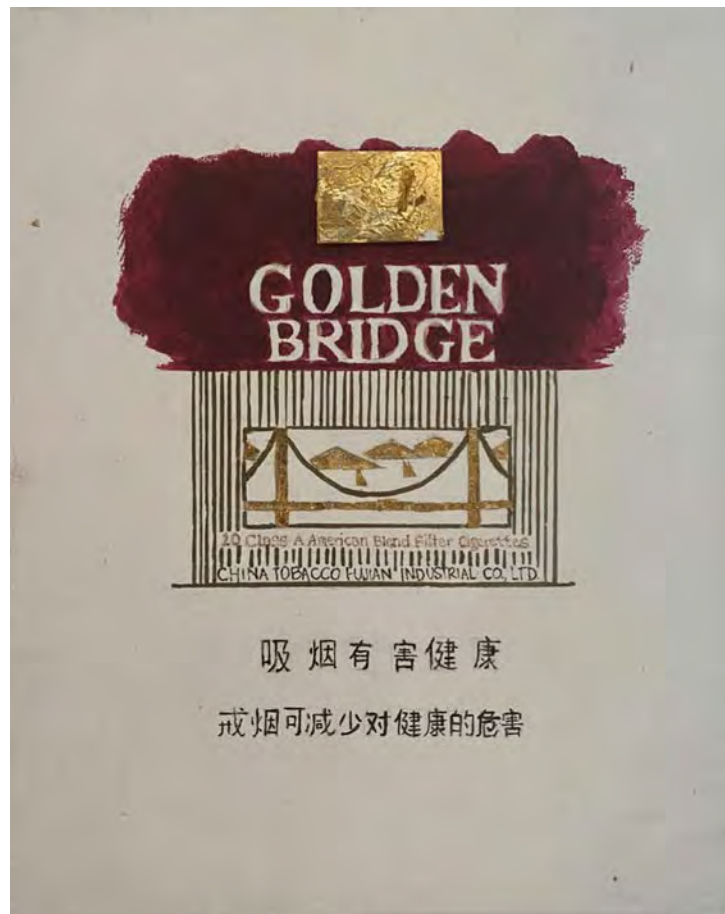
# Commemorating the Life of Christina Yuna Lee

*with her name, penetrate earth's floor* remembers the Korean-American creative producer who was murdered in Lower Manhattan at age 35.



Isabel Ling May 30, 2022

Share



Christina Yuna Lee, "Golden Bridge for Eli Klein" (2014), acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 10 x 8 inches (courtesy the artist and Eli Klein Gallery © Christina Yuna Lee)

# LISSON GALLERY

In a grainy video, a hand curls around a crisp white-green leaf from a head of napa cabbage, moving as if to peel and discard the vegetable's outermost layers. Instead, however, the viewer is witness to an uncanny creation story, with each motion bringing new leaves until the napa cabbage is fully materialized. "white vegetable i" (2021), a video work by stephanie mei huang, is an examination of grief's transformative powers, a proposal that by attending to one's fixation on melancholy, one might be able to reassemble that which is lost into a whole.

On view at Eli Klein Gallery through June 5, the work is a part of *with her voice, penetrate earth's floor*, a group exhibition held in honor of Christina Yuna Lee. On February 13, Lee was followed into her Chinatown apartment and murdered. While her murder has yet to be ruled a hate crime by authorities, her death follows a sharp rise in anti-Asian violence that has spiked since the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.



stephanie Mei huang, "white vegetable i" (2021), digitized 16mm film single channel color video, 2:59 minutes, edition of 7 (courtesy the artist and Eli Klein Gallery © stephanie Mei huang)

# LISSON GALLERY

Following Lee's passing, Eli Klein reached out to Huang to curate an exhibition in memory of Lee, who worked at the gallery between 2010 and 2014.

"[Christina's death] has been almost impossible to process," Klein told me. "I felt an obligation and a desire to honor Christina's life and remember her for who she was beyond this incident. She was so incredible and talented, I hate her name being almost synonymous with this act [of violence]."

In the wake of Lee's death, the act of mourning itself has become barbed with instances of violence. The memorial outside of her apartment has been vandalized multiple times and Asian femmes have reported experiences of being stalked upon visiting the site. For Huang, a guiding motivation for curating the show was a desire to establish a safe space for grieving. "It was important to me that we didn't grieve in isolation," they said in a recent phone conversation. During this conversation, Huang points out that within the Asian diaspora it is common to hold grief privately, an isolating experience that is caused by the geographic separation of individuals from their homelands and community-based rites and rituals. "I was interested in depathologizing mourning and normalizing extended mourning. Within extended mourning I think there's extended celebration of someone's life too, a way to extend remembrance."



Christina Yuna Lee (courtesy Eli Klein Gallery)

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

*with her voice, penetrate earth's floor* brings together the works of nine Asian American femme artists — stephanie mei huang, Kelly Akashi, Patty Chang, Maia Ruth Lee, Candice Lin, Astria Suparak, HỒNG-ÂN TRƯƠNG, Haena Yoo, and Christina Yuna Lee herself — in order to commemorate and highlight Lee's life and work within the art world.

Despite Klein's initial intentions to disentangle Lee's legacy from the conditions of her death, the exhibition, which draws its name from Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's poetry volume *Dictée* (1982), does begin by mapping the through line of gendered and racialized violence within the Asian femme experience. A photo series from 2017 by HỒNG-ÂN TRƯƠNG draws from stills of archival video footage shot by American and Australian soldiers in Vietnam in the late 1960s and early '70s. A pointed portrayal of the racialized gaze, each photograph suspends a moment in which the soldier wielding the camera has zoomed in on a woman wearing an áo dài, a traditional Vietnamese garment. In documenting these acts of voyeurism, TRƯƠNG excavates the power dynamics in seeing and being seen, demonstrating how the pervasive surveillance of Asian corporeality can distort simple everyday actions like crossing the street or walking home. Haena Yoo's "I've gone to look for America" (2021) tries to ground a long history of racial violence against Asians in the United States in the present by memorializing the victims of 2021's Atlanta spa shooting. The work features two origami guns crafted from rice paper that has been imprinted with newspaper headlines on the shooting. By staining the rice paper brown with soy sauce, Yoo seeks to evoke the staining tears of the East, a representation of the reaction East Asian communities across the world have had in response to the onslaught of anti-Asian violence in recent years.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Anchoring the exhibition is an altar where the majority of the show's artists contributed personal objects in honor of Christina's life and legacy. Offerings like a pinecone collected by Truong's seven-year-old daughter, a jade bracelet that is the last of Patty Chang's grandmother's jewelry, and gold-leaf embossed joss paper huang modeled after her grandfather's favorite cigarette brand are a reminder that grief is an ongoing and intergenerational inheritance.

At the center of the altar is Christina's own painting, made as a gift to Klein at the end of her tenure as the gallery's assistant director. Rendered in acrylic and gold leaf, the painting depicts a box of Golden Bridge cigarettes, an inside joke that originated with Lee finding boxes of the cigarettes, Klein's favorite brand, hidden in between art books.

In truth, grieving is a messy and often contradictory grasp in the dark. Christina Yuna Lee was a 35-year-old Korean-American creative producer whose warmth, curiosity, and sense of humor made her irreplaceable to her loved ones and those privileged enough to encounter her in life and in work. Her murderer, an unhoused and mentally ill young Black man, complicates the race-based narrative that has risen around her death by positing that perhaps her murder was not just an act of racial violence but a systemic failure of the state. Within this context, *with her name, penetrate earth's floor* is at its most profound in artworks that are not centered around diaspora, like Maia Ruth Lee's *Language of Grief* (2021) series. In these works, the artist deconstructs vintage sewing patterns, dipping skirt panels and pant legs in India ink and rearranging them in striking text-reminiscent patterns as an offering for new interpretation. Here, Lee augments grief by acknowledging that that which is incomprehensible sometimes requires new vocabularies and relationships of understanding.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, "August 4-6" (2020), bronze, 4 1/2 x 13 x 8 1/2 inches (courtesy the artist, François Ghebaly and Eli Klein Gallery © Kelly Akashi)

# LISSON GALLERY

*Ocula*  
2 May 2022

## Parallel Projects in Venice: Exhibition Highlights

By [Stephanie Bailey](#) and [Mohammad Salemy](#)  
Venice  
2 May 2022

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Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Life Forms*, Barbati Gallery at Palazzo Lezze, Venice (20 April–4 July 2022).  
Courtesy Barbati Gallery.

**Kelly Akashi: *Life Forms***

**Barbati Gallery, Palazzo Lezze, San Marco 2949, 30124**

**20 April–4 July 2022**

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

A Gothic Renaissance-era Venetian Palazzo in a prime Biennale city cross-square hosts Kelly Akashi's *Life Forms*, the inaugural exhibition for this new space.

A series of cast bronze hands, each holding a blown-glass balloon, line the walls like mediaeval lamps in the ground-floor gallery. Here, a bronze sculpture of what seems to be a flower veil covering a body created from knitting bronze casts of hand-crocheted flowers, *Heirloom* (2022), builds on a marble sculpture included in *Faultline* at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, in 2021.



Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Life Forms*, Barbati Gallery at Palazzo Lezze, Venice (20 April–4 July 2022). Courtesy Barbati Gallery.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Upstairs, a series of sculptures play with the Venetian interiors. Among them are beautiful glass flowers rendered in Murano glass screwed to steel stems shaped into coils, each one named after its namesake: *Lily*, *Fireweed*, *Red Poppy* (all 2022). These industrial yet fine art objects are positioned on the floor, wall, and hang like dramatic chandeliers, or mobiles, given enough room to breathe and connect to the space.

Akashi has long worked with glass, so it makes sense to see these new sculptures in Venice, a place that equally invites reflections on the channels of time that shape and frame material relationships between body, object, and memory. *SB*

Artsy  
11 April 2022

Art

# A Moving New Exhibition Pays Tribute to Christina Yuna Lee's Start in the Art World

Harley Wong

Apr 11, 2022 2:40PM



Portrait of Christina Yuna Lee with Li Hongbo, *Tools of Study*, at Eli Klein Gallery, 2014. Courtesy of Eli Klein Gallery.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

On February 13, 2022, Christina Yuna Lee was followed into her apartment in New York's Chinatown and murdered. Though anti-Asian violence has a long history in the United States, we've witnessed an alarming rise in attacks against individuals of Asian descent since the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020.

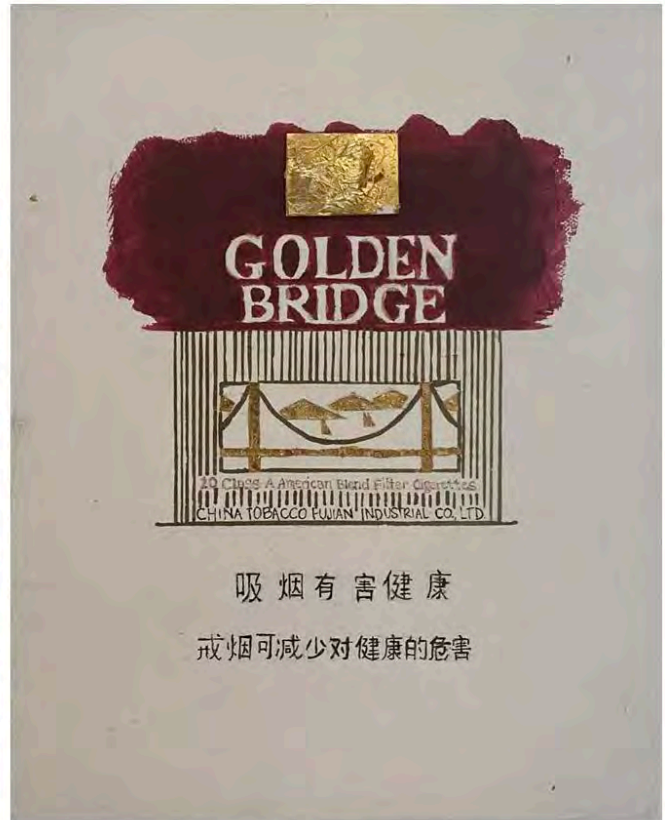
Opening April 13th, exactly two months after Lee's murder, the memorial exhibition "with her voice, penetrate earth's floor" will both mourn Lee's death and commemorate her presence in the art world. Borrowing a line from Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's *Dictée* (1982) for its title, the exhibition carries grief's immense weight, as well as the heavy truth that racialized and gendered violence against Asian American women is not a foreign concept—even to supposedly cosmopolitan cities like New York.

The upcoming group show will be on view from April 13th through June 5th at New York's Eli Klein Gallery, where Lee worked from 2010 to 2014. She was one of the gallery's first employees, joining at an entry-level position after earning a BA in art history from Rutgers University and later becoming assistant director. "She was so instrumental in so much that I did," gallerist Eli Klein told the New York Daily News. "All of my artists, the curators, everyone uniformly universally loved Christina."

# LISSON GALLERY



Portrait of Christina Yuna Lee with Li Hongbo's installation for *Hiding in New York No. 8 - Cereal*, 2013. Courtesy of Eli Klein Gallery.



Christina Yuna Lee, *Golden Bridge for Eli Klein*, 2014. © Christina Yuna Lee. Courtesy of the artist and Eli Klein Gallery.

The week after Lee's passing, Klein approached interdisciplinary artist stephanie.mei.huang to curate an exhibition in Lee's memory. "I saw how harrowing the loss of Christina was for Eli, and it felt so much that way for me. I felt like I couldn't move on with life unless I was doing something for her," huang said in an interview with Artsy. "Initially, I wasn't sure if I was well enough to do the show, because the timeline is so urgent and this [violence] keeps happening. But it also became clear that it was an avenue to channel grief into something that was a more socialized mourning rather than feeling isolated."

# LISSON GALLERY

This also rang true for the participating artists, who were confirmed within days after Huang and Klein decided to stage the show, just a week or two after Lee's death. Organized while in close communication with Lee's sister Angela, the show will dedicate at least 50 percent of proceeds from sales to the Christina Yuna Lee Memorial Fund, which supports the organizations and places that carried significance for Lee. The exhibition features the work of nine Asian American femme artists — Stephanie Mei Huang, Kelly Akashi, Patty Chang, Maia Ruth Lee, Candice Lin, Astria Suparak, Hồng-Ân Trương, Haena Yoo, and Christina Yuna Lee herself.

Lee had made a painting as a gift for Klein that depicts the Chinese cigarette brand Golden Bridge in acrylic and gold leaf. In response to this work, *Golden Bridge for Eli Klein* (2014), Huang created a woodblock print on mulberry paper with gold leaf of Daqianmen (大前门) cigarettes — the favorite brand of Huang's late grandfather. "I really wanted to be in dialogue with [Christina's] work, because her presence in the art world is a little bit forgotten," Huang said, pointing to how coverage of Lee has largely referenced her later work in the music industry. Huang also designed joss paper, often burned as offerings during ancestral worship, for Asian femmes visiting the exhibition to take home and ignite.

# LISSON GALLERY

“I want to bring the quotidian nature of offering, ancestral worship, and remembrance of the dead, because we have been so far removed from the nature of grieving in Asia and how daily that is,” huang explained. “I hope we can transmute the gallery space into this very alive space of active grieving and active mourning.”



Maia Ruth Lee  
*Language of Grief 06, 2021*  
Eli Klein Gallery



Kelly Akashi, *August 4-6, 2020*. © Kelly Akashi. Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly, and Eli Klein Gallery.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

This sentiment can be felt in the artworks on display. Akashi's *August 4-6* (2020) is from a series in which the artist casts the remnants of a paraffin candle burned to mark a recent tragedy. Akashi has created bronze sculptures in memory of George Floyd and to mourn the deaths in the 2021 Atlanta spa shootings. *August 4-6* specifically references the 2020 explosion in Beirut. Meanwhile, Maia Ruth Lee's abstract paintings from her "Language of Grief" series suggests that the gravity of certain losses cannot be expressed through words alone.

Trương will be exhibiting a series of photographs appropriated from archival film footage shot by American and Australian soldiers in Vietnam in the late 1960s and early '70s. Trương focuses on the video stills in which the soldiers momentarily fixed their lens on women on the street, and extracts the women from the frame of voyeurism. The 2017 works feel especially relevant today as women of Asian descent continue to experience a hypervisible and racialized gaze. "For a lot of Asian American people, we don't have control over how much our body is seen, or by whom it is consumed," huang remarked.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

These circumstances feel inescapable, even in death and mourning. Lee's memorial outside her home was vandalized on more than one occasion, and Asian American femmes have experienced stalking while visiting the site. In the hopes of creating a safe space to grieve, the exhibition at Eli Klein Gallery will include an altar for Lee that most of the exhibiting artists have chosen to contribute to.

Among the offerings are a prayer bell and seashells from Maia Ruth Lee that she's collected over the years; and mugwort incense and cherry blossoms from Huang. These will be catalogued as a collective tribute to Lee, and visitors are encouraged to engage with the altar and leave their own contributions, mourn, or pay their respects. "As I navigate this grief, I've been learning that this is lifelong," Huang said. "A space of mourning doesn't necessarily have to be a space of pain." ■

# LISSON GALLERY

*Frieze*

15 February 2022

## Ten Works under \$25K on Frieze Viewing Room

From photography by Gordon Parks to new watercolours by Madeline Hollander, the APAA (Association of Professional Art Advisors) share their top picks from the Frieze Los Angeles 2022 edition

IN FRIEZE LOS ANGELES, NEWS | 15 FEB 22

**Kelly Akashi (Tanya Bonakdar Gallery).**

***Life Forms (Polymorph), 2022***

**Calcite, lost-wax cast lead crystal**

**\$24,000**

Kelly Akashi's work casts fleeting gestures and moments of transformation into existence using materials such as wax, bronze, fire and glass. The sculptures challenge the conventions of form in a way that speaks to our interconnectedness with nature, and the possibility of growth from decay. *Life Forms (Polymorph), 2022* is a prime example of her practice and offers a small but powerful, presence with the glowing calcite, exposed raw rock and Akashi's signature hand. The piece is fresh, beautiful and accessible with its scale and price point.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly AKASHI, *Life Forms (Polymorph)*, 2022, Calcite, lost-wax cast lead crystal. Presented by Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, Frieze Los Angeles 2022

# LISSON GALLERY

ARTFORUM

12 January 2022



Jason Lazarus, *Phase 1 Live Archive*, 2013. Installation view, Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco, CA. Photo: Contemporary Jewish Museum.

January 12, 2022 at 10:25am

## WARHOL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES FALL 2021 GRANTEES

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts has revealed the forty-nine recipients of its fall 2021 grants, which total \$4.1 million and are issued to museums and arts organizations in support of their visual arts programs, exhibitions, and curatorial research, with up to 50 percent of the funding available to cover administrative expenses. Among first-time grantees, of which there are twenty, are those whose innovative, collaborative, and flexible programs have supported artists and allowed their practices to flourish in an especially turbulent time. These include Portland,

Maine's Indigo Arts Alliance, which assists Black and brown artists in New England, and Phoenix's CALA Alliance, a multidisciplinary Latinx arts organization providing artists from Arizona, Mexico, and Latin America with opportunities to expand their networks and to exhibit their work.

"The fall 2021 grantees are adapting and inventing new ways to meet the needs of artists as they persevere in the face of obstacles that surface every day in these unpredictable times," said Warhol Foundation president Joel Wachs. "Artists are at the heart of the foundation's work, and it is more important than ever to shore up the organizations that sustain and empower them as they evolve their practices."

Among the recipients cited by the foundation as representative of its own commitment to the principle of freedom of artistic expression are Brooklyn's Artist Freedom Initiative, which provides pro-bono immigration services, resettlement assistance, and exhibition opportunities to artists who have been persecuted for their work, and New York's National Coalition Against Censorship, which for over twenty years has assisted artists and arts presenters facing censorship pressure and which promoting public access to their work and champions their ability to freely express their views, no matter how controversial or unpopular.

"The economic, racial, and political turbulence of our contemporary moment affects the lives of artists as well as the work they produce," noted Warhol Foundation program director Rachel Bers. "Museums, nonprofit galleries, and other artist-centered organizations are essential sites for artists to incubate, interrogate, develop and discuss projects that tangle with the complexity of the present; the foundation values the prominence these platforms give to artistic visions and voices, centering artists' perspectives in conversations that extend far beyond the art world."

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

A full list of grantees is below.

## **Fall 2021 Grant Recipients | Program Support Over 2 Years**

A.I.R. Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (\$60,000)

Art Papers, Atlanta (\$100,000)

Artistic Freedom Initiative, Brooklyn, NY (\$100,000)

Artists Space, New York (\$130,000)

Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, FL (\$100,000)

Baxter Street at The Camera Club of New York, New York (\$60,000)

CALA Alliance, Phoenix (\$100,000)

Chicago Film Society, Chicago (\$50,000)

Coaxial Arts Foundation, Los Angeles (\$60,000)

Creative Time, Inc., New York (\$100,000)

DiverseWorks, Houston (\$100,000)

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The Flaherty / International Film Seminars, Brooklyn, NY (\$100,000)

FotoFest, Houston (\$80,000)

Fulcrum Arts, Pasadena, CA (\$50,000)

Indigo Arts Alliance, Portland, ME (\$100,000)

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles (\$100,000)

Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (\$100,000)

Museum of Jurassic Technology, Culver City, CA (\$60,000)

National Coalition Against Censorship, New York (\$150,000)

Pike School of Art - Mississippi, McComb, MS (\$60,000)

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR (\$150,000)

Providence College Galleries, Providence, RI (\$80,000)

Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (\$100,000)

Root Division, San Francisco (\$100,000)

# LISSON GALLERY

Second Street Gallery, Charlottesville, VA (\$80,000)

SPACE Gallery, Portland, ME (\$100,000)

Squeaky Wheel Film and Media Art Center, Buffalo (\$100,000)

The Wende Museum of the Cold War, Culver City, CA (\$80,000)

## **Fall 2021 Grant Recipients | Exhibition Support**

Americas Society, New York, “Tropical is Political: Caribbean Art Under the Visitor Economy Regime” (\$50,000)

Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, “Dara Birnbaum: Reaction” (\$35,000)

Bass Museum, Miami Beach, FL, exhibition program support (over 2 years) (\$100,000)

Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, 58th Carnegie International (\$150,000)

Cincinnati Art Museum, “Natural World” (\$75,000)

Denver Art Museum, “Who tells a tale, adds a tail: Latin America and Contemporary Art” (\$65,000)

Fisk University Galleries, Nashville, “African Modernism in America, 1947–1967” (\$100,000)

Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection / University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, “Madayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala,” (\$100,000)

Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Wisconsin, “Faisal Abdu’Allah” (\$50,000)

The Menil Collection, Houston, “John Akomfrah: ‘The SNCC Manifestoes’” (\$100,000)

El Museo del Barrio, New York, “Juan Francisco Elso: Por América” (\$100,000)

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, “Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora, 1990s–Today” (\$100,000)

The Queens Museum, New York, “Xaviera Simmons” (\$100,000)

San Jose Museum of Art, California, “Kelly Akashi: Of the Weeds” (\$50,000)

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, “Pacita Abad” (\$100,000)

The Wolfsonian - Florida International University (FIU), Miami Beach, Roberto Lugo exhibition and mural project (\$40,000)

# LISSON GALLERY

## **Fall 2021 Grant Recipients | Curatorial Research Fellowship**

MASS MoCa, North Adams, MA, Denise Markonish (\$50,000)

Mishkin Gallery, Baruch College, CUNY, New York, Macarena Gómez-Barris and Alaina Claire Feldman (\$50,000)

Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, Miranda Lash (\$50,000)

Katherine E. Nash Gallery, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Teréz Iacovino and José López Serra (\$47,000)

Ucross Foundation, Clearmont, WY, Sharon Dynak and Tracey Kikut (\$47,000)

ARTNews

12 January 2022

## Warhol Foundation Doles Out \$4.1 M. in Grants to 49 Art Institutions



BY MAXIMILIANO DURÓN January 12, 2022 10:00am

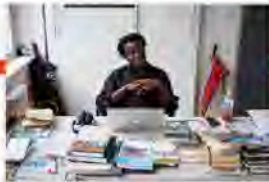


The Andy **Warhol Foundation** for the Visual Arts has named the 49 arts organization that received a combined \$4.1 million in funds as part of its Fall 2021 grant cycle. As part of the announcement, the foundation also unveiled a new website designed by Wkshps.

The grants go toward overall programmatic support over two years to organizations for varying between \$50,000 and \$150,000 and for specific exhibition support for funds ranging between \$35,000 and \$150,000. Five institutions also received curatorial research fellowships for either \$47,000 or \$50,000.

In a statement, Warhol Foundation president Joel Wachs said, “The Fall 2021 grantees are adapting and inventing new ways to meet the needs of artists as they. Artists are at the heart of the Foundation’s work, and it is more important than ever to shore up the organizations that sustain and empower them as they evolve their practices.”

### Related Articles



**Celebrated Filmmaker John Akomfrah to Represent Great Britain at the 2024 Venice Biennale**

**British Artists John Akomfrah and Grayson Perry Knighted**

Several highly anticipated shows received funding. The highest amount of support, \$150,000, went to the Carnegie Museum for its forthcoming Carnegie International exhibition, which opens in September and is organized by curator Sohrab Mohebbi. Other major surveys that received \$100,000 are ones devoted to **John Akomfrah** at the Menil Collection in Houston, Juan Francisco Elso at the El Museo del Barrio in New York, **Xaviera Simmons** at the Queens Museum, and **Pacita Abad** at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. A number of sweeping group exhibitions also received funding, including “Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora, 1990s – Today” at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (\$100,000), “African Modernism in America, 1947-1967” at Fisk University Galleries in Nashville (\$100,000), and “Madayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala” at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville (\$100,000).

Additionally, 20 of the grantees in this cycle are first-time recipients of support from the Warhol Foundation, including the CALA Alliance in Phoenix, the Artistic Freedom Initiative in Brooklyn, Baxter Street at the Camera Club of New York, the Pike School of Art in Mississippi, and the Indigo Arts Alliance in Portland, Maine. Curators recognized as part of the fellowship program include Denise Markonish at MASS MoCA in North Adams and Miranda Lash at the Museum of

Contemporary Art Denver.

“Museums, non-profit galleries and other artist-centered organizations are essential sites for artists to incubate, interrogate, develop and discuss projects that tangle with the complexity of the present,” Warhol Foundation program director Rachel Bers said in a statement. “The Foundation values the prominence these platforms give to artistic visions and voices, centering artists’ perspectives in conversations that extend far beyond the art world.”

The full list of Fall 2021 grantees follows below.

# LISSON GALLERY

**A.I.R. Gallery**, Brooklyn, NY \$60,000  
**Art Papers**, Atlanta, GA \$100,000  
**Artistic Freedom Initiative**, Brooklyn, NY \$100,000  
**Artists Space**, New York, NY \$130,000  
**Atlantic Center for the Arts**, New Smyrna Beach, FL \$100,000  
**Baxter Street at The Camera Club of New York**, New York, NY \$60,000  
**CALA Alliance**, Phoenix, AZ \$100,000  
**Chicago Film Society**, Chicago, IL \$50,000  
**Coaxial Arts Foundation**, Los Angeles, CA \$60,000  
**Creative Time, Inc.**, New York, NY \$100,000  
**DiverseWorks**, Houston, TX \$100,000  
**The Flaherty / International Film Seminars**, Brooklyn, NY \$100,000  
**FotoFest**, Houston, TX \$80,000  
**Fulcrum Arts**, Pasadena, CA \$50,000  
**Indigo Arts Alliance**, Portland, ME \$100,000  
**Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions**, Los Angeles, CA \$100,000  
**Midway Contemporary Art**, Minneapolis, MN \$100,000  
**Museum of Jurassic Technology**, Culver City, CA \$60,000  
**National Coalition Against Censorship**, New York, NY \$150,000  
**Pike School of Art - Mississippi**, McComb, MS \$60,000  
**Portland Institute for Contemporary Art**, Portland, OR \$150,000  
**Providence College Galleries**, Providence, RI \$80,000  
**Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago**, Chicago, IL \$100,000  
**Root Division**, San Francisco, CA \$100,000

# LISSON GALLERY

**Second Street Gallery**, Charlottesville, VA \$80,000

**SPACE Gallery**, Portland, ME \$100,000

**Squeaky Wheel Film and Media Art Center**, Buffalo, NY \$100,000

**The Wende Museum of the Cold War**, Culver City, CA \$80,000

*Fall 2021 Grant Recipients | Exhibition Support*

**Americas Society**, New York, NY

“Tropical is Political: Caribbean Art Under the Visitor Economy Regime” – \$50,000

**Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College**, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

“Dara Birnbaum: Reaction” – \$35,000

**Bass Museum**, Miami Beach, FL

Exhibition program support (over 2 years) – \$100,000

**Carnegie Museum of Art**, Pittsburgh, PA

58th Carnegie International – \$150,000

**Cincinnati Art Museum**, Cincinnati, OH

“Natural World” – \$75,000

**Denver Art Museum**, Denver, CO

“Who tells a tale, adds a tail: Latin America and Contemporary Art” – \$65,000

**Fisk University Galleries**, Nashville, TN

“African Modernism in America, 1947-1967” – \$100,000

# LISSON GALLERY

**Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection / University of Virginia**, Charlottesville, VA  
“Madayin: Eight Decades of Aboriginal Australian Bark Painting from Yirrkala” – \$100,000

**Madison Museum of Contemporary Art**, Madison, WI  
Faisal Abdu’Allah – \$50,000

**The Menil Collection**, Houston, TX  
“John Akomfrah, “The SNCC Manifestoes”” – \$100,000

**El Museo del Barrio**, New York, NY  
“Juan Francisco Elso: Por América” – \$100,000

**Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago**, Chicago, IL  
“Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora, 1990s – Today” – \$100,000

**The Queens Museum**, Queens, NY  
Xaviera Simmons – \$100,000

**San Jose Museum of Art**, San Jose, CA  
“Kelly Akashi: Of the Weeds” – \$50,000

**Walker Art Center**, Minneapolis, MN  
Pacita Abad – \$100,000

**The Wolfsonian – Florida International University (FIU)**, Miami Beach, FL  
Roberto Lugo exhibition and mural project – \$40,000

*Fall 2021 Grant Recipients | Curatorial Research Fellowship*

**MASS MoCa**, North Adams, MA  
Denise Markonish – \$50,000

**Mishkin Gallery, Baruch College, CUNY**, New York, NY  
Macarena Gómez-Barris and Alaina Claire Feldman – \$50,000

**Museum of Contemporary Art Denver**, Denver, CO  
Miranda Lash – \$50,000

**Katherine E. Nash Gallery, University of Minnesota**, Minneapolis, MN  
Teréz Iacovino and José López Serra – \$47,000

**Ucross Foundation**, Clearmont, WY  
Sharon Dynak and Tracey Kikut – \$47,000

Artsy

18 February 2022

Art Market

## The 10 Best Booths at Frieze Los Angeles 2022

Catherine Wagley

Feb 18, 2022 11:56AM



Sarah Rosalena Brady, installation view in Garden's booth at Frieze Los Angeles 2022. Photo by Ian Byers-Gamber. Courtesy of the artist and Garden, Los Angeles.

It has been two years since the last edition of Frieze Los Angeles, and the fair has left its previous whimsical home on the Paramount Studios backlot for a more conventional site in the city's most famously wealthy neighborhood: a tent on the grounds of the bright-white Beverly Hills Hilton. It has also grown. The 2020 edition included 70 galleries, while there are 100 this year, spread across three sections of the well-lit tent. The overabundance that comes with a fair this size always makes close looking a challenge, and thus it's even more of a delight when specific artworks catch the eye. Here are 10 standout booths from Frieze Los Angeles 2022.

# LISSON GALLERY

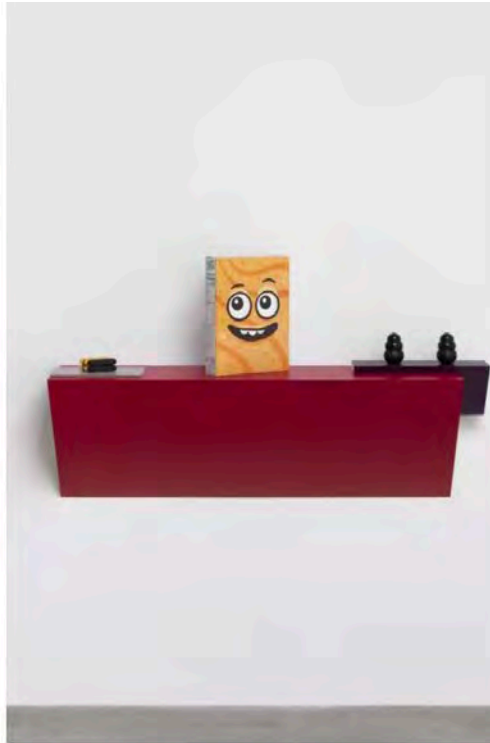
## Tanya Bonakdar Gallery

Booth C11

With works by Kelly Akashi, Martin Boyce, Sandra Cinto, Olafur Eliasson, Shilpa Gupta, Laura Lima, Mark Manders, Lisa Oppenheim, Analia Saban, Tomás Saraceno, Thomas Scheibitz, Haim Steinbach, Sarah Sze, and Lisa Williamson



Lisa Williamson, *Dive*, 2022. Courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles.



Haim Steinbach, *at hand*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles.

The best thing about Tanya Bonakdar's presentation is the way it makes artists on her roster—some of whom don't always seem terribly related—feel like part of a shared lineage. A comical sculpture by longtime conceptualist Haim Steinbach hangs right outside the booth, facing the fair's aisle. Called *at hand* (2021), it consists of a medium-size red laminated shelf with two black dog chew toys, a cereal box painted to look kind of like SpongeBob, and two black-and-yellow hand grip strengtheners on it. The absurd yet under-control energy of Steinbach's display carries around the corner, where L.A.-based artist Lisa Williamson's *Dive* (2022) hangs. Pea green, pink, and light gold stripes run up and down a long piece of aluminum. Sixteen little rectangles, their matching stripes painted in the opposite direction, protrude outward, looking like mini diving boards that hover over nothing but fair tent flooring. In this context, even Olafur Eliasson's sleek *Colour experiment no. 102* (2021) appears more lighthearted than it otherwise might.

Mousse Magazine  
12 February 2021

## Kelly Akashi “Faultline” at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles



Kelly Akashi, *Be Me*, 2020-2021. Courtesy: the artist and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles/New York. Photo: Paul Salvesson

François Ghebaly is proud to present Kelly Akashi’s third solo exhibition with the gallery: “Faultline”. The exhibition tracks the continual evolution of Akashi’s practice as she incorporates new photographic and craft traditions into her expansive practice.

Originally trained in photography, Akashi’s approach to sculpture consistently shows how materials can capture and render not only time, but emotional experience, interiority, and memory. She frequently uses cast bronze, blown glass, melting wax, and other materials that encode the passage of a moment. In “Faultline”, these materials are joined by new additions to her repertoire: carved stone, polished aluminum, and heirloom jewelry worn, loved, and gifted by her and her family. Taken together, the works pose biological and geological materials within a symbolic space of mind and memory.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The exhibition opens with a series of new crystalline photographs, produced through chemical processes of growth and fixity. Akashi grew crystals onto photographic film, then developed them using chemical techniques like silver gelatine, cibachrome, or chromogenic processing, capturing their quasibiotic structures in luminous images that she calls crystallographs. Akashi pairs these works with a gleaming column of polished aluminum, lying prone the length of her body and formed to a visualization of her pulse. Biometrics made physical, the work introduces the idea of the body segmented and diffused into inorganic materials, a dynamic also at play in Akashi's cast hand sculptures. One is suspended in the next hallway, holding aloft an intricate sphere of flame-worked glass, sprouting vines and blossoms from within.

The sparse second gallery of the exhibition contains a single sculpture, a monument depicting the artist's body carved into streaked marble. In this work as in others in her recent practice, Akashi draws on the Japanese notion of *mono no aware*, a gentle sensitivity to the state of impermanence and transience that underlies all things. Akashi heightens this attentiveness to ephemerality by showering the room with flower petals, which desiccate and decay over the course of the exhibition. The colorful scatter suggests a carnival or celebration as much as an untended memorial, emphasizing a sense of aftermath.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Entering the final room of the exhibition one is greeted first by the scent of earth. Four massive earthen forms support an array of new sculptures in a diverse range of materials, from cast crystal and carved stone to flameworked glass and heirloom jewelry. These works divulge a personal past in multiple ways. The heirloom objects speak to intergenerational passage and stand in for lineage and the delivery of familial knowledge. More directly to Akashi's family story are materials that originated in Poston, Arizona, the site of one of the largest internment camps for Japanese Americans during the 1940s. This was the site of the Akashi family's internment. The artist brought physical remnants from the site, including stones, fallen tree branches, and tumbleweeds, which she integrates into a number of sculptures in the exhibition. Throughout the exhibition, these works explore the sedimentation of experience and the layering of passing moments, passing lifetimes, and passing generations.

At François Ghebaly, Los Angeles  
until December 4, 2021

*Artillery*

28 December 2021

# Top 10 Picks of 2021

by Ezrha Jean Black | Dec 28, 2021



Installation view, Kelly Akashi, *Faultline*, 2021, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles.

Courtesy of the Artist and François Ghebaly Gallery. Photo: Marten Elder

## **Kelly Akashi: Faultline** **François Ghebaly**

Do you remember that penultimate scene in Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, where, after his solo space vessel has plunged a few zillion light years through a space portal, Captain David Bowman walks into a room that seems suspended between a kind of Renaissance earth moment and infinite space time? Akashi's show had similar effect—with its constellation of objects, "crystallographs" (which have an X-ray/scan effect), tree branches, stone and cast crystal—holding family jewels and heirlooms—and a flower-strewn effigy of the artist herself. In short, the artist was present—passing through us in the very atmosphere we breathed.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Ocula*

17 November 2021

## Kelly Akashi's Circle of Life Connects Body to Cosmos

By [Nicholas Nauman](#)  
Los Angeles  
17 November 2021

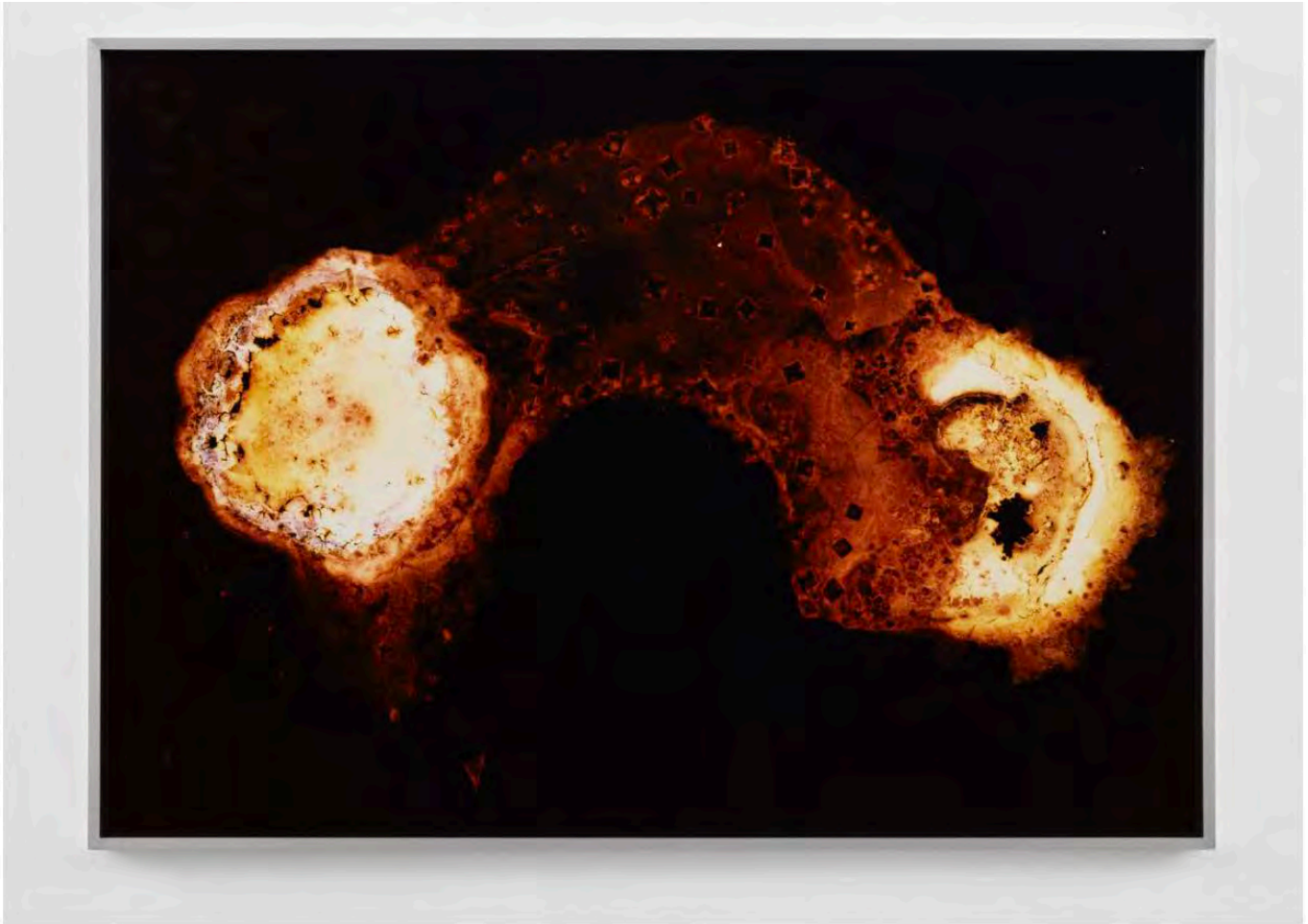
Kelly Akashi's exhibition at François Ghebaly in [Los Angeles](#), *Faultline* (5 November–4 December 2021), is a quiet derangement of mediums that colludes with the earth's physicality to aestheticise absent oppositions between life, death, and non-life.



Kelly Akashi, *Long Exposure* (2021). Carved, polished, and waxed marble, plant matter. 81.5 x 184 x 76 cm.  
Exhibition view: *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021). Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

The show begins in a room with vividly coloured photographic prints containing fine traces of crystalline structures. Akashi is an educated photographer, but these aren't quite photographs—she let crystals, which are not alive but certainly proliferate, grow themselves on film.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Formation* (2021). Chromogenic crystallograph in aluminium artist's frame, Unique. 56.5 x 87.5 cm (framed). Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

The images totally dement the expectation of two dimensions: trails of aggregation and involution create depth, hint at symmetry, and give way to lopsided tessellation. Geometries of motion promise further movement into details both like and unlike those which precede them.

The crystals look like they know what they're doing. The fractal singularity caught on film only one function of chaotic beauty's laughing participation in the routine elegance of math. Each print is called *Formation*, utterly distinct but properly named the same.

# LISSON GALLERY



Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021).  
Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

Dizzying as all that sounds, *Six Beats of My Heart at the Scale of My Body* (2021) grounds the viewer. An aluminium rendering of Akashi's measured heartbeat, it's a sculpture of a waveform, which is a picture of a pulse. Nearby, a webbed glass orb (*Bloom*, 2021) hangs from a bronze-cast hand.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Bloom* (2021). Flame-worked borosilicate, silicone coated stainless steel cable, lost-wax cast bronze. 134.5 x 20.5 x 30.5 cm. Exhibition view: *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021). Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

Here, at the edge of the next room, emerges the unmistakable smell of something earthen. It's unclear what's emitting the scent, but its evocation of the dank margin between fertile and fetid feels appropriate to the space's lone visible artwork: *Long Exposure* (2021), a carved marble statue of Akashi's body.

The figure is prone, stiff, set in a block like a sarcophagus. Its appeal to death is not at odds with its life-like precision and the once-living flower petals scattered across it.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Long Exposure* (2021). Carved, polished, and waxed marble, plant matter. 81.5 x 184 x 76 cm. Exhibition view: *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021). Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

There is one more room, where it is evident that the muddy smell is coming from four enormous display pedestals made of compressed dirt. Dapples and cracks in sharply angled surfaces appear to release the aroma from well below the gallery's floor.

Objects sit atop the platforms: crystal hands with smooth edges, bronze hands with wrists ragged like ripped tendons, bronze tree branches—each called *Witness* (2021).

# LISSON GALLERY



Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021).  
Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

Some hands are ornamented with heirloom jewellery from Akashi's family, some proffer exactly modelled sculptures of plantlife, some sprout plants from their flesh or emerge from stone. One poses a desert pinecone's needles like a spider, making pointed depressions on the pads of outstretched fingers.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Cultivator (Fruiting Whorl)* (2021) (detail). Carved, polished, and waxed travertine, cast lead crystal, lost-wax cast bronze. 47 x 45.5 x 6.5 cm. Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

A beeswax human torso pressed with thorny pieces of tumbleweed is called *Heirloom* (2021). Like the other desert botanicals in the room, the tumbleweed comes from Poston, Arizona, where Akashi's family was held captive because of their Japanese heritage in one of the United States' WWII-era concentration camps.

‘Akashi’s work performs an always already existent alternative to the dualism of life versus death, and does so according to the specificity of her embodied self.’

The press release for *Faultline* refers to *mono no aware*, the Japanese expression that is not quite adequately translated in such phrases as 'the pathos of things', or 'sensitivity to ephemerality'.

# LISSON GALLERY



Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021).  
Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

Akashi's work instantiates the concept with far more subtlety and rigour: not just a feeling to do with impermanence, but the sense that arises in the encounter between absolute flux and those aspects of its fleeting forms that come to self-consciousness.

It is the gentle gasp of the real as it affects its own nature with flashes of coherence, whether autopoetic crystal patterns or a knowing subject like the artist herself.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Inheritance* (2021). Poston stone, cast lead crystal, heirloom (grandmother's ring). 14 x 20.5 x 15 cm. Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

Physical and historical processes bear the universal whole and radical multiplicity at the same time and in the same space. The forces of the earth are the forces of the cosmos are the forces of history are the forces of a person; Akashi's work submits to and consigns the irreconcilability of these scalar fluctuations.

# LISSON GALLERY

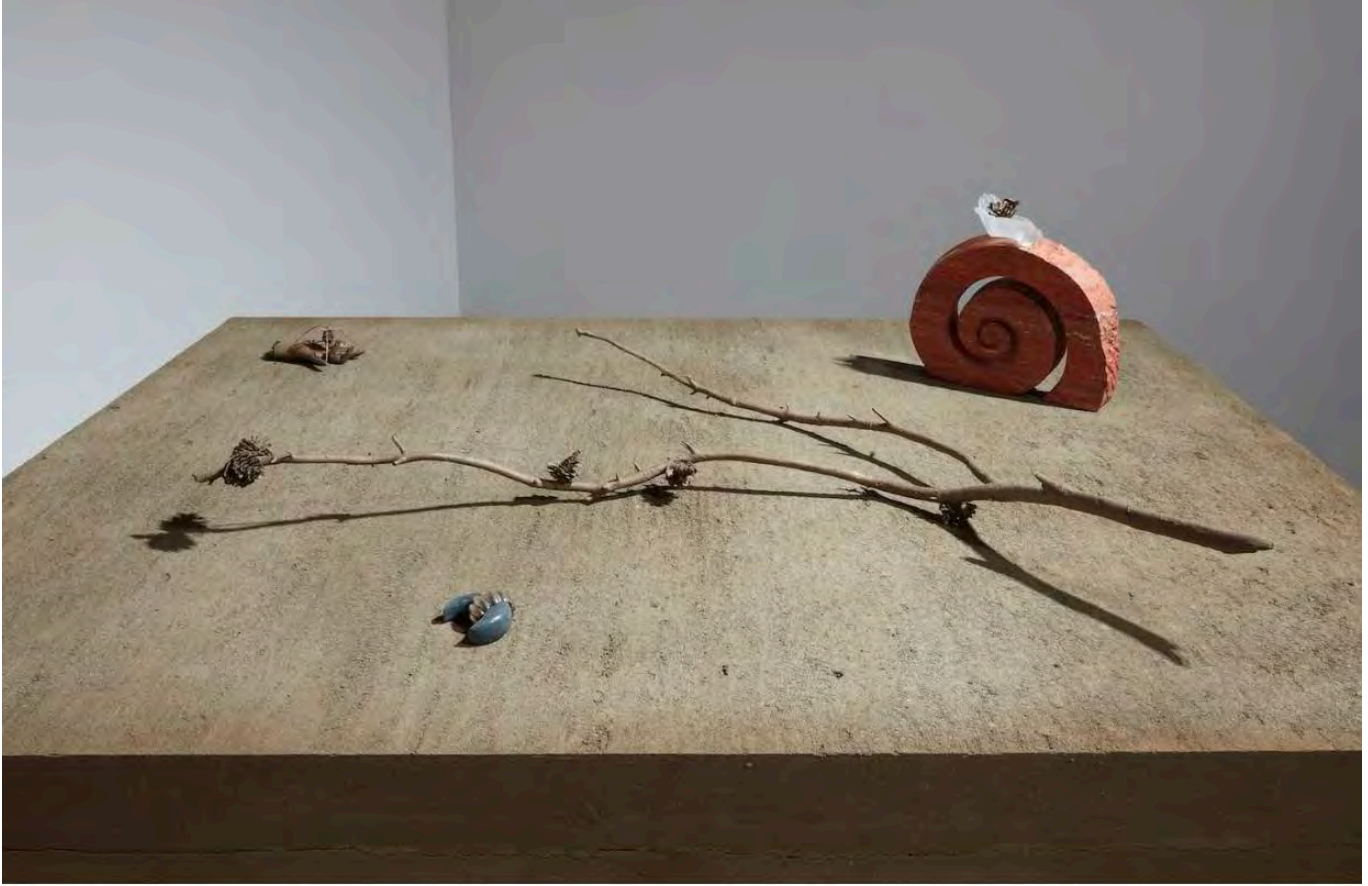


Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021).  
Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

The art is indifferent to the linear passage through the gallery I describe —each artwork relates to all the artworks. The textures of the earthen platforms pronounce their detail as if familiar with the crystal prints. The beeswax figure echoes the marble, subject in their own ways to durability and decay; heirlooms signal generations of resemblances and divergences among selves.

The envisioned heartbeat recalls that nothing measured is inextricable from the character of its measuring apparatus, while any representation of the artist's individuated body both flattens and discloses the materiality through which she moves and from which she is distinguished.

# LISSON GALLERY



Exhibition view: Kelly Akashi, *Faultline*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (5 November–4 December 2021).  
Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly.

Akashi's work performs an always already existent alternative to the dualism of life versus death, and does so according to the specificity of her embodied self. Her poetics dislocates scientific individualism and racist histories of power that depend on the disavowal of the ongoing differentiation of form by process.

Moving back through the gallery, the smell lingers, the flowers are a little more dead, and the prints continue to hang near the entrance that is now an exit. —[O]

*Medium*

3 November 2021

# Barnsdall Art Park Foundation Announces the Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop Exhibition



Eraina Ferguson · [Follow](#)

4 min read · Nov 3, 2021

## 22 LA Artists, Architects, and Designers Dedicate their Creativity to the Inaugural Fundraiser

The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation announces the Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop Exhibition and Auction, which will be on view from November 13 to December 4, 2021 at the contemporary art gallery, Luis De Jesus Los Angeles (1110 Mateo Street, Los Angeles). This creative fundraising initiative will support the goal to plant 40 new olive trees at Barnsdall Art Park and maintain the health and overall condition of the site's 463 existing olive trees. The group exhibition will feature original "Barnsdall Olive Wood" objects created by 22 renowned LA artists, designers, architects, and landscape architects nominated by the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation's Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop Committee and selected by the Barnsdall Foundation's Board of Directors.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Earlier this year, the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation partnered with the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks and the Los Angeles Parks Foundation to revitalize Barnsdall Art Park's historic 130-year-old olive grove, which was established in the 1890s. The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation contributed \$25,000 to the Los Angeles Parks Foundation's Adopt-a-Park program, and that grant funded the horticultural survey and forensic analysis of the olive grove, the repair and improvement of its irrigation system, the careful pruning of 400 olive trees, the removal of 20 existing olive tree stumps, and the development of a comprehensive strategy for planting additional olive trees at the park.

The Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop was established by the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation to transform pruned and saved olive wood limbs from the trees in Barnsdall Art Park into creative new objects. From November 13 to December 4, those extraordinary items will be on exhibit at Luis De Jesus Los Angeles.

Beginning November 13, the public may view the group exhibition during the gallery's normal business hours. (Tuesday — Friday: 11 am — 6 pm and Saturday 10 am — 6 pm.) A public opening reception will be held at Luis De Jesus Los Angeles on November 13 from 3 to 7 pm.

The exhibited olive wood objects will also be sold via an online fundraising auction. The net profit from each acquired piece will be divided between the creator of that item and the Barnsdall Olive Grove Fund. The individuals who provide the winning bids for the one of a kind olive wood creations will become members of the Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop Collectors Circle, which will include a special preview of the objects made for the future editions of this annual group exhibition and auction.

# LISSON GALLERY

The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation is honored and grateful that the following 22 talented individuals and organizations have dedicated their creativity and valuable time to the inaugural Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop Exhibition and Auction.

Tanya Aguiñiga

Kelly Akashi

Jamie Bush + Co.

Cayetano Ferrer

Janna Ireland

Matt Johnson

JPW3

Killspencer: Spencer Nikosey

Galia Linn

Nancy Monk

Kori Newkirk

Offerman Woodshop: Sarah Watlington

Sev's Wood Crafts: Katherine Pakradouni

Sev's Wood Crafts: Sev Pakradouni

Brendan Ravenhill

Aili Schmeltz

Azadeh Shladovsky

Emily Sudd

Terremoto: David Godshall

Welcome Projects: Laurel Conseulo Broughton

wrk-shp: Airi Isoda and Ryan Upton

Rosha Yaghmai

Working together to achieve the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation's fundraising mission will help amplify the beauty and integrity of this treasured landscape, improve the air quality of the East Hollywood community, support the City of Los Angeles' goal to plant 90,000 new trees as part of L.A.'s Green New Deal, and contribute to a spirit of collective healing, which is vital during these challenging times.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Elephant Journal*  
2 November 2021

*November 2, 2021*

## A “Green” Exhibition with a Mission Debuts at Luis De Jesus Los Angeles Gallery on November 13

Barnsdall Art Park Foundation is debuting the Barnsdall Olive Wood Workshop Exhibition and Online Auction – from November 13 to December 4, 2021 – at the contemporary art gallery, Luis De Jesus Los Angeles (1110 Mateo Street, Los Angeles). The group exhibition will feature original “Barnsdall Olive Wood” that was recently pruned and saved from the park’s trees – as part of Barnsdall Park’s ongoing Olive Grove revitalization efforts – into works for art by 22 renowned LA artists, designers, architects & landscape architects. LA artists participating include Janna Ireland, JPW3, Cayetano Ferrer, Kelly Akashi, Azadeh Shladovsky, Nancy Monk and Jamie Bush, to name a few.

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# LISSON GALLERY

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*Ocula*  
21 July 2021

## Gold Art Prize Will Award \$25,000 to Five AAPI Artists

By [Sam Gaskin](#)  
San Francisco  
21 July 2021

### LATEST OCULA EDITORIAL

#### INSIGHT

**In Italy, Panorama Presents New Exhibition Possibilities**  
20 September 2023

#### NEWS

**Marina Abramović Enlists Performance Artists in London**  
19 September 2023

Thirty-two Asian American and Pacific Island artists have been nominated for the inaugural prize.



Gold House president Bing Chen and art consultant Kelly Huang. Courtesy Gold House.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

American non-profit Gold House and art consultant Kelly Huang today announced a new prize for Asian American and Pacific Island (AAPI) artists.

The biennial Gold Art Prize will be awarded to five artists, each of whom will receive U.S. \$25,000, mentorship, and exposure through a mini documentary series and the publication of a catalogue.

The inaugural prize nominees include Patty Chang, Chaw Ei Thein, Candice Lin, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, and Cindy Ji Hye Kim.

'Our goal is to celebrate this next generation of AAPI and Asian diaspora artists on a broad scale to create meaningful opportunities for recognition, invite critical study, and build a more inclusive canon,' Huang said.

Asians make up about seven percent of the U.S. population, but less than two percent of museum trustees identify as Asian, according to the American Alliance of Museums.

'We are especially proud that the award is being given by leading curators, creatives, and changemakers coming together to ensure we won't be overlooked again,' Huang said.

Asians make up about seven percent of the U.S. population, but less than two percent of museum trustees identify as Asian, according to the American Alliance of Museums.

'We are especially proud that the award is being given by leading curators, creatives, and changemakers coming together to ensure we won't be overlooked again,' Huang said.

# LISSON GALLERY

The Gold Art Prize's nomination committee includes directors and curators at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and other leading art institutions.

The winners of the prize will be chosen by a separate selection committee, comprising a mixture of arts professionals and creative practitioners such as fashion designer Phillip Lim, author Cathy Park Hong, and *Top Chef* host Padma Lakshmi. Winners will be announced in December.



NEWS

Li Binyuan Wins \$30,000 Sovereign Asian Art Prize

[READ MORE](#)

The Sovereign Art Foundation, which awards its own prestigious prize to Asian artists, also announced a new prize this week in collaboration with the Norval Foundation. The Norval Sovereign African Art Prize will award 500,000 South African Rand (U.S. \$34,000) to an artist from Africa and the African Diaspora. The winner will be announced in February 2022.

The full list of nominees for the Gold Art Prize, as well as members of the nomination and selection committees, follows below. —[O]

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

## Gold Art Prize Nominees

Jaishri Abichandani

Kelly Akashi

Patty Chang

Tiffany Chung

Daniel Chew

Jesse Chun

Shaghayegh Cyrus

Chaw Ei Thein

Jes Fan

Brendan Fernandes

Chitra Ganesh

Oto Gillen

Jacqueline Kiyomi Gork

Glenn Kaino

Cindy Ji Hye Kim

Josh Kline

Maggie Lee

Maia Ruth Lee

Summer Meiling Lee

Candice Lin

Beili Liu

Michelle Lopez

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Shahryar Nashat

Tuan Andrew Nguyen

Puppies Puppies (Jade Kuriki Olivo)

Miljohn Ruperto

Aki Sasamoto

Sin Wai Kin

Kenneth Tam

Evelyn Taocheng Wang

Cici Wu

## **Gold Art Prize Nomination Committee**

Aleesa Pitchamarn Alexander — Assistant Curator of American Art at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University and Co-Director of the Asian American Art Initiative

Abby Chen — Head of Contemporary Art, Asian Art Museum

Christine Y. Kim — Curator of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Christopher Y. Lew — Nancy and Fred Poses Associate Curator, Whitney Museum of American Art

Sohrab Mohebbi — Curator of the Carnegie International's 58th edition

Daisy Nam — Director, Ballroom Marfa

Anurahda Vikram — Independent writer, curator and educator based in Los Angeles

X Zhu—Nowell — Assistant Curator, Guggenheim

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

## Gold Art Prize Selection Committee

Angelo Chan — Asian Art Circle and Collection's Council, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Gemma Chan — Actress, Producer, Activist

Lorin Gu — Founder, Recharge Foundation

Prabal Gurung — Fashion Designer, Prabal Gurung

Cathy Park Hong — New York Times bestselling author

Padma Lakshmi — Author, Host, & Executive Producer

Miyoung Lee — Vice Chair, Board of the Whitney Museum of American Art

Dennis Lim — Director of Programming, The Film Society of Lincoln Center

Phillip Lim — Fashion Designer, 3.1 Phillip Lim

Komal Shah — Board of Trustees Member, SFMOMA

Akiko Yamazaki — Chair of the Board, Asian Art Museum

# LISSON GALLERY

*Artnet*

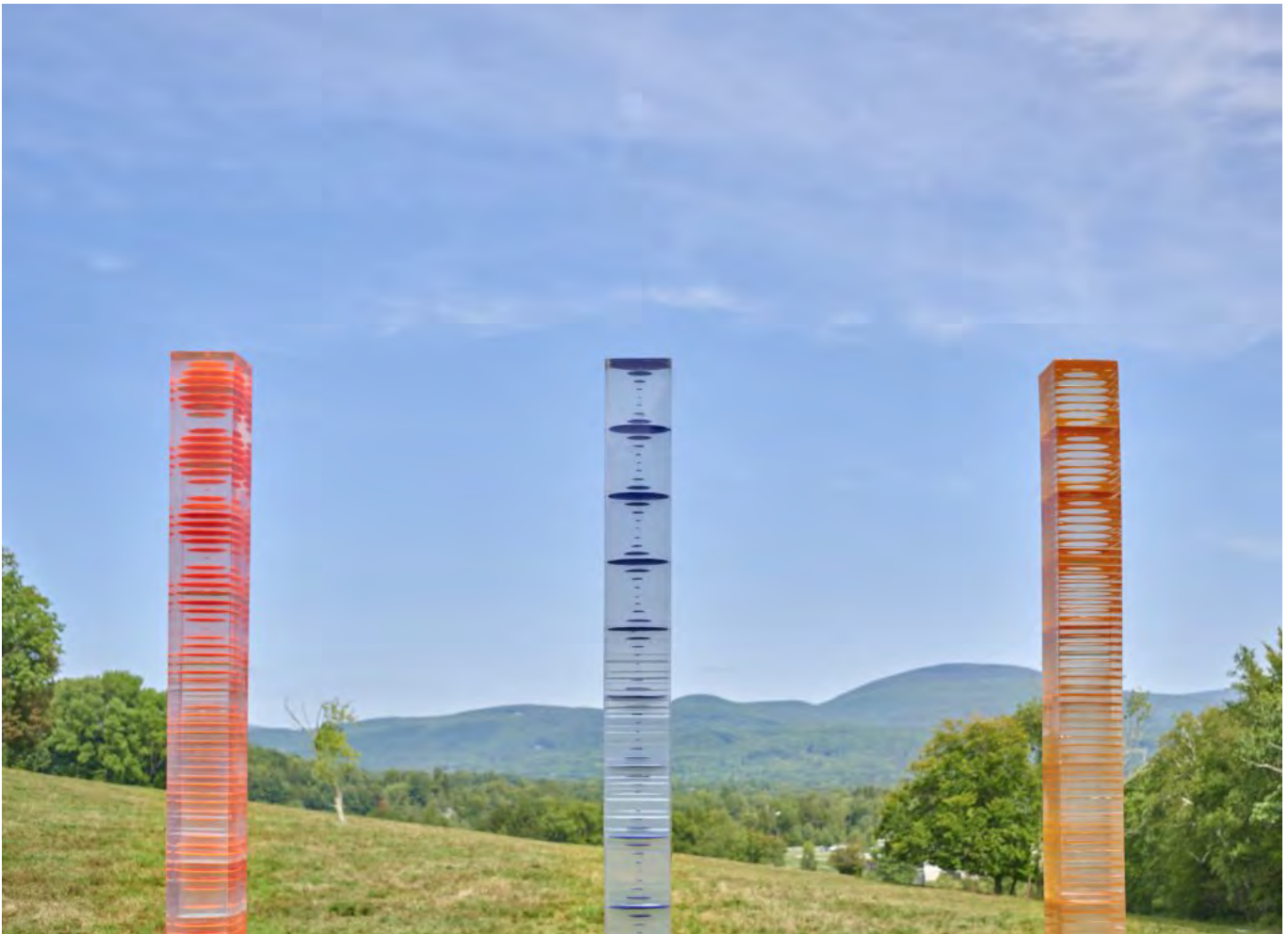
14 July 2021

## On View

## Sculptor Eva LeWitt's Colorful Outdoor Installation in Massachusetts Celebrates the Power of Observing Art in Nature—See Images Here

The artist is part of a group show taking place on the beautiful Massachusetts grounds of the Clark Institute.

**Artnet News**, July 14, 2021



Eva Lewitt, "Resin Towers" (2020). Photo courtesy of the artist and VI, VII, Oslo. Photo: Thomas Clark.

# LISSON GALLERY

One of the best parts about summer art exhibitions is that many offer opportunities to spend time outdoors.

One of the season's most exciting shows for this kind of escape—to take in beautiful artwork in an even more beautiful setting—is the Clark Institute's "Ground/work," which welcomes visitors to the sprawling grounds of the Berkshires-based museum in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

The show, the museum notes, highlights "a reverence for nature and a desire to further enliven the surrounding trails, pastures, and woods" of the property, and brings together bold, colorful installations from six contemporary female artists: Kelly Akashi, Nairy Baghramian, Jennie C. Jones, Analia Saban, Haegue Yang, and Eva LeWitt. All of the artists planned their works in response to sites they chose by hand, each of which are scattered about the Clark's massive 140-acre campus. The works were also planned with the changing landscape—and visitors hoping to escape into the bucolic wilds of the Berkshires—in mind.

"Ground/work," according to the museum, "highlights the balance between fragility and resilience that both nature and the passage of time reveal, while offering fresh experiences with every visit." The works were conceived in part as a way to help visitors re-enter the world again, following a long year of isolation, and gently encourages them to re-engage with themes like the comforts of nature and community.

# LISSON GALLERY

One of the most striking works in the show is perhaps Eva LeWitt's *Resin Towers* (2020), which were assembled by the New York-based artist from tall pieces of colorful plastic in hues like fluorescent orange, yellow, and light aqua, and cast in layers of transparent resin. Together, the pieces create a pattern of expanding and contracting spheres as the viewer approaches the works or moves further away, depending on where they stand. The work was also planned to interact with particular elements of the landscape (including the sky, woods, grass, and light) and time of day, morphing as time passes, and seems to twirl more and more quickly as viewers approach it as if to "call them down the hill and beckon visitors to their site."

The works, which in many ways celebrate the "purity of hue against an ever-shifting landscape," according to the museum, will be on view until October 17. See images of the show below.



Eva LeWitt, "Resin Towers" (2020). Photo courtesy of the artist and VI, VII, Oslo. Photo: Thomas Clark.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Artnet*

7 June 2021

## People

### What I Buy and Why: Millennial Art Advisor Lawrence Van Hagen on How He Collects the Artists of His Generation

We caught up with the collector at his new home in London.

**Naomi Rea**, June 7, 2021



Portrait of Lawrence Van Hagen in his home in Chelsea, London. Image by Edd Horder. Courtesy of LVH Art.

# LISSON GALLERY

Lawrence Van Hagen is putting the finishing touches on his new home, a bright and airy apartment filled with art and design in London's Cadogan Square. The 27-year-old collector is an art advisor by day, having founded LVH Art, which specializes in postwar, modern, and contemporary art.

Since 2016, he has found a successful sales format in curating a series of pop-up exhibitions, titled "What's Up," designed to raise the profiles of emerging artists by placing them in dialogue with more established names. So far, the shows have been mounted in five different countries, from France to South Korea.

The program reflects Van Hagen's personal taste and collection, which includes emerging names from his generation, such as Issy Wood and Christina Quarles, as well as industry heavyweights like Gerhard Richter and Georg Baselitz.

We caught up with the collector at his new home in London to talk about the artwork he covets most, and the very delicate sculpture visitors can't seem to keep their hands off.



On the left, Gerhard Richter, *Abstraktes Bild* (2009). On the right, Donna Huanca, *High Roze* (2017). The sofa is by Ennio Chiggio, the lamp is Fabio Lenci for Guzzini and the table is from the 1970s. Courtesy of LVH Art.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **What was your first purchase (and how much did you pay for it)?**

I bought my first canvas by Donna Huanca for under £10,000 back in 2016. It is incredible to see all the career milestones she has accomplished since and how her practice is developing. I grew up in an art collector family, but this was the first large piece of art that I purchased myself, hence I feel particularly attached to it. I could not live without it! It has moved with me from home to home.

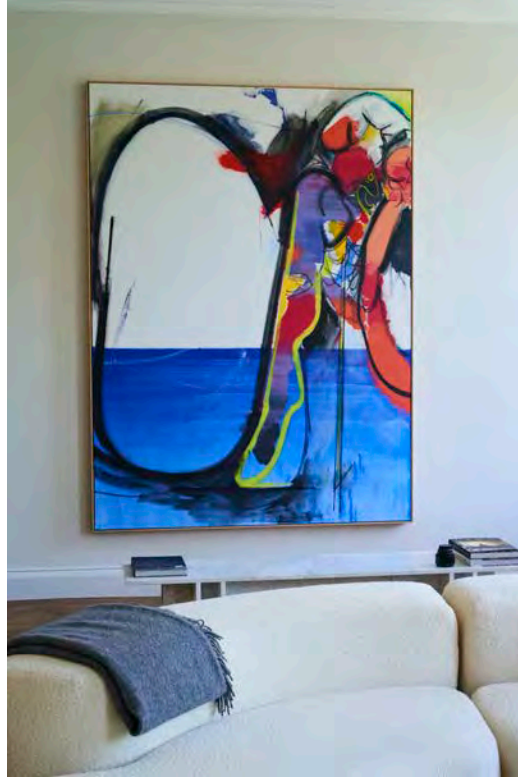
I first became acquainted with Huanca in 2015 and I immediately fell in love with her practice. There is a very mystical element to her canvases and her performances: the intensity of the colors, the textures, and shapes. Since then, I have been collecting her works and placing them into my clients' collections. She is one of the most impressive artists of our generation and I am confident that she will continue to push barriers and over-achieve. Her exhibitions at the Belvedere Museum in Vienna and the Marciano Art Foundation in L.A. were groundbreaking.

## **What was your most recent purchase?**

A large-scale canvas by Daniel Richter. I love the intensity of the colors against the presence of fragmented bodies—it's beautifully disquieting. His recent works tread a path between figuration and abstraction that creates these surreal landscapes charged with symbolism and art-historical references. However, they evade a single interpretation, which makes his work even more interesting.

Coming from a German family has made me grow a particular appreciation toward German artists and I believe Daniel Richter is one of the most important raising artists in German painting. He was born in Eutin and now lives and works in Berlin. In the early '90s he studied in Hamburg under Werner Büttner—one of the protagonists, along with Martin Kippenberger, of the revival of expressive trends in painting during the 1980s—and later worked as assistant to Albert Oehlen. These artistic influences are obvious in his work, but he has managed to create his own style and vocabulary, and I find it fascinating.

# LISSON GALLERY



Daniel Richter, *Haparanda (Tyska II)* 2020. Image by Edd Horder. Courtesy of LVH Art.

## **Which works or artists are you hoping to add to your collection this year?**

The first artist on my list is Martha Jungwirth. I have already placed a few in my clients' collections and this year I would love to buy one myself. Her process is a direct rhythm involving the body, with finger marks and even scratches remaining as a visceral record of her presence in the work. It's charged with passion and soul, and is really moving and emotional.

Another artist in my list is Loie Hollowell. I bought one of her beautiful works on paper some years ago and I would love to get my hands on one of her canvases soon. I love how she explores the feminine body in such a corporeal way: the textures, the forms, the colors, the three-dimensionality of the canvases. Her most recent body of work is breathtaking.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **What is the most expensive work of art that you own?**

A stunning “Abstraktes Bild” by Gerhard Richter. I am very happy with the fact that not only this piece is the most expensive one in my collection, but it is also the most important and historically relevant. Richter is widely regarded as one of the most important contemporary artists in the world and he is probably the greatest living European artist. I am very proud and humbled to own this painting and to be a gatekeeper of his work, which is part of the most important museums and art collections worldwide.



In the dining room, a large-scale canvas by Katherina Olschbaur meets a “Love Handles” by Anissa Kermiche, table by Angelo Mangiarotti and chairs by Gio Ponti. Lamp by Ingo Maurer.

# LISSON GALLERY

## Where do you buy art most frequently?

Artist studios when possible, otherwise galleries and fairs. Art fairs can be a bit overwhelming, but I always find something I love, or something I had had an eye on for a while. I also enjoy buying from galleries, but to me the greatest joy of art collecting is to get to know the artist on a personal level and be able to buy directly from his or her studio.

## Is there a work you regret purchasing?

Not really. I always say “buy what you love.” And that has always been my premise. Of course there are works I like better than others, or works I have which haven’t really appreciated much in value, but that is not something that matters when you buy out of passion.



Left to right: Daniel Richter, *Haparanda (Tyska II)* (2020). *Small Spall 2 IV* (2016). Georg Baselitz, *Ohne Titel (Untitled)* (2019). Courtesy of LVH Art.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **What work do you have hanging above your sofa? What about in your bathroom?**

In the living room above the sofa I have works by Gerhard Richter and Georg Baselitz. The dialogue between the two is remarkable. Both being post-war German artists it creates a narrative that is fueled by the history of the 20th century, and it goes beyond beauty, it is eternal and transcendental.

In the TV room I placed a *Sterne* (Stars) photograph by Thomas Ruff from 2012 and above the bath tub I have a photograph by Alex Prager from 2010. They both are very important and interesting photographers, the former a disciple of Bernd and Hilla Becher, the latter a disciple of Cindy Sherman.

## **What is the most impractical work of art you own?**

The most delicate sculpture by Kelly Akashi that everyone seems to want to touch. I love this sculpture. It's funny because Akashi is known for creating sculptures and installations that emphasize the reciprocity of touch. I think it is safe to say that her work really lives up to these assertions!

My sculpture is as fragile as it is beautiful, it's a bronze cast of two interwoven hands, capturing a momentary gesture into perpetual existence.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **What work do you wish you had bought when you had the chance?**

A hero painting by Vojtech Kovarik and another Lenz Geerk. Kovarik is a young artist from the Czech Republic who paints figuratively, depicting mythological heroes that challenge assumptions around sexuality and gender. His vividly colored compositions result in impactful paintings that evoke the strength of sculpture, making the characters in his paintings seem even more herculean. Conversely, his stereotypically hyper-masculine subjects display postures evoking fragility and introspection.

Geerk is another artist I love. I own one of his works but I will always regret not buying a second one when I had the chance. His paintings depict people at the threshold of excitement, creating psychologically charged paintings that draw out the hidden emotions of the human psyche.

## **If you could steal one work of art without getting caught, what would it be?**

A Cy Twombly “Bacchus” painting. In the 1950s, Twombly wrote that the act of painting could come out of “one ecstatic impulse,” and I find that these paintings convey a similar intensity: the energy of an unbroken movement across the large canvases. Titled after the Roman god of wine, the red color of the Bacchus paintings is evocative of both wine and blood, encompassing both the sensual pleasure and violent debauchery associated with the god.

*The Berkshire Edge*  
28 May 2021

## OUT & ABOUT

# Art in Public Places

Want to feel COVID-safe while enjoying good art outside? Here are places throughout the Berkshires that will welcome you this summer.

**BY JULIA DIXON**  
**POSTED ON MAY 28, 2021**



These Berkshire hills offer an incredible legacy of art in public spaces. Artists have been drawn to the landscape for centuries in search of tranquility and inspiration, but they have also exposed the community to their talents while here.

Private space was made public decades ago at [Jacob's Pillow](#) in Becket where performers danced—and continue to do so—without cost to anyone willing to sit and watch under a tree. In 1991, singer Arlo Guthrie purchased the [Old Trinity Church](#) in Great Barrington to serve as a spiritual, physical, and creative refuge for the community. Once a palatial estate, [Ashintully Gardens](#) in Tyringham was donated to The Trustees of Reservations in 1996, preserving the lands and architectural ruins for the public. And actors have performed [Shakespeare's plays](#) on Pittsfield's First Street Common for free for thousands of people nearly every year since 2014.

# LISSON GALLERY



*Tunnel/Tellers by Alicia Kwade at Art Omi. Photo courtesy Art Omi*

Publicly accessible art has taken on new meaning now, in a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has locked many of us at home for months and kept us socially distanced. Indoor spaces, where much of the world's art is contained, have become menacing and navigating social space has been challenging.

"We heard from the Clark that many people used the trails for respite from the stress that the pandemic precipitated," said Molly Epstein, co-curator of *Ground/work*, the first outdoor exhibition mounted by the [Clark Art Institute](#) in Williamstown. "We have a huge appreciation that [the show] happened at a moment when there was a deep need for comfort, solace, and spending time outdoors."

The Clark is one of several Berkshire cultural institutions to be showcasing art on its grounds this year. [Norman Rockwell Museum](#), [Berkshire Botanical Garden](#), and [Chesterwood](#) in Stockbridge and [The Mount](#) in Lenox and are all featuring outdoor exhibitions as part of their seasonal programming. Some are annual events that had established an important tradition of highlighting the work of regional and national sculptors. Others, like *Ground/work*, are embracing open-air campus assets to provide a safe space to see artworks.

# LISSON GALLERY



*Knee and Elbow* by Nairy Baghramian at *Ground/work* at The Clark. Photo: Thomas Clark

The six installations on view in *Ground/work* were completed last October and will remain on view through the fall. For Epstein and her fellow curator Abigail Ross Goodman, who began to work on this project years before the coronavirus surfaced, it was a perfect opportunity to extend the museum's reach into publicly accessible natural space.

"There's something exciting for artists about making work in a place that isn't as mitigated by the trappings of an indoor art experience," she said of participating artists Kelly Akashi, Nairy Baghramian, Jennie C. Jones, Eva LeWitt, Analia Saban, and Haegue Yang. They engaged the material world, embraced the changes in landscape that four seasons bring, and pushed their own practices in new directions in order to provide something special for visitors.

Great Barrington-based sculptor [Natalie Tyler](#), who also serves as the program director at SculptureNow, believes that their upcoming exhibition at The Mount will be especially powerful. "A lot of sculptures that may not have touched people before may [do so] now," she said.

# LISSON GALLERY

Tyler exhibited at TurnPark Art Space in West Stockbridge this spring and witnessed people interacting with her work in new ways. Public art is having a moment, she said, not simply because it is easy and safe to view works outside, but because of the “symbiotic relationship people have with something three-dimensional.”

“Sculptures have a deeper meaning now because we’ve been so isolated,” she said.

“There’s a renewed interest in interacting with what’s around us, whether that’s habitat or artworks.”

Temporary sculpture exhibitions aren’t the only projects that have changed the significance of public spaces. Murals and municipal artworks have long redefined community and reflected shared experience.

Vincent Ballentine’s *Metal and Stone*, a 100-foot-long painting of a train roaring through the Hoosac Tunnel, tells the story of North Adams’ industrial past. *Transitions*, a mural created in 2000 by artists William Blake, Jay Tobin, and others, commemorates the 100th anniversary of the Pittsfield Boys and Girls Club, the second in the United States. More murals will be coming to both cities this summer.

# LISSON GALLERY

"Last year, we encouraged people of color to submit proposals that reflected what was going on in the world," said Abby Powers of Artscape's ongoing paintbox project. Powers, who is chair of Pittsfield's public art committee, facilitated the installation of four new paintbox murals that tackle local and national issues including Black Lives Matter.

"Public art is breaking down barriers for viewers," said Powers. "We want to give residents of our community a voice and a space to share."

Many artists share their inspirations by inviting visitors to their studio or work space to see the art-making process first hand. Local sculptors Robert Butler, Roy Kanwit, and Matt Thomases have gone one step further, creating publicly accessible sculpture parks on their own properties which will all be open this season.

A sculptor who works with natural stone and metals, John Van Alstine established a sculpture park on his own land—nine acres surrounding an abandoned lumberyard on the Sacandaga River in New York's Adirondack State Park. Like many artists who manage their own parks, Van Alstine was inundated with local visitors last summer and welcomed guests by appointment only.

But the pandemic-induced isolation that lured many New Yorkers outside created a unique opportunity for the artist inside. "I have made more works this whole year in lockdown than I ever have," he said. "I was incredibly focused, almost like I was at a forced retreat."

Although Alstine produced nearly 80 new pieces, he will be exhibiting 11 large-scale works, made over the course of his career, at Chesterwood's 2021 Contemporary Sculpture Show in Stockbridge. He hopes the show will be an "awakening" for people who may not seek out art.

"The stone I work with is generally raw and unmanipulated—I see it as the spirit of the stone which I combine with industrial metals for a merging of cultural sensibilities," he said. "For me, the physical qualities of the work are the hook that can draw people in who might not know anything about sculpture."

# LISSON GALLERY

ArtNews  
21 April 2021

## **ARTnews in Brief: Glasgow International Details 2021 Edition—and More from April 30, 2021**

### **Friday, April 30**

#### *Glasgow International Details 2021 Edition*

The ninth edition of the **Glasgow International**, which will take place throughout the Scottish city from June 11–27, will feature work by over 100 artists, including **Martine Syms**, **Carol Rhodes**, **Sam Durant**, and others. The festival will encompass exhibitions, events, talks, and performances across 30 spaces in the city and online.

### **Thursday, April 29**

#### *François Ghebaly To Open New York Space*

The Los Angeles–based gallery **François Ghebaly** will open its first space in New York on May 7. Located at 389 Grand Street on the Lower East Side, the gallery’s inaugural exhibition in New York, titled “The Future in Present Tense,” will feature works by Kelly Akashi, Neil Beloufa, Candice Lin, Patrick Jackson, Christine Sun Kim, and other artists.

#### *Toledo Museum of Art Names First Director of Belonging & Community Engagement*

**Rhonda Sewell** has been appointed the first director of belonging & community engagement at the **Toledo Museum of Art** in Ohio. Sewell joins the museum from the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, where she served as the director of governmental and external affairs. Prior to her 15 years at the library, she worked as a journalist for the *Blade*, and was also an adjunct instructor in ethnic studies and mass communications at Bowling Green State University. She is the current president-elect of the Arts Commission board of trustees.

#### *Yossi Milo Gallery Now Represents Shikeith*

The artist and filmmaker **Shikeith**, whose practice spans film, sculpture, photography, and installation, has joined **Yossi Milo Gallery** in New York, where he will have his first exhibition in 2022. Shikeith’s work focuses on queerness and notions of Black masculinity, and he is currently presenting a solo exhibition at the Mattress Factory Museum of Contemporary Art in Pittsburgh.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **Wednesday, April 28**

### *Theme Park Ordered to Destroy Chris Burden 'Urban Light' Imitation*

According to a **report** by *Artnet News*, the Indonesian theme park Rabbit Town has been ordered by a court to destroy its imitation of **Chris Burden's** iconic LACMA installation *Urban Light* because it violates copyright law. The enterprise reportedly has 30 days to remove its copycat installation and publicly apologize to the artist's estate.

### *Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural and Education Center Adds Nine Board Members*

The New York–based **Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural and Education Center** has added nine new members to its board of directors. They are **Veronica Relea**, a partner in the New York office of Latham & Watkins who will serve as chair of the board; **Anisha Steephen**, a strategic leader in community development finance; **Beatriz De La Torre**, managing director of housing and homelessness at Trinity Church Wall Street; **Diego Leonardo Robayo**, public relations manager to the Historic Districts Council; **Guido Hartray**, a founding partner of Marvel Architects; **Urayoán Noel**, associate professor of English and Spanish and Portuguese at New York University; **Jorge Vazquez**, director of the Power and Democracy Program at the Advancement Project's National Office; **Richard Morales**, community partnerships manager at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center and former manager of public programs at El Museo del Barrio; and **Annya Ramírez-Jiménez**, director of Marvel Architects.

### *Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County Appoints Chief Strategy and External Relations Officer*

The **Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County** has been named **Shana Mathur** to the newly created position of chief strategy and external relations officer. Mathur will join the Museums in July 2021. From 2008 to 2018, she served as chief marketing officer at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, where she oversaw marketing, sales, and customer experience. Until 2020, she was was an independent consultant to cultural nonprofits in San Francisco.

## **Tuesday, April 27**

### *North Carolina Museum of Art Appoints Curator of American Art*

The **North Carolina Museum of Art** in Raleigh has appointed **Lauren Applebaum** as its next curator of American art, beginning May 3. Applebaum joins from the Toledo Museum of Art has appointed Lauren Applebaum, where she served as associate curator of American art. During her tenure, she oversaw various acquisitions, including Bisa Butler's quilted portrait of the 19th-century abolitionist Frederick Douglass, as well as a group of works by artists including Thornton Dial, Lonnie Holley, and Ronald Lockett given to the museum by the Souls Grown Deep Foundation.

### *Madison Avenue Spring Gallery Walk Details 2021 Edition*

The **Madison Avenue Spring Gallery Walk** in New York will take place on May 15. Participating galleries in this year's edition include **Acquavella Galleries**, **Franklin Parrasch**, **Gagosian**, **Lévy Gorvy**, **Skarstedt Gallery**, and **Van Doren Waxter**, among other enterprises. (*ARTnews* is the media sponsor for the Madison Avenue Spring Gallery Walk.) For the full list of galleries and events, **[click here](#)**.

### *Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation Launches Second CreARTE Grants Program*

The **Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation** has launched an open call for its second **Pérez CreARTE Grants Program**, which was established in 2019. The foundation will award over \$1.5 million to cultural organizations in the greater Miami area. This grant cycle will focus on arts access, arts education, and artist fellowships and residencies.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **Monday, April 26**

### *Anton Kern Gallery Now Represents Hein Koh*

**Hein Koh**, whose paintings, drawings, and sculptures often feature anthropomorphized foods, flowers, and other objects, has joined **Anton Kern Gallery** in New York. Koh often imbues her work with a quirky sense of humor, and her pieces have addressed feminism and selfhood. The artist has previously shown work at **Rockefeller Center**, Marvin Gardens, and other outfits.

### *Winners of 2021–2022 Rome Prize and Italian Fellowships Named*

The **American Academy in Rome** has named the winners of the 2021–2022 **Rome Prize and Italian Fellowships**. The 35 American and 5 Italian artists and scholars being recognized will each receive a stipend, studio, and room and board at the Academy's campus in Rome, beginning in September 2021. Among the artists who won are **Firelei Báez**, **Autumn Knight**, **Eric N. Mack**, **Daniel Joseph Martinez**, **La Nietas de Nonó** (Mapenzi Chibale Nonó and Mulowayi Iyaye Nonó), and **William Villalongo**. Additionally, **Carol Mancusi-Ungaro**, associate director for conservation and research at the Whitney Museum in New York, was awarded in the historic preservation and conservation category.

### *Casey Kaplan Now Represents Cindy Ji Hye Kim*

Artist **Cindy Ji Hye Kim**, whose paintings often feature trompe l'oeil effects and draw on animation, biblical art, 20th-century propaganda, psychoanalytic theory, and other sources of inspiration, has joined **Casey Kaplan Gallery** in New York. The artist is currently the subject of a survey at the MIT List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which is on view through September 12, and her work has previously been shown at Various Small Fires in Seoul, the Kitchen in New York, and other venues. She will have her first solo exhibition with Casey Kaplan in 2022.

### *FotoFest Reveals Details for 19th Biennial*

**FotoFest** has announced the dates, curators, and curatorial focus of the 19th edition of the photography biennial, which will take place in Houston, Texas, from September 24–November 6, 2022. The event will be curated by **Amy Sadao**, the former director of the Institute of Contemporary Art Philadelphia; **Steven Evans**, executive director of FotoFest; and **Max Fields**, FotoFest associate curator and director of publishing. Its focus will be how contemporary image production and circulation influences global social and political movements. More than 100 Texas-based art spaces and commercial venues will participate in the event.

### *Ilana Savdie Joins Kohn Gallery*

**Kohn Gallery** in Los Angeles now represents **Ilana Savdie**, who creates large-scale, vibrant paintings that blur the line between figuration and abstraction. The gallery will show new work by Savdie at Frieze New York in May, and the artist will have a solo exhibition with the enterprise in November.

Frieze  
16 April 2021

## The Best Public Art Shows to See this Year

From Yayoi Kusama's flora-inspired sculptures at the New York Botanical Garden to this year's Shanghai Urban Space Art Season, these are must-see public art shows across the globe

F

BY FRIEZE IN REVIEWS, REVIEWS ACROSS THE WORLD | 16 APR 21

### **Yayoi Kusama: Cosmic Nature**

New York Botanical Garden, USA

Yayoi Kusama's monumental sculptures take over the grounds of the New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) in the Bronx. Inspired by time the artist spent on her family's seed nursery as a child, 'Cosmic Nature' features her most iconic installations, including *Ascension of Polka Dots on the Trees* (2002/2021) and *Hymn of Life: Tulips* (2007) – her giant, undulating, coloured, polka-dot flowers. The exhibition will also showcase newly commissioned works, most notably Kusama's *Infinity Mirrored Room: Illusion inside the Heart* (2020), a reflective cube that mirrors the changing landscape of the NYBG. 'Cosmic Nature' is part of a suite of shows this year celebrating the nonagenarian artist's career, with additional surveys at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington D.C., the Gropius Bau in Berlin and Tate Modern in London.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **Ground/work**

Clark Institute, Williamstown, USA

Curated by Molly Epstein and Abigail Ross Goodman, 'Ground/work' brings together newly commissioned outdoor sculptures and installations from Kelly Akashi, Nairy Baghramian, Jennie C. Jones, Eva LeWitt, Analia Saban and Haegue Yang, with each artist invited to create work that speaks to the idyllic surroundings of the Clark Institute's 140-acre campus. One of the highlights is Jones's *These (Mournful) Shores* (2020) – a large wind instrument, based on the Aeolian harp, which extends out of architect Tadao Ando's granite wall structure outside the main plaza. The piece is inspired by Jones's experience of walking through the institute's grounds and observing works – specifically *Eastern Point and West Point, Prout's Neck* (both 1900) – by Winslow Homer in the Clark's collection. When the wind hits Jones's monumental instrument, a piercing hum fills the air.

## **Thomas J. Price and Veronica Ryan**

Hackney Windrush Art Commission, London, UK

In east London, Hackney council, in partnership with Create London, has commissioned two new individual works by Thomas J. Price and Veronica Ryan to honour the significant contribution of the Windrush generation: the Caribbean immigrants who arrived in the UK between 1948 and 1971. Price's design is a critique of the idea of monumentalism itself: his three-metre bronze figures will draw from photography archives and 3D scans of Hackney residents but won't depict specific individuals. Ryan's oversized marble and bronze Caribbean fruits will reference migration and movement as well as her childhood memories of Dalston's Ridley Road Market. Both commissions will serve as a permanent reminder of the borough's relationship to Windrush and aim to give the area's Black community a sense of connectedness to, and ownership of, their histories.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **Liverpool Biennial**

Various venues, Liverpool, UK

The 2021 Liverpool Biennial – rescheduled from 2020 due to COVID-19 – brings together 50 international artists and two collectives to present works in various locations around the city. Larry Achiampong has installed eight Pan-African flags on buildings and streets across the city centre, referencing Liverpool's connection to the transatlantic slave trade while evoking a sense of solidarity and collective empathy. Yael Davids presents a new public performance, *Wingspan of the Captive* (2021), at Liverpool Central Library, responding to the naturalist illustrations of John James Audubon's *The Birds of America* (1827). Rashid Johnson's public sculpture *Stacked Heads* (2020) – a totem that uses resilient flora to speak to present-day racial discrimination – is presented at Canning Dock Quayside. And Luisa Ungar's interactive tours, taking place throughout the city, point to elements of medicine, stigmatization and otherness.

## **Ruhr Ding: Klima**

Various venues, Germany

The Ruhr area of Germany is best known for driving the country's Wirtschaftswunder – or economic miracle – of the late 1950s. With its coal mines and other industrial sites no longer in use, however, the region now hosts various cultural institutions and festivals in these abandoned architectural settings. The annual public art exhibition 'Ruhr Ding' combines the industrial history of the area with lesser-known narratives to explore the region's cities via various themes. Comprising 21 projects in four cities, 'Ruhr Ding: Klima' examines issues of global warming and the political divisions that surround the topic. Ari Benjamin Meyers's sound and video installation *Forecast* (2021), for instance, will examine weather phenomena and the human desire to predict the future. In the former General Blumenthal colliery, Monira Al Qadiri's series of sculptures – whose forms resemble the drill bits used to mine coal and oil – reflect on links between regional wealth and extractivism.

# LISSON GALLERY

## **Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran and Judy Watson**

HOTA Gallery, Surfers Paradise, Australia

In anticipation of its grand opening in Surfers Paradise, HOTA Gallery unveiled public sculptures by artist Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran and Judy Watson, installed just outside the gallery entrance. Born in Sri Lanka and based in Sydney, Nithiyendran creates new-age idols that explore the politics of the monument. His largest sculpture to date at six metres tall, Nithiyendran's work will welcome visitors to HOTA in the form of an effigy, cast in bronze, neon and fibreglass. Meanwhile, Waanyi artist Watson presents a multi-part installation, in which a map depicting the Nerang region prior to European settlement becomes the setting for a pathway of dilly bag and basket sculptures, local languages and motifs, culminating in a two-metre-tall feather canopy.

## **Shanghai Urban Space Art Season**

Various venues, Shanghai, China

For the 2021 edition of the Shanghai Urban Space Art Season, the biennial will, for the first time, invite its chief curators through an open call, by issuing a request to 'build a 15-minute community-life circle' in response to the concept of 'a city built by the people, for the people'. This willingness for public participation is echoed by Fosun Foundation, whose two-city residency kicked off earlier in the spring. Artists were invited to produce public artworks in response to specific sites in Shanghai and, subsequently, Liajiang. In Shanghai, the focal points of these commissions were the Bund Finance Centre – which has dominated the Shanghai waterfront since 2013, with Fosun Foundation's flashy museum as its centrepiece since 2017 – and the nearby Yu Garden, thought to be more than 300 years old.

The Aspen Times  
25 February 2021

# Art gallery spotlight: Aspen Art Museum

News [FOLLOW NEWS](#) Sponsored | Feb 25, 2021



**Installation view: Kelly Akashi, "Cultivator," 2020. Photo courtesy the AAM.**

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The Aspen Art Museum (AAM) is an admission-free, globally engaged contemporary art museum, with community, education and member programs that provide ever-changing onsite and online exhibitions, workshops, and events.

Opened as the “Aspen Center for the Visual Arts” in 1979, the museum was officially accredited as the Aspen Art Museum in 1984. The AAM’s downtown building was designed by 2014 Pritzker Prize for Architecture winner Shigeru Ban and completed that same year with 100% private funding. In 2017, the facility was recognized among the American Institute of Architects (AIA) awards for “best contemporary architecture.”

## **Community-focused**

Modern Aspen was founded on the principles of “The Aspen Idea” — the balance of “mind, body and spirit” — a holistic concept which continues to inform AAM programming. Under museum Director Nicola Lees, the museum’s future builds on the legacy of Aspen’s singular history and the artists that visited over the course of the 20th century, including Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenberg, Bruce Nauman, Christo & Jeanne-Claude, Ed Ruscha, Andy Warhol, and resident artist/designers like Herbert Bayer.

Working rigorously and considerately with the local community to put education, collaboration, and community at the heart of its programming and with artists across the ecology of the artworld, the AAM hosts site-specific artist commissions, exhibitions, and educational and public programs that respond to Aspen, the Roaring Fork Valley, and Colorado’s Western Slope and the area’s unique climate and topography.

Finding creative ways to be site-specific and site-responsive in times of inhibited social contact has led to flexible and dynamic museum programs that move fluidly between physical and digital spheres and engage artists not only in exhibitions, but also in helping reinvent and redefine what museums can be as ‘site’ may refer to hybrid physical/digital spaces.

# LISSON GALLERY

e-flux  
20 January 2021

## Kelly Akashi and Shahryar Nashat appointed Core Faculty of Graduate Art

ArtCenter College of Design



Left: Kelly Akashi. Right: Shahryar Nashat.

January 20, 2021

**Kelly Akashi and Shahryar Nashat  
appointed Core Faculty of Graduate  
Art**

**ArtCenter Graduate Art Department**  
950 S. Raymond Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91105  
United States of America

[www.artcenter.edu](http://www.artcenter.edu)

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The Graduate Art MFA program at ArtCenter College of Design is pleased to announce the appointment of Kelly Akashi and Shahryar Nashat to our Core Faculty.

Kelly Akashi (1983, Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Cultivator*, Aspen Art Museum (2020–21); *a thing among things*, ARCH, Athens (2019); Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito (2019); and *Long Exposure*, SculptureCenter, New York (2017). She has exhibited internationally at institutions and galleries such as Clark Art Institute, Massachusetts; MoCo Montpellier Contemporain, France; Gladstone Gallery, New York; White Cube, London; Antenna Space, Shanghai; Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, Lyon; Jewish Museum, New York; David Roberts Art Foundation, London; and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Her works reside in the collections of the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Brooklyn Museum, New York; The Perimeter, London; CC Foundation, Shanghai; X Museum, Beijing; and Sifang Museum, Nanjing. Her practice is represented by François Ghebaly Gallery (Los Angeles) and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery (New York).

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Shahryar Nashat is a Swiss artist. Recent solo exhibitions include The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2020), Swiss Institute, New York (2019), Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2018). Nashat's work has been included in the 54th International Venice Biennale, the 8th Berlin Biennale, the 20th Sydney Biennale, and Made in L.A., Hammer Museum.

**In March 2020**, when pandemic sheltering began, Graduate Art's core faculty made the decision that to graduate our MFAs with integrity it was crucial that their planned final exhibits happen in the gallery spaces they desired. These final exhibits, as well as the various, related kinds of studio work required, were mapped onto the summer and fall terms.

Working with ArtCenter's President and Provost, Graduate Art's graduating and first-year MFAs were able to pilot and research studio use, in a safe, staggered, scheduled manner, for the college as a whole, and they worked in the graduate studios throughout the summer term. The graduating MFAs demonstrated inventiveness and perseverance, and they installed their vibrant final thesis exhibits in our numerous MFA galleries.

This fall brought renewed pandemic strictures, but Graduate Art found alternative ways of working, and our students rose to the challenge. We strongly believe that our MFAs had some of the most dynamic opportunities for pursuing their creative work available on the west coast.

# LISSON GALLERY

**Graduate Art** is an interdisciplinary Master of Fine Arts program that encourages divergent ideas and methods. With a core faculty of 10 internationally recognized artists and writers, 14 adjunct faculty (in addition to roughly 20-40 guest artists, writers, and curators brought in for individual studio visits each term), and with a total of 35 students, we have one of the lowest faculty-to-student ratios among comparable MFA programs. The result is an intense work environment where concentrated art making is assured equally concentrated and careful attention, whether within specific disciplines or among them: film, video, photography, painting, sculpture, installation, performance and everything in between.

Fundamental to our program are one-on-one studio visits with faculty and rigorous critical, academic and practical coursework. We extend our reach internationally, inviting artists and writers—famous and infamous—as well as historians and philosophers for weekly seminars and our biannual conference series. As part of a world class design school, our students have access to cutting edge software and hardware technology and the equipment and advanced fabrication shops that go with it. We provide students with individual studios, several gallery spaces, and dedicated computing and moving image production labs. We make our public gallery spaces and project rooms available to all candidates, from the first term through the fourth, when every graduating student mounts a solo final exhibition.

*Aspen Daily News*  
16 December 2020

## In with the new at Aspen Art Museum

Erica Robbie, Aspen Daily News Staff Writer Dec 16, 2020

A new leader. A new shop. New installations and a New Year, almost. There's a lot happening at the Aspen Art Museum.

On Thursday, the museum will welcome visitors to experience "Winterfest: An Exhibition of Arts and Crafts," an alpine-themed exhibition inspired by the German tradition, Jahresgaben. On Friday, AAM will present a solo exhibition of colorful works by painter Mary Weatherford, appropriately titled "Neon Paintings."

"We have a couple of unusual and magical projects this winter," Museum Director Nicola Lees, choosing her words carefully, said in a recent interview. Lees assumed her new post at the onset of the pandemic this spring, with a slew of fresh ideas for the Aspen institution despite initially being stuck in New York. Lees previously served as the director and curator of [80 Washington Square East Gallery \(80WS\)](#), an exhibition space for contemporary art at New York University that also operates as an admission-free nonprofit, like AAM.

One of Lees' first initiatives at the museum brings a piece of the city — and therefore the world — to Aspen. Artist Jonathan Berger completely reimagined the museum's gift shop, to the point that referring to it as such feels wrong. Simply called The Store, Berger converted the space so that it functions as a market as well as an exhibition itself. Inspired by travels as well as his time in the East Village in the '90s frequenting places like Little Rickie's, The Store boasts an eclectic inventory of more than 350 objects — "some of which are incredibly strange," Lees quipped.

Berger personally curated the entire shop, which showcases new, antique and dead-stock items from varying regions and time periods, including jewelry, textiles, toys, furniture, ephemera, fragrances, ceramics, glassware and household objects — as well as folk and contemporary art. Pieces in The Store, which opened to the public Dec. 1, range from free to \$50,000.

# LISSON GALLERY

Next door to the new store on the museum's main level is Weatherford's "Neon Paintings," which will run Friday through May 2. The L.A.-based artist is known for her work incorporating neon lightning tubes within her abstract works. Weatherford's Aspen exhibition will examine pivotal pieces from the last decade with a particular focus on her neon paintings, according to the museum.

And downstairs, in galleries four and five, the art museum will transform into a Winter Wonderland of sorts. "Winterfest" will consist of artworks displayed within an exhibition that is designed by German artist Veit Laurent Kurz and based on a wintery scene of mountains, a cabin and a lake. Kurz is known for creating a number of immersive installations that interpret traditional alpine cabin structures to house artist-curated exhibitions.

As with the German iteration of the concept, on which "Winterfest" is based, the majority of the works' proceeds will go to the artists, Lees said, "as it's really about supporting them during this time." On display Thursday through Feb. 21, Winterfest will feature works by more than 20 artists: Kelly Akashi, Kerstin Brätsch, Beverly Buchanan, Richard Carter, Milano Chow, Beau Dick, Olivia Erlanger, Gina Fischli, Rochelle Goldberg, Jonas Lipps, Soshiro Matsubara, Malcolm Mooney, Brandon Ndife, Erin Jane Nelson, Precious Okoyomon, Silke Otto-Knapp, Giangiacomo Rossetti, Lin May Saeed, Cole Speck, Stefan Tcherepnin and Amelie von Wulffen.

Acknowledging the museum's spacious building and airy rooftop while looking ahead to a winter season filled with unknowns, Lees pointed to another one of her objectives: "We're actively trying to figure out how we can collaborate more with other nonprofits — like Jazz Aspen Snowmass and Aspen Music Festival and School — to really make this space a resource for the community.

Artsy  
24 November 2020

Art Market

# 19 Collectors on the Art They Bought in 2020

Artsy Editorial

Nov 24, 2020 3:03PM

Karen Robinovitz

New York



Kelly Akashi, detail of *Cultivator (Metamorphic)*, 2020. Courtesy of the artist; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York; and Francois Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.

# LISSON GALLERY

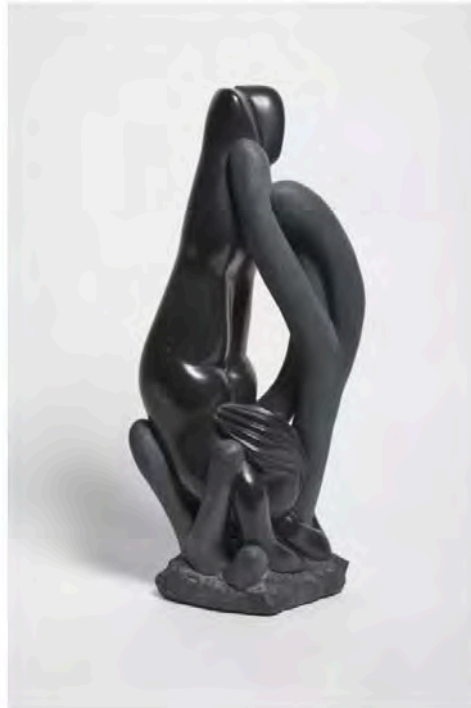
**What was the most meaningful artwork you purchased in 2020?**

Kelly Akashi's *Cultivator (Metamorphic)* (2020) is super meaningful to me. I have been following her for years and she has just gotten better and better with each new work. This was my favorite work from the show "Mood Organ," which opened at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery in February. It was taken before the show opened, so I had reserved a different one. But when the original sale of the piece fell through, I was offered the work. It's a very personal piece for the artist as the pedestal represents her cardiogram. Hands in art have always felt important to me, perhaps due to the historical references. This oversized bronze hand, intertwined with delicate, sinuous handblown glass, reflects such an elevated moment in Kelly's practice. It lives just outside my bedroom so I get to take it in every day, multiple times a day.

Would you say you've been more or less active as a collector in 2020 than in years past?



Kennedy Yanko  
*Cocina*, 2018  
Leyendecker



Kay Hofmann  
*In the Coral*, 1986  
François Ghebaly

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

I have been a bit less active as a collector since COVID-19 (my budgets have taken a hit), but I remain as active as an appreciator and a museum board member. It has been a challenging time for art institutions and it is nice to be able to contribute with my skill set in marketing and digital media to support in new ways. I may not be going to galleries as much as I used to, but I have increased my screen time on my phone so much that it is a little embarrassing! Most of that time, when I'm not working, is spent looking at art.

**Are there any artists you're looking forward to collecting or supporting in 2021?**

I am in love with Sally Han's work. I recently acquired a piece and I would like to collect more. I love how intimate and personal her paintings feel and she is incredible with her sense of realism. I am also hoping to collect Cristina BanBan, Coady Brown, Kennedy Yanko, Kathleen Ryan, Kay Hofmann, Ebony G. Patterson...the list goes on. There is no shortage there! They all have something different that resonates with my sensibility. They're all strong women whose stories permeate their work in complex ways.

*The Art Newspaper*  
13 November 2020



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**Outdoor sculpture** // Gallery

## A breath of fresh air: The Clark opens its first outdoor exhibition

Known for its esteemed collection of European and American paintings and art historical research library, the institution's 140-acre meadow now features contemporary sculptures set against the bucolic landscape of the Berkshire Highlands in Massachusetts



Nairy Baghramian, *Knee and Elbow*, 2020

Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery. Photo: Thomas Clark

**Gabriella Angeleti**

13 November 2020

# LISSON GALLERY

After several years of development and a months-long postponement due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, has opened its first-ever outdoor exhibition.

The show *Ground/Work* comprises several poetic site-responsive commissions imbued by the picturesque backdrop of the Berkshires by six contemporary women artists, including Kelly Akashi, Nairy Baghramian, Jennie C. Jones, Eva LeWitt, Analia Saban and Haegue Yang.

The show is scheduled to be on view until October 2021 or later, and is perhaps serendipitously timely as lockdown restrictions begin to tighten with Covid-19 cases spiking in Massachusetts and other parts of the East Coast again, making outdoor art activities more valuable than ever even as winter rolls in.

The Clark, formally known as the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, opened in 1955 as a museum of European and American artworks from the collection of the American philanthropists Sterling and Francine Clark, who amassed a significant collection in their lifetime, including extensive holdings of works by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, JMW Turner and Winslow Homer, among others.

# LISSON GALLERY

The institute expanded to become a research and academic centre, and gradually blossomed to its current state to include a 140-acre outdoor campus as part of a \$145m renovation. Led by the architects Tadao Ando, Annabelle Selldorf and Reed Hilderbrand, the project was completed in 2016.

While museum attendance remains capped at 25% capacity due to state-wide mandates amid the global health crisis, the outdoor campus will be open year-round at all hours, and offers ample room for social distancing.

The inaugural plein air exhibition has been organised by the guest curators Molly Epstein and Abigail Ross Goodman, in collaboration with Robert Wiesenberger, the associate curator of contemporary projects, who joined the museum in 2018 and is a graduate professor at Williams College, which The Clark co-sponsors.

Below, Wiesenberger tells *The Art Newspaper* about the dynamic works that now dot the surrounding landscape:

# LISSON GALLERY

*Wallpaper*

20 October 2020

## Natural high: escape to the Clark Art Institute's first-ever outdoor exhibition

Titled 'Ground/work', the Institute's first outdoor exhibition sees sculptures by Nairy Baghramian, Eva LeWitt and Kelly Akashi set against the bucolic landscape of the Berkshires in Massachusetts



Nairy Baghramian, *Knee and Elbow*, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery. (Image credit: Thomas Clark)

# LISSON GALLERY

With indoor activities largely restricted in the United States, what better way to make the most of sprawling grounds than to stage an exhibition of outdoor art? For the Clark Art Institute, located amidst the bucolic landscape of the Berkshires in Massachusetts, the timing coincided with a larger ambition to extend the museum's presence beyond its physical walls. Its inaugural outdoor show entitled 'Ground/work' is guest curated by Molly Epstein and Abigail Ross Goodman, and sees a collection of newly commissioned, site-responsive works from six leading contemporary artists situated around the institute's 140-acre site.

While many may know the Clark's memorable setting for its iconic Tadao Ando-designed building and courtyard garden, the fact that its surrounding woodland trails, rolling hills and open meadows are publically accessible is a bit of a local secret. Now forming the backdrop for its first official exhibition, the institute's incredible grounds offer newfound space to expand its curatorial vision.



Eva LeWitt, *Resin Towers A, B, and C*, 2020. *Courtesy of the artist and VI, VII, Oslo*  
(Image credit: Thomas Clark)

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

‘The Clark has a unique and varied natural setting – woodland trails, open meadows, expansive vistas, cloistered areas for contemplation— that is open to the public day and night throughout the seasons without fee or mitigation: a highly rare offering to accompany a renowned permanent collection and research institution,’ share curators Epstein and Goodman. ‘Olivier Meslay, director of the Clark, approached us in 2017 about his vision for the first-ever outdoor exhibition to take place at the Institute, which was motivated by a desire to further activate and engage the 140-acre campus which surrounds the museum buildings. With the landscape as our prompt, we spent time researching, travelling and visiting artists in their studios. We then invited this group of six makers to visit the Clark, so that each could identify a site, and consider the possibilities for a new site-responsive commission for the exhibition.’

The exhibition will remain open throughout the four seasons until October 2021, offering a novel expression of themes of duration, transformation and interconnectivity.

As Meslay says, ‘For Ground/work, our meadows and woodlands serve as a kind of natural ‘gallery,’ offering visitors the opportunity to venture beyond our institutional walls and contemplate vibrant and inspiring contemporary works set amid the remarkable natural beauty that surrounds them.’

# LISSON GALLERY



Analia Saban, *Teaching a Cow How to Draw*, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles

(Image credit: Thomas Clark)

The artists featured in the show include Kelly Akashi, Nairy Baghramian, Jennie C. Jones, Eva LeWitt, Analia Saban, and Haegue Yang, and each artist's work responds to its surroundings, the environment and even the museum's permanent collection in an individualised way. In Saban's tongue-in-cheek adaptation of a length of split-rail fence, cows who pasture in the Clark's fields are invited to consider the art viewing experience in *Teaching a Cow How to Draw*. Nairy Bagrahmian's sculptures *Knee and Elbow* abstractly portray these primary joints in the human body in marble and steel, while set in a particularly meditative patch of the grounds' Stone Hill pasture.

'The siting of each project is grounded in the specificity of the artists' unique visions, and we were lucky that it came into being rather organically', say Epstein and Goodman. 'The result is a show that unfolds through wandering - there is no prescriptive order or hierarchical process of making one's way through the landscape, and we hope that this freedom translates for visitors as a new awareness of the possibilities that both art and nature provide.'

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *A Device to See the World Twice*, 2020. Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

(Image credit: Thomas Clark)

*Artillery Magazine*  
8 September 2020

# Materia Medica

François Ghebaly

by Christopher Michno | Sep 8, 2020



Max Hooper Schneider, DIALECTRIX: DIVISION  
APTERONOTUS (JESUS SAVES), 2020. Courtesy of the  
Artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles. Photo by  
Paul Salvesson.

# LISSON GALLERY

“Materia Medica,” the summer group show at François Ghebaly, curated by Kelly Akashi, is more than a call to reconsider the relationship between humans and the natural world. The show pointedly issues a rallying cry of refusal against relentlessly destructive human systems that are connected with histories of colonial exploitation. A short introductory text—a mash-up of science fiction and manifesto—juxtaposes observations of human activity, as seen on an evolutionary scale, with a series of artistic intentions, such as, *“To work from one’s own history... To record nature’s subjugation to human needs. To foretell the co-opting of all life in service to structures of power.”*

The exhibition title references an early pharmacological text and millennia of botanical and medicinal knowledge—even as it exposes such knowledge as centered in human subjugation of all life. *De Materia Medica*, a definitive pharmacopeia by the 1st century physician Dioscorides that sought to classify plant, mineral and animal substances according to their medicinal effects, sits in the interval between traditional knowledge of the natural world and the scientific exploitation of nature.

But in the midst of our post-apocalyptic landscape, *Materia Medica* posits empathy and organic relations with the natural world. A number of works are allegorical—for example, Kay Hofmann’s hand-carved alabaster sculptures, featuring female figures entwined with organic forms. These reflect an idealized oneness with the natural world.

# LISSON GALLERY



Catalina Ouyang, font III, 2020, courtesy of the artist, Make Room, Los Angeles, and François Ghebaly, photo by Paul Salveson.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Several mixed-media works examine histories of colonization.

Catalina Ouyang's *wronging wrongs* (2019), shown previously in "fish mystery in the shift horizon" at Rubber Factory in New York, is part of her work on the parallels of species extinction and the transmission of knowledge in diaspora. In *font III* (2020), in which a raw egg sits in a carved soapstone sculpture resembling a head, and is bathed in vinegar each day while its shell dissolves, Ouyang addresses identity and whiteness.

Candice Lin's *Minoritarian Medicine* (2020), a homemade apothecary fortified with various tinctures infused with substances like Astragalus, Echinacea, Reishi Mushroom, and Oxymel (for immune support), and hand sanitizer, alludes to both medicinals based in intimate knowledge of plants and passed on through generations, and to our current pandemic. It is one of the show's ironies that medicine is needed in the pandemic, and that pandemic periodically disrupts humans' self-appointed hegemony.

The dichotomous relationship between nature and culture is addressed most explicitly in works by Jessie Homer French and Max Hooper Schneider. *Pastoral* (1992), an oil painting by Homer French, depicts cows grazing in the shadow of nuclear cooling towers, which presumably fuel the electrical lines stretching above the pasture. *Pastoral* plays off Hooper Schneider's installation of a flickering "Jesus Saves" neon sign powered by an aquarium of Black Ghost Knifefish (*DIALECTRIX: DIVISION APTERONOTUS (JESUS SAVES)*, 2020). Electrical signals from the Knifefish are transmitted through copper embedded in the tank, thus illuminating "Jesus Saves."

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Akashi's text concludes in a resolution: *"To become one with nature, to bind with it, to emote from within it;"* yet it dispassionately observes that proposals "for empathy, for defense, for action" remained unanswered. And so it dispenses with simple solutions and technological saves and leaves us to answer the difficult question of how to become one with nature.

# LISSON GALLERY

*The Los Angeles Times*  
22 August 2020

ENTERTAINMENT & ARTS

## Essential Arts: The art of women's rights, the staging of the DNC



The Natural History Museum's celebrating women's suffrage includes women's rights ephemera from throughout the 20th century. (Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County)

## Essential happenings

**Matt Cooper** rounds up [the 16 culture picks for the weekend](#), including the **La Jolla Music Society's SummerFest 2020** and a streaming series of past concerts staged by the **L.A. Phil** at the **Hollywood Bowl** — those good ol' days when we could gather in crowds. As always, find Cooper's complete culture listings at [Things To Do: Arts & Culture](#).

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

If you need art IRL but aren't ready to hit an indoor space, artist **Gabriel Garza** has been organizing installations in his backyard in Silver Lake. **Punto Lairs**, as this improvised exhibition space is called, is available for viewing by appointment ([via their website](#)). Their current exhibition, featuring work by **Cameron Cameron** and **Symrin Chawla**, is on view through Sept. 5.

**The Broad** has been doing a series of reports titled “**Up Close**,” each of which examine, in depth, a single work in the collection. I really enjoyed [this one](#), which examines a painting by **Julie Mehretu** inspired by the **Arab Spring**. Find the whole series [here](#).

**Night Gallery** is marking its 10th anniversary with the group show “**Majeure Force**,” which is [on view for one more week](#). While the gallery has placed images online, many of the works bear viewing in person — including an elaborate cut-paper painting by **Khari Johnson-Ricks**, a wry wall installation of a dining table by **Samara Golden**, a quilted painting by **Anne Libby** and a large canvas by **Mira Dancy** showing bathing figures in resplendent shades of purple. Don't miss the ceramic vessels by **Jasmine Little** in the courtyard. The show is on view through Aug. 29; timed visits are available through the website.

# LISSON GALLERY



"Black Sky Sirens (Splash)," 2013, by Mira Dancy at Night Gallery. (Carolina A. Miranda / Los Angeles Times)

Right across the way, **François Ghebaly** has a show of paintings by **Cassi Namoda** on view, as well as the group show "**Materia Medica.**" The latter was organized by **Kelly Akashi** and explores the ways in which nature has been subjugated to human need. Highlights include some beguiling paintings by **Evelyn Statsinger** that toy with nature's patterns and works by **Candice Lin** that pay tribute to the medicinal powers of flora.

"Materia Medica" is on view through Sept. 4, while Namoda's paintings will remain up until Sept. 20. Timed visits are available through [the website](#).

# LISSON GALLERY

*Whitehot magazine of contemporary art*  
May 2020

## 18 Fabulous Figurative Sculptures from Frieze New York Online

By **PAUL LASTER**, May 2020

Frieze Art Fair launched its first **Frieze Viewing Room** with Frieze New York 2020, which is accessible online through May 15. Exhibiting art from more than 200 international galleries, the virtual art fair features work in a variety of media by a lively mix of emerging and established artists.

Find our favorite figurative sculptures being presented - including Paola Pivi's frolicking pink polar bear - Tom Friedman's embracing figures in hazmat suits that were originally fashioned from roasting pans, John Baldessari's four-foot tall penguin that comments on the lack of attention being paid to global warming, Tony Matelli's witty cast-bronze weed that celebrates the mundane and vulgar, Tom Sachs' recreation of the Aries-1B lunar carrier from Stanley Kubrick's science-fiction film *2001: A Space Odyssey* and Tony Tasset's astonishing *Snowman with Coke Can Mouth and Broom*, and then use the augmented reality (AR) technology to view the artworks in your own space.

Scroll through the images below to see all 18 of our sculptural picks. **WM**



*Kelly Akashi, Feel Me (Lamina), 2020. Courtesy François Ghebaly*

# LISSON GALLERY

*X Tra*  
15 April 2020

04.15.20 / EXHIBITIONS Kelly Akashi and David Muenzer

## Reach Inside

*Kelly Akashi's latest outing, Mood Organ, February 27–April 18, 2020, occupies both floors of Tanya Bonakdar's New York gallery. Weep (2020), a cast bronze orb trickling with water, holds the center of the first room, the pitter-patter of its drips echoing in the white cube. Flanking the fountain are a series of turned-wood pedestals, whose undulating spindles take their shape from the artist's echocardiogram patterns. These support casts of Akashi's hands which variously caress, hold, and penetrate a complex array of organic glass forms—bubbles, spirals, and webs. Upstairs, branching glass sculptures are suspended from the ceiling with knotted rope, and a table displays a family of Murano-inflected ersatz Venuses below a hanging bell. Walking through the exhibition, Akashi spoke with artist David Muenzer about collectivity in the craft tradition, emotion in form, and what to hold on to.*



Kelly Akashi, *Mood Organ*, installation view, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, February 27–April 18, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York. Photo: Pierre Le Hors.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

DAVID MUENZER: Your sculptural hands, accentuated by these elaborate pedestals and each making contact with a glass object—they dramatize both the gesture of the touch and the specifics of what is being touched. What were you thinking about with that spiral shape in *Wielded Whorl* (2020)?

KELLY AKASHI: I've been making various spiral forms for a long time, and I think that comes from the candles, making very erect candles in the beginning and then making them more flaccid. Recently, I've thought about different kinds of support. The spiral is something that's porous, that allows for movement, that meanders. But it also has a lot of structure. And then, separately, thinking about models or illustrations of time. In school I used to draw this little figure—instead of the person moving, the time was moving through the person. Now I've been thinking about a way to structure time where it's self-reflective, where it acknowledges past and future in the same moment. The spiral is a good illustration of that, since it folds back on itself even though it still has a directional movement. Now I think, of course, those candles were always that, with their twists.



Kelly Akashi, *Wielded Whorl*, 2020. Hand-blown glass, bronze, walnut pedestal, sculpture 19 × 10 × 8 1/2 in. (48.3 × 25.4 × 21.6 cm.), pedestal 59 1/4 × 14 × 14 in. (48.3 × 25.4 × 21.6 cm.), overall 78 1/4 × 14 × 14 in. (198.8 × 35.6 × 35.6 cm.) Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

DM: I remember you wrapping the candles around the copper tubing (*Downtime Machine*, 2017), and it became very animal, like a creature from the Precambrian period. There are so many possible evolutionary configurations for propulsion. I like thinking about how the notochord, which became the root of all vertebrates, was just a blip among the diversity of life before a mass extinction made it the dominant form. I think your earlier work with shells, from your 2019 exhibition at François Ghebaly, brought up that kind of morphological introspection.

KA: Yeah, spirals are mystical, ancient: shells, galaxies. For that show, I was researching shells and how they are built. I love that shells have an architectural component—they are homes. And the body of the shelled creature moves, so the shape includes past inhabited spaces.

DM: Were you looking at brachiopods?

KA: Yeah, I was looking at brachiopods and whelks. I chose four distinct species from a few different areas that I thought would articulate the spirals in different ways.



Kelly Akashi, *Downtime Machine*, 2017. Handmade candles, glass, copper, bronze wire, dimensions variable, 18 × 54 × 54 in. (45.7 × 137.2 × 137.2 cm.) Courtesy of the artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

DM: Let's talk about the upstairs works. Looking at these pieces, I was thinking about the photographer Nobuyoshi Araki and suspension, and wondering about the disposition of the knots and the places where the loose ropes go over them. Or the long downward hangs—they aren't structural, right?

KA: No, there's one main structural support. All of these have a central body or bodies that other pieces of glass are stuck to or bend around. The meaning and the making converge here, because there are a lot of restrictions. The end of each piece, made from the initial rod of glass, is the place to tie the rope. At a certain point, the glass can't support itself. It takes four of us to work on all of these because they are so intense. And the first one shattered after two hours of work. None of us knew the limits of this form with this material. We just had to do one that pushed too far in order to learn.

DM: What's this branching piece called?

KA: This one is called *Serrated Cell* (2020). I've been funny about embracing previous artists' influence. I don't like to say that I'm looking at one person or another. But for these I kept thinking about how the forms were based on these branches I'm collecting. The goal has been to find branches that encompass an obvious volume, around themselves or inside of their arms. Thinking about that, I was reminded of the language of Louise Bourgeois and her cages and her *Cells*. Researching the word cell after I had read a bit about Bourgeois, I found so many similarities in her work—not even just the obvious ones like hands, or the body and nature. But also, it seems she hoarded a lot of things...

DM: Indeed! Her house is near here, on 20th Street.

KA: I don't hoard hard, but I do keep my fingernails...I have my own version of hoarding. I put a lot of that stuff in my work, because then I know where it is! I know it will be safe and taken care of. This is just a side thing, but it was interesting to read that later in life Bourgeois placed hoarded things into works as well, also because she knew the stuff would be safe.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Mood Organ*, installation view, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, February 27–April 18, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York. Photo: Pierre Le Hors.

DM: Seems quite effective, since artworks are one of the things that, as a culture, we try and take care of indefinitely.

KA: Yeah. I thought I'd embrace this relationship and I stuck with "cell" because it is about isolation, but also about protection in this case. And then also, obviously, a cell is a biological building block. I think the fine line there is in the language between architecture and the body.

DM: In a tree, when a new branch comes out, is that called a node? When I saw these, I was thinking about coral. They bud. The biological analogies are profligate here.

KA: Definitely. I had someone come into the studio once and ask if the leaves in an older work were like fingernails, and I really liked that! It's so obvious, but I think that often the cells can rest between antlers, coral, tree branches, fire, flames. What all these things share is more important than any one reference—how something might spread out and populate, for instance.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Serrated Cell*, 2020. Detail. Hand-blown glass, rope, glass only 24 1/2 × 12 × 14 in. (62.2 × 30.5 × 35.6 cm.), overall 111 × 24 × 12 in. (281.9 × 61 × 30.5 cm.) Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.

DM: Tell me a bit more about making these.

KA: I borrowed a lot of these techniques from flameworking. I'm starting to mix glass techniques now, which is nerdy. Once the central part was made, the part waiting in the garage oven could be brought in and just stuck on and tapped off and the final sculpt could happen. We were able to make three branches, take a break, build the central parts, then add the three clusters onto the central parts very quickly.

DM: Is it done in one long day?

KA: I don't recall exactly, maybe three or four hours? Which might not sound like very long, but it's long for a piece four people are working on. There is one piece in the other room, the vessel adorned with flower petals. That was really fun because we all have to make those flower petals, and I love that everyone has an equal hand in the piece. We're just making flower petals Murano production-style.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Triple Helix*, 2020. Detail. Hand-blown glass, rope, hair, quartz bell, granite, steel, overall 60 x 72 x 72 in. (152.4 x 182.9 x 182.9 cm.), glass bell (installation height variable) 6 1/2 x 9 x 9 in. (16.5 x 22.9 x 22.9 cm.) Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.

I've learned enough about glass now that I'm able to take traditions from Murano and interpret them differently. It's a very patriarchal scene there and I bring a different perspective. There is traditional *incalmo* happening here, there's frit, there's assembly work, there's cane work, there're prunts... All on these rather feminine vessels, in the end. In the back of my mind is the labor history of the studio art glass movement. My understanding of it comes from a Venetian glassblower, Lino Tagliapietra, who retired from a glass factory and started his own studios in Murano and Seattle. He's 85. He's a maestro. Before the studio art glass movement, you had to work at the factory to be a glassblower. You couldn't work on your own. The studio furnace didn't exist.

DM: So that language of the glory hole and all that—does that come from the studio art glass movement too?

KA: Or Murano? I don't know. Those are English interpretations. But there is a feminist vein in all this, though it's still struggling to find its way. These petaled vessels focus on an internal force. How are we all here right now? And what is inside us? Organs, sure, but I'm thinking more like intuition, instinct, and emotion. Those things have also been developed and cultivated and changed by our ancestors. I feel that through my own participation in some version of the studio art movement: receiving technical knowledge that is also the story of the people who pass it down.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

DM: And the bell, is that a part of the same piece?

KA: Yes, a scientific glassblower in Oakland made it. It's made of blown quartz, so it will ring for quite some time after being struck. Quartz has a predictable vibration. It's used in timekeeping devices and scientific experiments because of that. I designed it to have a low frequency. I had been reading about the ear when I was working on those shell works and I learned that the lower the frequency is, the deeper inside your ear you hear it. You're hearing this in the deepest part of the ear. I was really excited to make a piece that talks about this internal force but part of it, the frequency, would actually reach inside of you. x

Kelly Akashi lives and works in Los Angeles, California. Winner of the 2019 Carolyn Glasoe Bailey Foundation Art Prize, Akashi's institutional exhibitions include *Long Exposure*, curated by Ruba Katrib, at SculptureCenter; *Made in L.A.*, curated by Aram Moshayedi and Hamza Walker, at the Hammer Museum; *Take me (I'm Yours)*, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Jens Hoffmann, and Kelly Taxter, at the Jewish Museum; and *Can't Reach Me There*, curated by Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer, at Midway Contemporary Art.

David Muenzer is an artist and writer. He formerly co-directed the space Full Haus. New work will be on view in *Delusionarium 5*, curated by Becky Koblick and Jesse Benson, at Night Gallery later this year.

Artsy  
3 March 2020

Art

# 9 Must-See Shows in New York This March

Artsy Editors

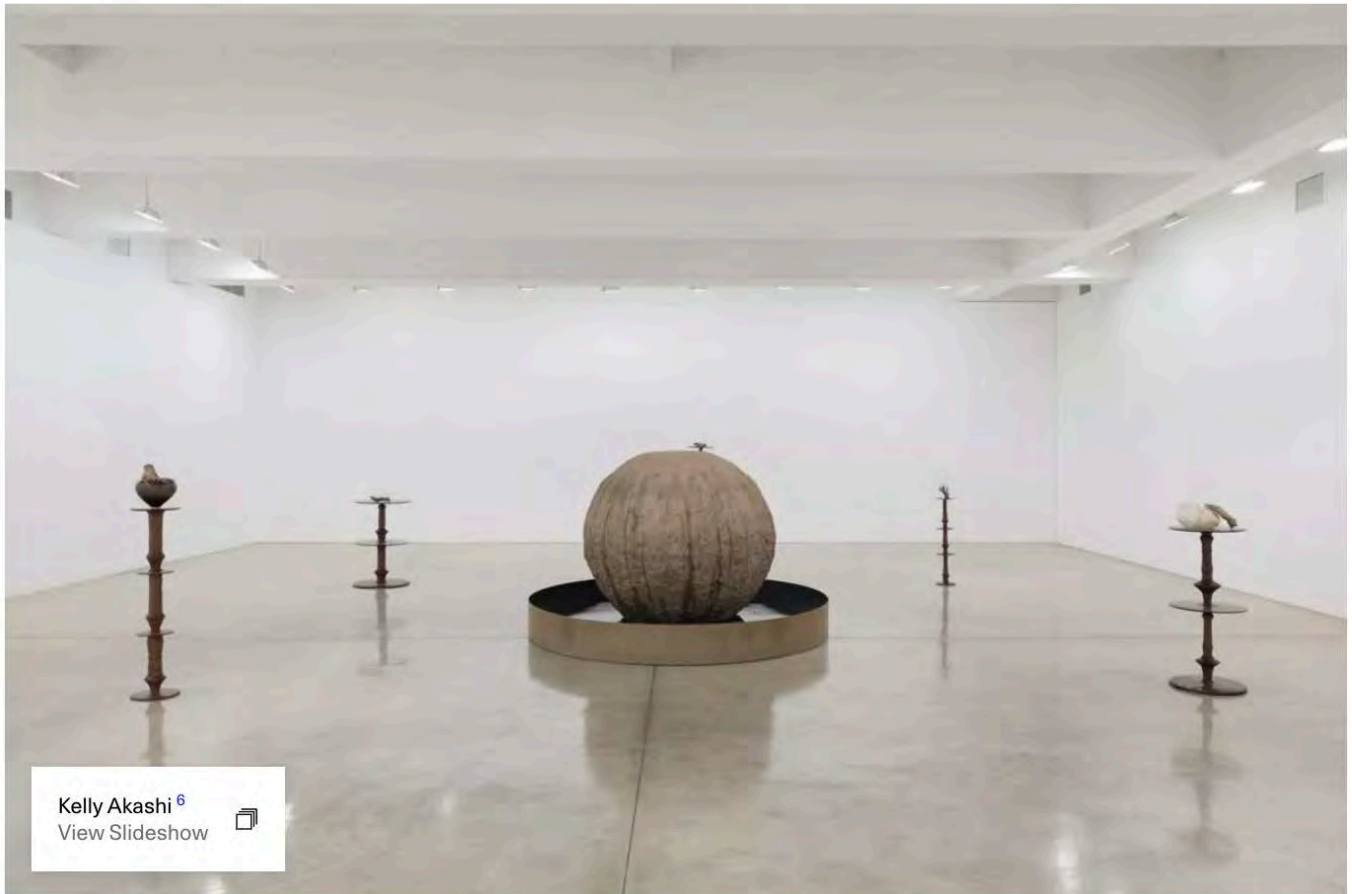
Mar 3, 2020 2:12PM



## Kelly Akashi

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, 521 West 21st Street

Feb. 27–Apr. 18



Kelly Akashi<sup>6</sup>  
View Slideshow



# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Artists working in glass don't usually command the space of Chelsea galleries. Yet Kelly Akashi's first solo show at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery proves that should not be the case. With her mastery of traditional glassmaking techniques, the Los Angeles-based artist harnesses the volatile material and combines it with other substances — bronze, rope, wood, marble, steel — to encapsulate and express feelings of fear, joy, and sadness, among others. The exhibition title, "Mood Organ," helpfully offers a glimpse into Akashi's intentions: It's a nod to the Penfield Mood Organ, a gadget imagined by sci-fi writer Philip K. Dick that would allow people to control and leverage their emotions.

On the main floor, water trickles from a spherical bronze fountain (*Weep*, 2020), which is encircled by five sculptures that pair a bronze cast of the artist's elegant hand with glass forms — a Venetian-style bubble, a lacelike globe, a translucent curlicue. Each sits atop a walnut pedestal shaped after the EKG waves of Akashi's heartbeat. The sharpness of the sculptures' pointy fingernails contrast with the fragile glass forms they caress.

Upstairs, *Cultivator (Metaphoric)* (2020), a larger-than-life marble hand, is draped in delicate glass flowers and cradles what resembles a small spiky fruit. A small room is dedicated to *Triple Helix* (2020), a table of vessels that resemble the shapely torsos of ancient fertility figures; next door, braids of golden rope and hand-sculpted glass antlers drape a larger gallery. The enveloping experience does indeed toy with our moods, presenting exceptionally alluring objects that often feel incredibly breakable, and remind us that our emotions are just as fragile as glass.

— Casey Lesser

*Hyperallergic*  
14 February 2020

Art

## This Year, Frieze Los Angeles Feels Grand, Celebratory, and Actually Kind of Fun

This year's iteration drives painted sports cars into the showroom, disguises booths as furnished apartments, and even houses a James Turrell skyroom.



Renée Reizman February 14, 2020

Share



Performance artist Pandemonia at Frieze Los Angeles 2020 (all photos by the author for Hyperallergic)

LOS ANGELES — Frieze Los Angeles is doing away with minimalism. This year's iteration drives painted sports cars into the showroom, disguises booths as furnished apartments, and even houses a James Turrell skyroom.

Situated in Paramount Studios and its backlot — a grand imitation of New York City with palm trees sneaking into the skyline — Frieze juxtaposes a traditional enclosed art fair, stuffed with blue chip galleries exhibiting living and late superstars like Jeff Koons, Anish Kapoor, and Jean-Michel Basquiat, with a sprawling outdoor festival that celebrates Los Angeles's history of artist-run spaces.

# LISSON GALLERY

Inside the main tent, colorful figurative paintings, motion works on large LCD screens, and bright neon slogans (“Look at Them Look at Us” cries out a piece by LA-based artist Genevieve Gaignard) compete for attention. Some galleries turn their entire booths into an immersive experience, like at Anat Ebgi, where Greg Ito’s paintings of California wildfires line the walls of a dining room slowly flooding from rising tides that protrude from the baseboards. Other booths, like Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, stuff their space with a wide sampling of who they represent. Bonakdar showed off works from 12 artists, including Olafur Eliasson, Kelly Akashi, and Sandra Cinto.

Outside, on the Frieze Backlot, pop-up reading rooms, shops, and bars are moved into Paramount’s brownstones, giving you a rare chance to see New York through the same eyes as *Ally McBeal*. The backlot’s highlight is Frieze Projects, curated by Rita Gonzalez and Pilar Tompkins Rivas, a set of 18 recontextualized or newly commissioned, site-specific art pieces and performances by 16 artists. Lorna Simpson’s two-channel video installation, “Momentum” (2011), shows Black ballet dancers perpetually spinning, their bodies painted gold like prized Oscar statuettes. Will Boone’s life-sized sculpture, “The Three Fates” (2020), depicts three witches conspiring over a cauldron, their cartoonish figures evoking oversized merchandise from a Disney film. And Patrisse Cullors leads a silent disco, inviting fairgoers to put on synced wireless headphones and side-step to the electric side.

With such grandiose artworks dominating Frieze Los Angeles, the fair caters to the Instagram age more than ever before. But not every booth — especially the LA contingent — lets a photo op overpower substance. Look for Calida Rawles’s gorgeous paintings of Black swimmers at Various Small Fires (one of these paintings is the cover of Ta-Nehisi Coates’s newest novel), Jaime Muñoz’s modern take on pre-Colombian art at the Pit, and Gaignard’s flowery demands for gallerists — or anyone — to sell to Black collectors at Suzanne Vielmetter Los Angeles.

Artsy  
31 December 2019

Art

## L.A. Artist Kelly Akashi Uses Glass to Create Primordial, Emotive Sculpture

Alexa Gotthardt

Dec 31, 2019 5:00AM



Kelly Akashi, *Be Me (Cultivator)*, 2019. Photo by Paul Salveson. Courtesy of the Artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.

“Getting breasts even is a challenge,” said artist Kelly Akashi as she scrutinized a bulbous, blazingly hot glass form that resembled a prehistoric Venus figurine crossed with a swelling Murano-forged vase. For the past hour, the piece had been growing with bursts of Akashi’s breath, piped through a metal tube. Periodically, she plunged it into a glory hole where flames licked and softened its surface, rendering it sculptable.

We were in the West Adams, Los Angeles, glass studio where Akashi makes a significant amount of her work. She and her team of glassblowers had just received a delivery of coffee-laced horchatas to power the six hours of work ahead. It was hot outside and broiling in the studio, filled with furnaces and ovens that melt, heat, and bake glass at temperatures as high as 2,250 degrees Fahrenheit. “Glassmakers, they don’t like going to saunas,” Akashi joked.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi and assistants working on November 23, 2019 at KT Glassworks, Los Angeles, CA.

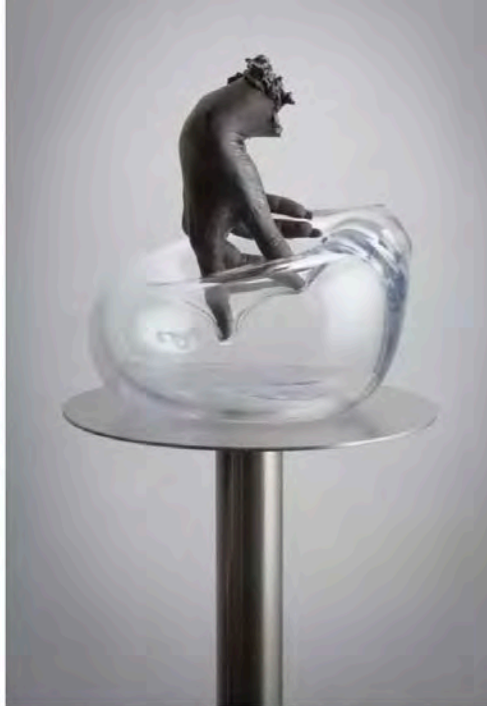
When I visited in mid-November, Akashi was preparing for a February 2020 solo show at [Tanya Bonakdar Gallery](#) in New York. She had just returned to L.A. — where she was born and now lives and works — after a two-month-long residency at Headlands, in Marin County. Recently, she'd also shown work at Frieze London with Bonakdar, and at FIAC, in Paris, with [François Ghebaly](#). In one sculpture, called *Be Me (Cultivator)* (2019), thin strands of glass curl around a textured steel cast of Akashi's own hand and erupt into fiery, semi-transparent petals. In *Peeking* (2019), two long-nailed fingers (again cast from Akashi's, as for all hands in her work) crawl from a glass shell, which resembles a dollop of deep, celestial space. These pieces, like all of Akashi's, seem to harbor something alive — even primordial.

Since 2014, glass has been an integral component of Akashi's work. Though her practice encompasses sculpture and photography, it feels more like a series of alchemical experiments invoking the historical and emotional significance of objects. Glassmaking is one of several processes — including assembling photograms, casting her own hand, and making and burning candles — that Akashi persistently engages to embody the passage of time. "I think I was always trying to find a way to create work that could hold evidence of a lot of time and change," she explained, "and also point towards future time and change."

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Peeking*, 2019. Photo by Paul Salvesson. Courtesy of the Artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.



Kelly Akashi, *Submersion*, 2019. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer. Courtesy of the Artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.

Akashi thinks a lot about the history of her materials and how they've been used by generations of humans before her. Glassmaking stretches back around 4,000 years to Mesopotamia, when someone discovered that sand could be heated, liquified, and manipulated into a scintillating, malleable substance. Early instructions, etched into a cuneiform tablet from the library of King Assurbanipal (reigned 668–627 B.C.E.), point to the process's ritualistic beginnings: "On the day when you plan to place the glass in the kiln, you make a sheep sacrifice...you place juniper incense on the censer, you pour out a libation of honey and liquid butter, and then only [do] you place the glass in the kiln." Later, starting around the 12th century C.E., deft Venetian artisans honed and perfected glass techniques on the island of Murano, churning out elaborate vases and chandeliers dripping with ornate, iridescent accretions.

Akashi, who has traveled to Murano, regularly visits museums to mine their age-old glass for inspiration; she's particularly drawn to pieces where the human hand is visible in marks and slippages. "I get very excited about feeling humanity [in objects]," she explained, "to touch on humanity and the history of object-making throughout thousands of years."

# LISSON GALLERY

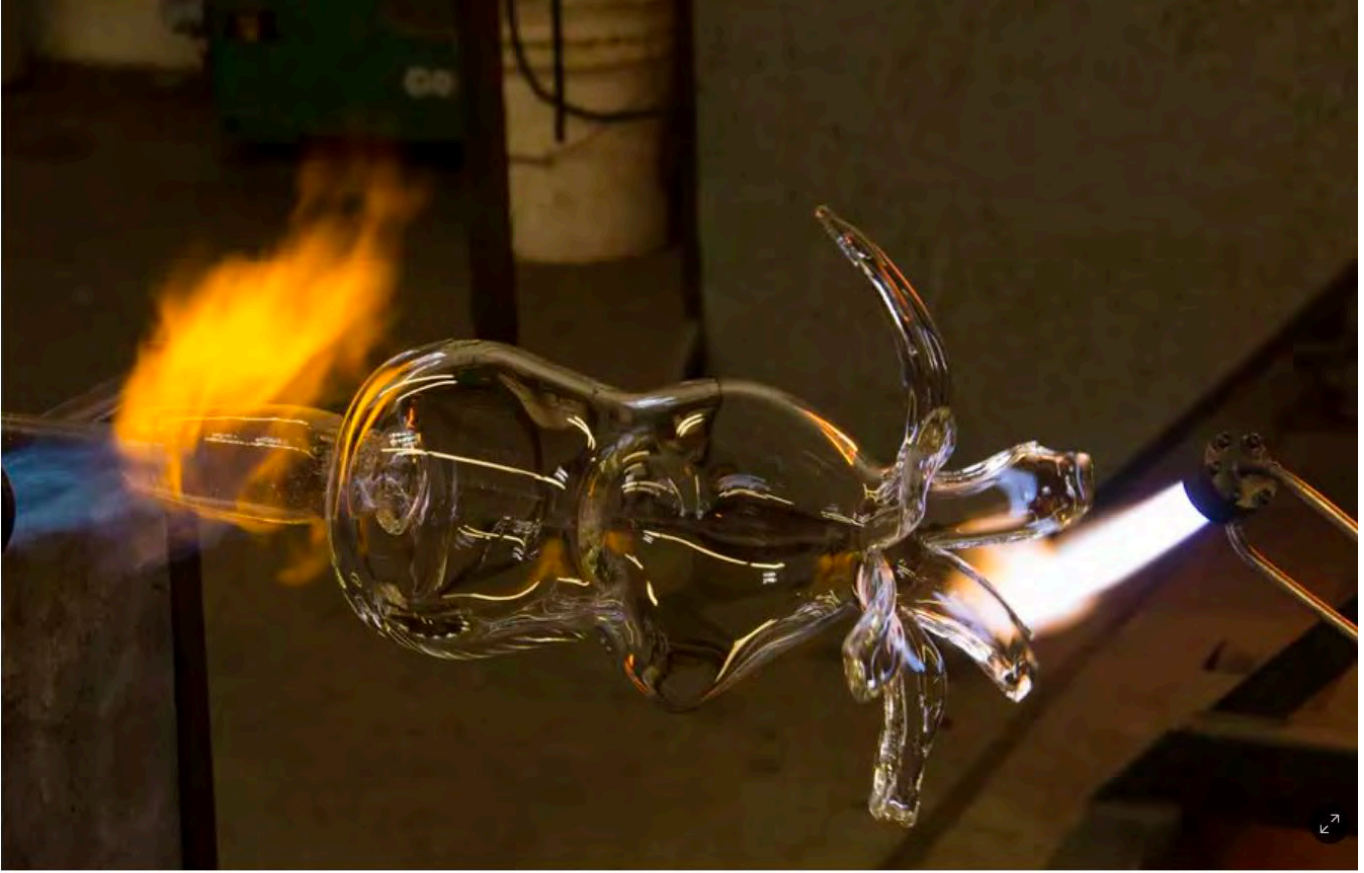


Kelly Akashi, *Tunnel Complex*, 2019. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer. Courtesy of the Artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.

For her solo show in L.A. at François Ghebaly earlier this year, Akashi used glass to resuscitate the forms of extinct organisms. Fossils of ancient shells from the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles became blueprints for reverse crystal casts. Suspended in clear blocks, the spiraling cavities that resulted give shape to the interior space of each shell, where the soft, fleshy creatures once took refuge. “I loved this idea that there was a creature that built it, made it, lived inside of it, and had its own timeline to it,” she explained. For Akashi, works like these elicit a “conversation or connection with some kind of consciousness that existed before me.”

The show also featured casts of Akashi’s hands and sharp nails pressed deep into ballooning glass orbs. She thinks of her fingernails—protein deposits which lengthen and build much like shells—as “mini geological features,” she laughed. These sculptures express a different facet of time: “a mortal timeline,” she continued. Paired together, the shells (representing the long dead) and the hands (the living) form an expansive, heady chronology reaching from the prehistoric past to the tenuous present, suggesting “that humanity might even have its own extinction date,” she mused.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi and assistants working on November 23, 2019 at KT Glassworks, Los Angeles, CA.

The day I visited, Akashi was making some of her first overtly figurative glass pieces: curvaceous vessels loosely inspired by pre-Columbian urns and expressive of the female form. While much of her past work has suggested body parts — labial folds, turgid appendages, creased skin — Akashi had never connected such disparate elements to form a whole. I watched as a glob of molten glass transformed through the tender, sweaty handling of four glassmakers (Akashi with assistants Kazuki Takizawa, David Gutierrez, and Deshon Tyau). It expanded and swelled with breasts, teased out by Akashi's breath and encouragement from a hunk of wet newspaper. "If the glass is hot enough and the newspaper is thin enough, you can really feel your fingers shape it," she explained. "It's the closest you can get to touching it."

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Feel Me (Aquamarine)*, 2019. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer. Courtesy of the Artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.

Akashi endowed the form with a vulva and a collar of radiant, rippling petals. She made eight figures in all. In the upcoming exhibition at Tanya Bonakdar, Akashi is planning for them to stand on a single table under a quartz glass bell that resonates at a frequency so low “you almost feel the sound as much as you hear it,” she explained. I imagine the transparent figures filling up with deep, primal vibrations. Elsewhere in the show – and amongst many other works still in progress – a sphere will leak water from hundreds of tiny orifices, as if weeping.

These sculptures express time and transformation, but they also harness something closer to feeling. They’re investigations into an object’s ability to “contain and transmit emotion,” Akashi explained, smiling, as the glass furnace bubbled behind her. “Objects that emote.” ■

# LISSON GALLERY

*Artnet*

21 December 2019

## People

# Which Emerging Artist Dominated 2019? 12 Art-World Players Share Their Thoughts

Which artists commanded the spotlight in 2019?

**Artnet News**, December 21, 2019

Kelly Akashi



Kelly Akashi, *Flowing Figure (Hooked)* (detail) (2019). Courtesy of the artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.


# LISSON GALLERY

With her materially dynamic and elegiac exhibition last year at François Ghebaly in Los Angeles and three residencies—at ARCH Athens, the Ojai Institute, and Headlands Center for the Arts—LA-based artist Kelly Akashi had a busy and exciting year in 2019. Her practice, which is both conceptually rigorous and seductively handmade, considers enduring themes which feel especially resonant in this moment: entropy, deterioration, and the capacity and fragility of the natural environment and the human form. The year ahead includes various notable exhibition projects, including Kelly's first solo gallery show in New York (opening in February at Tanya Bonakdar), a project at the Aspen Art Museum (opening in March), and a new outdoor commission at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts (opening this summer), all of which will no doubt catalyze new developments in her work and her audience.

*—Molly Epstein, curator and art advisor*

*Art in America*  
1 April 2019

# Kelly Akashi

By Leah Ollman  April 1, 2019 9:18am

**Kelly Akashi**'s hand was everywhere in this ensnaring show, and not just implicitly, in that the Los Angeles–based artist made its sculptural contents, but explicitly, too. Throughout, her hand, cast in stainless steel, appeared as an agent of inquiry, an autonomous empirical tool. It probed, nested, and squeezed, a surrogate eye and synecdochical I.

Movement through the spiral layout of the gallery spaces registered as a subtle, experiential echo of the imagery within, much of which took the form of nautilus, conch, whelk, and drill shells with twisting inner chambers. There was no programmatic progression from the scientific to the erotic, but the work intrigued in its encompassing of both extremes. The first gallery featured two installations in which rectangular, open-shelf structures in red oak frame and support an assortment of objects, bringing to mind cabinets of curiosities, orderly housings for the wondrous. In one of the installations, *Spirit Complex* (all works 2019), three conical, clear glass vessels fitted in holes in the top of the shelving unit suggest at once lab equipment and something vaguely bodily, a tail or horn. A coiled heap of slender rope rests like a sleeping snake on a shelf below, passing through it to suspend a gorgeous **blown-glass** shell form in smoky amber, its voluptuous mouth agape. In the other installation, *Body Complex*, Akashi's hand, immortalized in steel and sunk into a cushion of rose-colored glass, cups a sprouting, decaying cut onion. On the bottom level, old anatomical illustrations of the human torso's interior are overlaid with clear glass shells—delicate protective cover over the skinless machinery, or additional organs swelling from the chest cavity.

# LISSON GALLERY

“Figure Shifter,” as the show was titled, abounded in dualities, multiplicities, changes in form. On the wall of the darkened second gallery, a looping ten-minute video projection drew, in light, a continuous sequence of shells emerging from nothingness, transforming, and dissolving back into nothingness, the work suggesting a time-lapse peek at evolution. That same space contained four industrial-looking pedestals—steel poles with matching circular bases and display platforms—holding sculptures of sensual encounter between Akashi’s cast hand and pieces of blown glass. In the most haunting of them, *Ripple*, fingers of the upturned hand curl up into the broad bottom—the buttocks—of a clear glass bowl. Like a membrane with memory, the glass is molded around the fingers’ stimulating reach. Akashi, who also works frequently with wax, flaunts glass’s provisional solidity. However firm and still it obviously is, the glass in these sculptures retains the appearance and effect of a liquid, the wet, malleable skin of a bubble.

Akashi explores not just the erogenous boundaries between inside and outside, but also the perceptual experience of comprehending a subject from different physical angles and in different materials. In the third gallery space, the center of the spiral, three large blown-glass spheres with handsome netting patterns hung head-high or higher. Each was suspended by a rope that extended up and over a different wall, to drop down into a previously traversed room, where it wrapped around the wrist or through the fingers of one of Akashi’s cast hands. When, as in several places, the strands are separated, they hang with the uncanny power of tresses in myth and fairy tale. The three installations could not be seen whole, but only over time and through motion. Retracing our steps, we could see the parts we’d encountered before but with new awareness of the larger idea they belong to—an elegant reminder of the spiral path that knowledge takes, circling ever around and upward.



Kelly Akashi: *Ripple*, 2019, stainless steel and hand-blown glass, 55 1/2 by 13 1/2 by 13 1/2 inches; at François Ghebaly. Photo Robert Wedemeyer.

ArtNews  
27 February 2019

# Kelly Akashi at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles



BY THE EDITORS OF ARTNEWS

February 27, 2019 5:13pm



Installation view of “**Kelly Akashi: Figure Shifter**,” 2019, at **François Ghebaly**, Los Angeles.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND FRANÇOIS GHEBALY, LOS ANGELES

**Today's show:** “Kelly Akashi: Figure Shifter” is on view at François Ghebaly in Los Angeles through Sunday, March 10. The solo exhibition, the L.A.-based artist’s second with the gallery, presents a suite of new work that uses “glassblowing, lost-wax casting, tomography, cameraless photography, and water,” according to a press release.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Hyperallergic*  
17 January 2019

News

## Art Movements

The city of Tulsa has received \$1 million from Bloomberg Philanthropies to fund public art commemorating Black Wall Street, Pérez Art Museum Miami has received a \$100,000 grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and more.



Jasmine Weber January 17, 2019

## Accolades

**Kelly Akashi** has won the **Carolyn Glasoe Bailey Foundation Awards Art Prize**. She will receive a \$10,000 grant, a residency in Ojai, and a solo show at the foundation. [ARTnews]

The **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** has awarded the **Academy of American Poets** with two grants totaling \$2.2 million. The funds will enable the work of several poets serving in civic Poets Laureate positions, and of more than 20 poetry organizations who comprise a national Poetry Coalition. This is believed to be one of the largest awards made by a philanthropic institution to support poetry in the United States. [via email announcement]

The **Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts** has named the recipients of its Fall 2018 grants. \$3.65 million was given to 42 nonprofit arts organizations for exhibitions, publications, and visual arts programming. [ARTnews]

The **Bronx Museum of the Arts** in New York has named **Carey Lovelace** as the third honoree for its 2019 benefit gala. **Hank Willis Thomas** and **Junko Kobayashi** will also be honored. [ARTnews]

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

**Creative Capital** has announced its 2019 Creative Capital Awards. 50 projects (representing 58 individual artists) have been selected, with each receiving a total of \$100,000, split between direct project funding and career development services. The full value of this year's awards is \$5 million. Among this year's winners are **Allison Janae Hamilton, Ja'Tovia Gary, and Kia LaBeija & Taina Larot.** [Creative Capital]

The **Joan Mitchell Foundation** has announced the 32 artists who have been awarded residencies at its **Center in New Orleans**. The group includes nine artists from the New Orleans area. The selected artists include **Shani Peters, Antoine Williams, and Jave Yoshimoto.** [via email announcement]

The **Museum of Chinese in America**, in partnership with the **Center for Jewish History** and the **American Jewish Historical Society**, has received a \$364,824 grant from the **Council on Library and Information Resources** to fund a three-year collaborative research project on the shared history of Chinese and Jewish immigrant communities in New York City. [via email announcement]

**Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM)** has received a \$100,000 grant from **The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts** to support PAMM's upcoming exhibition, *Teresita Fernández: Elemental*, co-organized with **Phoenix Art Museum.** [via email announcement]

# LISSON GALLERY

The **Prix Marcel Duchamp**, a prestigious French art award, announced its shortlist for 2019. The selected artists include **Eric Baudelaire, Katinka Bock, Marguerite Humeau, and Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille**. The winner will be announced in October, and receive €35,000 (~\$40,000) for personal use and up to €30,000 (~\$34,000) to produce an exhibition of their work in the **Centre Pompidou**, the French National Museum of Modern Art.

[ARTnews]

**Tulsa, Oklahoma** has been named a **Bloomberg Philanthropies 2018 Public Art Challenge** winner. Tulsa will receive \$1 million for “The Greenwood Art Project,” a group of temporary public artworks that celebrate and commemorate “**Black Wall Street.**” [via email announcement]

**Bob Woodward**, a *Washington Post* editor known most recently for his book *Fear: Trump in the White House*, will be awarded the 2019 **PEN America Literary Service Award**. [NYT]

*Forbes*  
6 February 2018

FORBES > LIFESTYLE > FORBESLIFE

# Despite An All-Female Roster Of Artists, Stray Focuses On The Art Itself

**Ann Binlot** Former Contributor 

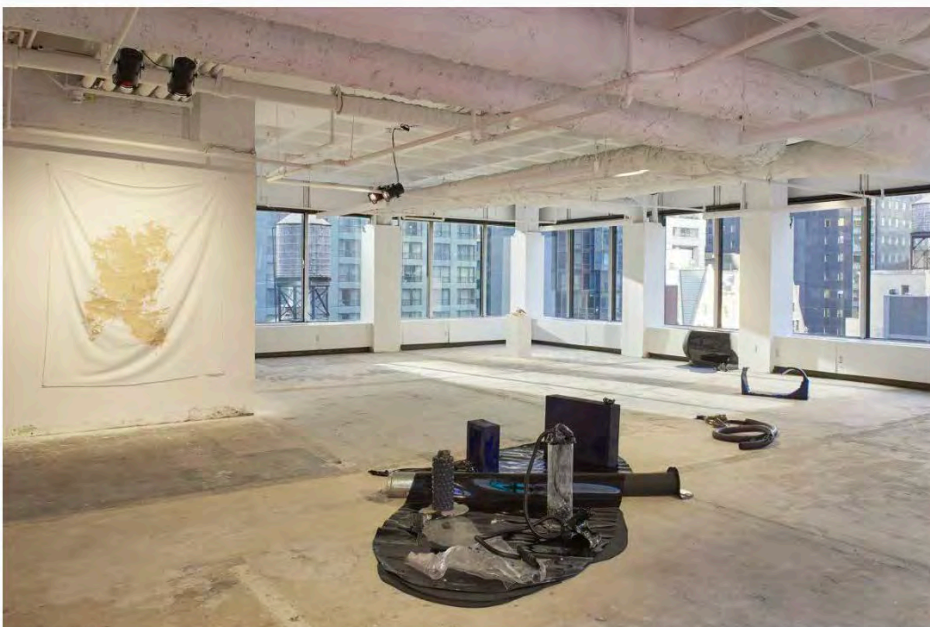
*I bring creativity and culture from around the globe to you.*

Feb 6, 2018, 01:44pm EST

In the art world, it's a well known fact that female artists don't have equal footing with their male counterparts; art collective The Guerrilla Girls noted in 2015 that only four women had solo exhibitions in a major New York museum — the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim and the Whitney — only four more than their original count 30 years before in 1985. Not much else has changed; according to the National Endowment for the Arts, 51 percent of working visual artists are women, yet, says the Art Newspaper, only 27 percent of solo exhibitions over a six-year period featured female artists. The art world has started to take note; Hauser & Wirth opened its Los Angeles location with an [all-female abstract sculpture show](#), and La Monnaie in Paris inaugurated its new space last fall with an exhibition of female artists called [Women House](#).

# LISSON GALLERY

Although it's a positive thing that women artists are finally getting their due, in a way, it's a double-edged sword; all-male exhibitions never publicize the fact that the only artists featured are men. Curator Tiffany Zabłudowicz had the same line of thinking when she organized the exhibition [Stray](#), which ends its run on February 7 at 1500 Broadway in Times Square. While Zabłudowicz enlisted five female artists to contribute their work to the women-only show, that fact was not highlighted in the press release — intentionally. “I deliberately decided not to state that Stray includes only female artists on the press release,” said Zabłudowicz. “There have been countless exhibitions with only male artists and I have never seen that listed as such. An artist is an artist regardless of gender.”



L-R: Work by Pamela Rosenkranz, Kelly Akashi (background), and Hayden Dunham KYLE KNODELL

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

In Stray, the focus is not on the fact that all the artists are female, but rather on the artists' actual work. Zabludowicz organized Stray with a common theme, incorporating pieces by five artists:

Kelly Akashi, Ivana Bašić, Hayden Dunham, Marguerite Humeau, and Pamela Rosenkranz.

“Artists in this exhibition explore what it means to have a human body in the contemporary world by depicting abstract sculptural suggestions of flesh that is in flow or transition,” reads the release. “Flesh is fleeting, and authority over one’s own skin is in question in an age where the body can be commodified, observed, edited, augmented, and frozen.”

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Akashi's sculptures use temporal materials like glass or wax to form snake-like spirals on what appears to be a soft pillow. She also uses her own body, casting her hands in bronze for a sculpture where a pair of hands hold a ball of blue glass with blown-out rays that is supposed to be a sun. Bašić contributed sculptures that look like marble alien-like forms emerging from a womb. Juxtaposed behind them, Humeau's Digital Desert II manipulates a digital camouflage print that the military uses against drones, placing it above containers that hold fake human blood. "If you look through it you're almost looking through the perspective of the drone," explained Zabłudowicz. "Also, you're kind of being protected by it as well." In the opposite side of the space, Rosenkranz references Yves Klein's Anthropometrie series, where the artist used female bodies as human paint brushes using his signature blue. Rosenkranz concocted her own shade of nude, using her own body as the brush on terrycloth in each piece of the diptych No One's Expression; No One's Impression. Dunham combines a number of materials in her installations, like silicone, oil, charcoal, and a formula she made that she calls "gel."

Stray ends tomorrow night with a final viewing at 6pm and a performance by Dunham from 7pm to 8pm.

*V Magazine*  
22 January 2018

## V Magazine: The New Vision, Kelly Akashi



Monday, January 22, 2018

By Alexandra Pechman

**With genre-bending bodies of work that span a range of mediums and materials, these are the names to know in today's evolving scene. First up is sculptor Kelly Akashi (BFA *Fine Arts* '06).**

As she leads me around her Inglewood, California studio, sculptor Kelly Akashi runs her finger along a blown-glass work. "I touch everything," she says with a laugh. One can understand why: Glancing around, there are experiments like an oyster shell filled with glass; tin-foil trays of gem-colored wax; or a life-size, speckled glass apple. Akashi's sculptures use materials and textures such as bronze, wax, and glass to create self-contained—and incredibly tactile—microcosms.

On the day we meet, Akashi is preparing a solo booth at Art Basel Miami Beach with her L.A. gallery, Ghebaly, and has just wrapped up her first major museum solo show—at SculptureCenter in New York City—titled "Long Exposure," which examined themes related to the body and temporality.

# LISSON GALLERY

You can also catch Akashi's work at ***ALL HANDS ON DECK***, the new exhibition at the Ben Maltz Gallery.

Image: Kelly Akashi, *Two Sides of One Story*, 2017, bronze and glass. Courtesy the artist and Ghebaly Gallery. Photography Kelly Akashi.

AQNB

11 December 2017

## Gravity, fire, light, sound + liquid: Kelly Akashi on the material concerns of integrating art-making into daily life

Laura Brown, 11 December 2017  
Focus

"Sometimes it is to show tension," reflects Kelly Akashi, describing the meeting of element and sensation in her work. Writing back and forth in the weeks following the opening of her exhibition, Long Exposure, at New York's SculptureCenter, running September 18 to December 18, Akashi shares on the show. Gravity, fire, light, sound, and liquid are at the core of the Los Angeles-based artist's making, embedded and evidenced in works using glass, wax, bronze, and knotted rope. "Since I primarily use rather fluid, impressionable materials," she notes, "I am most satisfied when it is difficult to discern where exactly my hand comes into play."

*Long Exposure* is Akashi's first institutional solo show. It is abundant with blown glass, twisting candles, rope, copper, delicate tree branches, photograms, and cast hands, often installed atop (or penetrating) the smooth surface of cherry wood. Elsewhere they sit or hang, clustered or alone, in nooks and ledges throughout SculptureCenter's windowless subterranean spaces. A 16mm projection is also introduced, throwing flames onto a perforated copper screen. A level above this, outside in the courtyard, Akashi's bronze hand is bound with rope, held by its own weight against a wedge of concrete. Glass buildings fill the view of this sky. The rope ends tangle in the wind like long hair.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

If the extent of Akashi's hand becomes difficult to detect in the work, the unclear edges of the exhibition itself are also made important. "Instead of creating work that responds to a space with strong character," Akashi explains, she considers what it may "lend to the history and biography of the work." Upon the opening of *Long Exposure*, I had the pleasure of visiting the artist's studio, seeing other parts to this geology. Lined with materials and tools, as well as various spots for sitting, in the middle of this workspace sits a large, low table covered in many more colorful glass volumes. This isn't the only space for Akashi's working, though. Taking a walk, writing, hearing music, or working elsewhere — changing tempo — are also necessary.

*\*\*Let's begin with your show in SculptureCenter's porous basement. How did you think through furnishing this space?*

KA: In SculptureCenter's basement, I was drawn to the most geological and impacted parts of the space: the patina of the concrete walls, the jagged broken concrete nooks, the arched cutouts carved into several dividing walls. I wanted to embrace these characteristics and allow them to become a framework, to have a conversation, not an interdependency, with my objects and images. The lack of natural light seemed especially useful for projections and allowed me the opportunity to produce a film work that operated as a lighting device for a screen ('Shadow Film'). I then used the only window, a stairwell skylight, to create a contrasting work that accumulated sunlight through solar panels, which periodically illuminated a glass object that hung below.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

The moveables, or structures that utilize the language of domestic furniture such as shelves and tables, specifically build off of the versions from my last exhibition, *Being as a Thing*. There, the moveables developed with a vocabulary that I borrowed from bed frame, table, shelving, screen, and sandplay design. For *Long Exposure*, I wanted them to further blur the boundary between object and display mechanism, and allow the arrangements to be examined without privileging any one perspective. This is what led to the rounded and curved cherry wood planes — each one builds off of an interaction with a circle, whether elongated or divided or perforated.

*\*\*With the moveables, this sense of accumulation and adaptation lies in the forms you take up. Could you speak about the cast bronze hands, what they hold, where they might lead?*

# LISSON GALLERY

KA: The introduction of casts of my own hands in the work became necessary as I began to identify the importance of my hands and fingernails as primary tools. At the time I was invested in my first series of bronze casts: a sequence of lost-wax cast bronze objects that substituted melted candles for foundry wax. I used my knowledge of wax, which came from watching candles burn very slowly in layers, and applied it to the casting process of my own hand. This process lent a geological quality to the wax cast of the hand, which is found in the wrist where many accumulated poured wax layers are evident through the drippings. Originally I wanted this geological sensibility to parallel itself with the cast fingernails, which are each a different length as some have broken off from work or other contact. After the first cast ('Figure 31,' made in 2015), I recognized how a life cast acts in a similar way to a photo document and thus expanded my sensibility of geology to embrace the slow changing human body.

A larger body of work has developed from this singular life-casting experiment. I now think of the casts operating in two ways: to slow down or 'fix' a physically rendered moment in time, and to provide a framework for the other object(s) on display. This framework can be a nod towards tactility, or a way to ascribe a sensibility and embed it in the object(s), for example with my works that share the title 'Be Me.'

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

*\*\*Sometimes these hands are hanging, pointing, pressing, or grasping. Gravity is strong, as both sensation and element.*

KA: I sometimes think that I create the objects I do because I want to see them in relation to the natural world. This is why I look to nature — to weeds and branches, combustion and light, the accumulation of wax drippings and other fluid to static states — for research and inspiration. I am thrilled when the boundaries between the natural world and the artwork are difficult to detect. I am able to bring in natural order by utilizing gravity in many of my works. Sometimes it is to show tension, to 'float' at a certain height, to compress, accumulate, or absorb.

'Double Penetration' and 'Shadow Film' are great works to bring up in relation to this, but I find a work as simple as 'Be Me (Californian — Japanese Citrus)' just as relevant. I placed it very high so that one would be eye-level with the bottom of the object, where the wax had dripped out of the mold and created small stalactites at the base of the citrus. It asks one to start from nature and then enter and examine the object, which is a cast of cultivated nature. And since I primarily use rather fluid, impressionable materials, I am most satisfied when it is difficult to discern where exactly my hand comes into play.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

*\*\*I recall our conversation in your studio about the branch hanging from the ceiling and how it linked with the need for a break, entering a different timezone by taking a walk to find it. How do these varying tempos function into your working, which come to show in your materials?*

KA: The varying tempos come from a sensitivity to where my attention is focused when making work. When I am making art under a sensibility of designated 'work-time' I feel it results in work that emits at a certain frequency, one I would describe as being rather uptight or detached from the 'world at large.' This mode is useful sometimes, but I am not personally drawn to other artists who work this way exclusively and I definitely do not want all the works I make to communicate through this kind of self-absorbed tunnel. And I suppose another big concern here is that when one gets into that level of minute attention to detail and to a level of 'finishing,' presentation, or 'done-ness,' intentionality can get lost if it is applied *en masse* or utilized exclusively... it can register as default or, worse, as standard.

So at some point I began to build different kinds of 'work-time' into my practice. There are multiple reasons why this is necessary. I am able to be deliberate with where I place my attention in my work, and how the value of attention to different objects is identified in my larger practice. I am also able to create work that does not take away, nor differentiate itself from my life, work that integrates itself within my daily life.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

I experience a special kind of joy when I am able to identify something in my life, which was not intended as art, to be linked to sensibilities in my studio practice. As you saw when you came to visit, my studio is right next to my home kitchen, and I see the door that lies between as this portal where things can pass back and forth, from studio to kitchen, to be transformed. I am able to consistently learn and surprise myself through these varying modes of working.

*\*\*In an interview a couple years ago with Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer you talked about why you don't or can't listen to music while you work, is this still the case?*

KA: It is true that I still do not listen to music while I work, but since that interview I discovered that I love listening to music when I write. I choose music that has a rhythm or flow that I want to integrate into the text I am working on, and it feels somewhat natural to me to repeat the same album, or musician, for hours in order to embody their skillfully composed vibrations and utilize them in my own words and for my own meaning.

This relates to glassblowing, as well. There, I am listening for the sounds of the glass, especially as it cries out in stress. To not hear it is to not be paying attention. The wax too, when it is fully heated, will make this strange bubbling sound as the top plate of hardened wax dislodges from the pot and flatly sinks downward. These are all moments worthy of my attention, so I'd rather not muffle it. \*\*

*The Village Voice*  
24 November 2017

ART ARCHIVES

# Under the Spell of Sculptor Kelly Akashi's Eerie, Tactile Elegance

by JENNIFER KRASINSKI  
November 24, 2017

**Kelly Akashi, "Feel Me," (2017)**

KYLE KNODELL

There is an eerie loveliness, a troubled elegance, to the work of Los Angeles-based artist Kelly Akashi. Insides and outsides are defined, then confused; materials behave as themselves, then pose as something else; objects look familiar, but perform strangely. In other words, she's a sculptor in the classic California tradition that celebrates eccentricity as a kind of instinctive intelligence. (Akashi completed her MFA at the University of Southern California in 2014; her BFA at Otis College of Art and Design in 2006.) An exhibition at SculptureCenter, her first solo institutional show, is formally tight, conceptually brainy, and materially astute—not to mention appealingly weird.

Art traditionally forbids touch (as in: *look, but don't...*); it is principally the territory of vision. Though visitors aren't allowed or encouraged to meddle with Akashi's sculptures, the artist offers cerebral encounters with tactility, invoking the hand as a maker of things, and as a thing made. Hands and fingers cast in bronze—*her* hands and fingers, one presumes—appear throughout. Amputated (loosed, freed) from the body, an appendage becomes yet another object in the world: a shape, a weight, a sign. In *Feel Me* (all works 2017), a pair of hands is slung across the top of a tall concrete incline, tethered together by a rope. It's a balancing act: One scales up by its fingertips on one side, anchoring the other which hangs down on the other, the end of the rope wildly frayed beneath it — a cushion against the cold, rough surface of the cement.

# LISSON GALLERY

Looking at Akashi's body/objects (or object/bodies) feels a bit like watching the material world sense itself, encounter itself, shift and repurpose its constituent elements, natural and otherwise. The lone cast bronze digit of *Finger Figure* hangs from the ceiling at the show's entrance by a bronze wire rope, and points down toward the subterranean galleries of SculptureCenter where most of her exhibition is installed. The finger casts a stubby shadow onto the floor, like a morbid sundial tracking the passing of time by the movement of light. But here, the main light source is electric, somewhat constant, so the finger and its shadow are suspended not only in space, but in time.

*Long Exposure* also muses on object, light, and time (titled as it is after the photo strategy of leaving the aperture open for an extended period). A round, mossy, blown-glass vessel (shaped not unlike a Japanese fishing float) is tied by a rope to a cast-bronze tree branch installed beneath a skylight. On the branches are perched what looked to be curls of metal—solar panels, we're told. The panels are slowly charged by the sunlight, which in turn charges a hidden element inside the glass vessel; duration brings illumination. The day I visited, there was no detectable glow coming from the sculpture; rather, I was struck by how difficult it was to see the bronze branch, read its details, since against the lightwell it mostly disappeared into silhouette.

Although heady and entirely graceful, there is also something decidedly macabre about Akashi's art. Severed extremities, curling candles burnt, wax drippings, hanging ropes, glass vessels flayed open like skin and half-filled with still water: the undercurrents of her installations aren't exactly violent, but carry an energy that might be called "post-event," possessing an unsettled presence somewhere between detritus and memorial. The SculptureCenter's drafty, raw-walled basement galleries always feel more like a crypt beneath a cathedral than an exhibition space, and Akashi's work makes best use of its unshakable creepiness. Down here, her oddities—candles wrapped around a bronze branch; creamy, abstract photograms made by placing her glass works onto paper; more vessels, hands, and fingers—take on the aura of relics.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

*Double Penetration* is a jaundiced-yellow transparent glass orb with gaping holes blown through it – like a buoy designed to sink. Long strands of rope—knotted at the top, tatty at the ends—thread through its top, wind inside its interior, then snake through its punctures, dropping limply onto a round cherrywood platform. The title tips its hat to perversity, pleasure, and the pornographic, but any transgressions are formal, straight-faced, simply demonstrating that what goes in must come out.

*An Archive from Two Perspectives* is installed inside the basement’s central tunnel. In metaphor, as in fact, it cuts through (and to) the heart of the show. Akashi set two tall tables flush against the wall, on top of which she placed objects and materials we know well by now—bulbous-bottomed glass pieces, more long ropes—and some we don’t: ortho litho film prints of tree leaves, a delicate glass funnel that bores straight through the table top. The installation is a bit like a Kelly Akashi Reader, the elements of her work laid out for closer study, though she calls it an archive, so perhaps it’s more accurately understood as a repository of sorts, a time capsule for objects she’s made and declared things of the past.

In one of Akashi’s weirdest moves, a bronze finger with a torn-up nail pokes out the top of a pale blue glass funnel lying on the *Archive* table. Out its rear extends a generous tail of rope—a bizarro creature, unnatural if logically constructed. A hole occasions one of two conditions: emptiness, or occupation. (Nature abhors a vacuum; art despises a lost opportunity.) With this piece, Akashi seems to signal a future phase of all this collapse: Out of the old come new beings, new beginnings, new unearthly concoctions.

**Kelly Akashi: Long Exposure**

*SculptureCenter*

*44-19 Purves Street, Long Island City*

*718.361.1750*

*[sculpturecenter.org](http://sculpturecenter.org)*

*Through December 18*

# LISSON GALLERY

*e-flux*

3 October 2017

## *Nicola L.: Works, 1968 to the Present / Kelly Akashi: Long Exposure*

SculptureCenter

***Nicola L.: Works, 1968 to the Present***  
***Kelly Akashi: Long Exposure***  
September 18–December 18, 2017

**SculptureCenter**  
44-19 Purves Street  
Long Island City, NY 11101  
United States  
**Hours:** Thursday–Monday 12–6pm

T +1 718 361 1750  
info@sculpture-center.org

[www.sculpture-center.org](http://www.sculpture-center.org)  
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[YouTube](#) / [Tumblr](#)

SculptureCenter is pleased to announce two solo exhibitions by **Nicola L.** and **Kelly Akashi**, on view through December 18, 2017. Both exhibitions are curated by **Ruba Katrib**.

### ***Nicola L.: Works, 1968 to the Present***

Since the 1960s, Nicola L. has occupied a unique position through her interdisciplinary practice. She creates works that are thematically connected but take on many different forms and formats, from performance to film to domestic objects. Her exhibition at SculptureCenter is the artist's first institutional survey, including works from her wide-reaching oeuvre from the late 1960s to 2000s, showing her "functional art" alongside her paintings, collages, and film works.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Nicola L.'s work takes up notions of skin and surface, often breaking apart representations of the body and turning them into furniture-like objects and vice versa. Dressers, lamps, sofas, and other items resembling human forms comprise her functional objects. This body of work appears as a cast of characters, physically confronting their human counterparts as they open and close, turn off and on, and store personal items. Her series of "Penetrable" works, initially conceived to be entered or worn by viewers and/or performers, extends the body's exterior, skin, into vinyl and textile casings that enclose single or multiple bodies within another layer of material. An emphasis on superficial coverings and caricatured anthropomorphic objects ties into Nicola L.'s longstanding interests in feminism and in interrogating constructions of subjectivity.

On the occasion of the exhibition, SculptureCenter presented a staged reading of ***The Banquet of the Beheaded***, a performance work by Nicola L. originally mounted at La MaMa E.T.C. in New York in January 1999.

*The Banquet of the Beheaded* is a collection of monologues delivered at a dinner party for decapitated historical figures. At this meeting, 12 characters assemble to describe the circumstances of their iconic deaths, aiming to correct the historical record and reassess the relevance of their fates.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

SculptureCenter's presentation was read by Alexandra Cunningham Cameron, Kyle Dancewicz, Brian Droitcour, Moriah Evans, Jamian Juliano-Villani, Ruba Katrib, Baseera Khan, Kayode Ojo, Jessi Reaves, Silas Riener, Aki Sasamoto, Jamie Stevens, and C. Spencer Yeh.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully-illustrated publication with an essay by Ruba Katrib, available [online](#) and in our [bookstore](#). *Nicola L.: Works, 1968 to the Present* is supported by Linda Mirels and Gerard Mossé, Amy and Ronald Guttman, and Ursula Hauser.

## ***Kelly Akashi: Long Exposure***

Kelly Akashi is a Los Angeles-based artist working in sculpture and photography, often using materials like wax, glass, bronze, light, and air to emphasize time and ephemerality. Akashi's exhibition at SculptureCenter marks her first solo institutional presentation and includes new works commissioned for the lower level galleries incorporating large and mid-scale glass forms. The exhibition also includes photograms that capture impressions of selected objects, revealing their internal structures.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Throughout Akashi's work, glass forms are often placed in combination with other objects, such as candles and lost-wax bronze casts. Akashi displays these diverse elements within specifically designed structures, creating elaborate tableaux. Her arrangements suggest abstracted narratives of use and explore relationships between different forms and materials. For her exhibition at SculptureCenter, Akashi continues her exploration into specific connections between air and fire—two elements necessary to produce her glass works—by periodically lighting wax candles within her installations, altering the appearance of the works over time. Energetic and alchemical transformations of material are central to her work: the objects comprising Akashi's sculptures are physical manifestations of the intangibility of a breath of air or a burst of flame.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully-illustrated publication with an essay by Ruba Katrib, available [online](#) and in our [bookstore](#). *Kelly Akashi: Long Exposure* is supported by Brenda Potter, Mary Hoeveler, Mihail Lari and Scott Murray, Anthony Grant, and Susan Steinhauser and Daniel Greenberg.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

## **About SculptureCenter**

SculptureCenter leads the conversation on contemporary art by supporting artistic innovation and independent thought highlighting sculpture's specific potential to change the way we engage with the world. Positioning artists' work in larger cultural, historical, and aesthetic contexts, SculptureCenter discerns and interprets emerging ideas. Founded by artists in 1928, SculptureCenter provides an international forum that connects artists and audiences by presenting exhibitions, commissioning new work, and generating scholarship.

SculptureCenter's major exhibition and operating support is generously provided by grants from the Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; the Kraus Family Foundation; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; the A. Woodner Fund; Jeanne Donovan Fisher; the Seth Sprague Educational and Charitable Foundation; and contributions from our Board of Trustees and Director's Circle. Additional funding is provided by the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation and contributions from many generous individuals.

For more information, please visit: [www.sculpture-center.org](http://www.sculpture-center.org).

# LISSON GALLERY

FLAUNT  
29 August 2017

## SCULPTURECENTER PRESENTS KELLY AKASHI'S FIRST SOLO INSTITUTIONAL SHOW. "LONG EXPOSURE"



Time, ephemerality, lightness, and darkness are constantly reinterpreted in art. Los Angeles born and based artist Kelly Akashi has recently presented art works around the world and is bringing her latest exhibition to the SculptureCenter, located in Long Island, New York.

In beginning the creation her debut solo institutional show, Akashi weighed the question 'what physical object will be able to represent my ideas and expressions most accurately'? Throughout her work, she came to the understanding that the sculptural objects that she created, satisfied her "formerly photographic concerns regarding the document, the operator in relationship to tool and print, and representation."

# LISSON GALLERY



Utilizing her knowledge and skills from her practice of photography, Akashi manipulates glass and wax into varying twisted and bent shapes. Carefully placed near light sources, the sculptures are illuminated aspects of her show. Throughout the exhibition, there is a contrast between smooth, glossy and textured matte finishes.

Using the dungeon-like space of SculptureCenter's basement, a major piece on the descending staircase will be activated by solar cells hanging on a bronze tree branch installed on the wall--one a glass orb with a lightbulb inside and the other a cast bronze of a tree branch. Fluctuating with the sun, when there isn't enough light to power the solar cells on the roof, the stairwell lights cease to function, varying the lighting intensity as visitors make their way to the basement.

Throughout Akashi's work, glass forms are often placed in combination with other objects, such as candles and lost-wax bronze casts. Akashi displays these diverse elements within specifically designed structures, creating elaborate tableaux. Her arrangements suggest abstracted narratives of use and explore relationships between different forms and materials.

For her exhibition at SculptureCenter, Akashi continues her exploration into specific connections between air and fire—two elements necessary to produce her glass works—by periodically lighting wax candles within her installations, altering the appearance of the works over time. Energetic and alchemical transformations of material are central to her work: the objects comprising Akashi's sculptures are physical manifestations of the intangibility of a breath of air or a burst of flame.

# LISSON GALLERY



The exhibition will be open to the public September 18 - December 18, 2017. Opening Reception will be held Sunday, September 17, 5 pm to 7 pm.

*Cultured*  
1 February 2017

# Kelly Akashi: Young Artists 2017

The human body often shows up in Kelly Akashi's sculptures, often unattached. Not quite unsettling, but messy nonetheless, Akashi's materials are presented as a way of questioning the subjects they're depicting. Her solo show at Ghebaly Gallery in L.A. runs through December 23, and she is preparing work for a group show at Antenna Space in Shanghai curated by Franklin Melendez.

## **What was your first gallery experience?**

It was with the artist Phillip Zach, who was running a space called Beige Cube in Frankfurt. I went to Städelschule with him. That was really special, because the school gives the students an off-site space to run, and they can do whatever they want with it. That was a great experience, which the schools in L.A. don't do. And it taught me a lot. We had full control.

## **If you could trade with anyone, who would it be?**

Paul Thek.

# LISSON GALLERY



Installation view of Akashi's work at Made in L.A. 2016

## **What is the best piece of advice you've received?**

If I notice I'm thinking, Should this be a certain way? I really question where that 'should' is coming from and get out of that train of thought, because 'shoulds' are based on false assumptions. That was told to me by Willem de Rooij, who was my teacher in Frankfurt.

## **When you aren't in the studio, where are you?**

I play video games. I played a really heavy game called *Life Is Strange*.

*Cultured*  
15 September 2017

# Kelly Akashi's Sculptures Are Growing Underground

On a coffee table littered with shaped glass, long spills of wax and a plaster impression of a hand, rests a sweet potato past its prime. Long sprouts stretch like fingers from its wrinkled rust-brown skin, fading from red to yellow to green at the leafy tips. "I'm not sure what to do with it," says artist Kelly Akashi of the baroque spud. "A photographer was in here and thought I should just photograph it. But, I'm not convinced."



Kelly Akashi. Photo by Cayetano Ferrer courtesy artist and Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

It's an understandable dilemma: the unmediated potato already fits right in among the lumpy, bodily, slick, stringy and bright objects covering nearly every surface of Akashi's studio. The artist is known for casting her own hands and fingers in fleshly transubstantiations of bronze, wax and silicone, and for intertwined taper candles, in gradients of vibrant taffy hues, their wicks sometimes tied in nautical or macramé braids. In preparation for her solo show at [SculptureCenter](#) this September, table and floor are covered with knobby blown glass globe-and vase-like, sometimes tuberous forms in dozens of colors—opal, amber, milky gold and cloudy seafoam volumes, pulled and folded to translucence.

## L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

As much as the results, Akashi seems taken with the alchemical intricacy of the processes she uses. She has, for example, made a detailed study of the history of the candle. “Akashi is incorporating elements such as time, fire, air and other seemingly intangible phenomenon into sculptures that embody these qualities in solid form,” explains the show’s curator, Ruba Katrib. The tiered wooden furniture that the artist arranges with glass and bronzes are also caked with variegated splatter from candles burned while the work is on display; wax runs off the sides like stalactites. It won’t be cleaned off, she says—only added to. The form hardens and you can’t go back in, but at the same time, nothing is ever really final.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Photography is in Akashi's bag, too. Her glass works become subjects for photograms probing their opacity and transparency. Akashi points to where, in one of her favorites, refractions from the glass have left smoke-like traces on the emulsion. The optics of a camera are, after all, just high-grade lumps of melted sand... And, as Akashi notes, a glass studio is not unlike a darkroom. At SculptureCenter, Akashi's sculptures will occupy the basement, an alcoved brick and concrete place with only a drift of natural light. She realized the basement would make a perfect darkroom. The show, aptly titled "Long Exposure," turns on the idea of illumination. A kind of solar cell rigged to a skylight above the basement staircase will power a bulb inside a green bulge of glass, thin enough in places for the light to seep through. There will be candles, burning and burnt. Akashi will also exhibit a 16mm film, her first in several years, which will brighten one wall of the space with footage of chemical light. This time underground promises to be fruitful for a practice both formally beguiling and technically exact. Indeed, potatoes aren't the only things that sprout in the dark.

# LISSON GALLERY

*Hammer*  
20 April 2017

## Previewing K.A.M.P. with Kelly Akashi

**APRIL 20, 2017 – BY LAURA HYATT, MANAGER, MEMBERSHIP  
AND ANNUAL GIVING**

Everyone at the Hammer looks forward to K.A.M.P. (Kids' Art Museum Project) all year! Our annual fundraising event is imagined by artists for kids and their families. As we gear up for the big day on Sunday, May 21, we checked in with one of this year's artists, **Kelly Akashi**. You may have seen her work hanging in the Hammer courtyard last summer, as she was included in Made in L.A. 2016.

Kelly invited the Rubeli family over to her studio for a test-run of her project, so we tagged along and asked a few questions about why she is excited about K.A.M.P. and what led her to being an artist.



*Kelly Akashi with one of her sand sculptures*

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

## **Laura Hyatt: When did you first decide you wanted to be an artist?**

Kelly Akashi: The first artworks I saw were the paintings I grew up with, which my mom had made in college. But it wasn't until I started studying art history in college when I realized all that art encompassed—all that was possible.



*A painting by Kelly Akashi's mom*

## **What inspired you to participate in K.A.M.P. this year?**

I saw Cayetano Ferrer's workshop at K.A.M.P. a few years ago. It was really fun. I loved the energy of the kids and seeing the interpretations they had of the projects the artists presented.

## **Can you give us a preview of your project for K.A.M.P.?**

We're going to make sand sculptures and sand candles with different colors of wax. My mom actually taught me how to make sand candles.

LISSON GALLERY

*Artforum*  
March 2017

# OPENINGS: KELLY AKASHI



Kelly Akashi, *Finger Figure* (detail), 2016, bronze, copper, brass, anodized aluminum wire, 28 × 28 × 44".

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

**KELLY AKASHI** titled her most recent solo show at Ghebaly Gallery in Los Angeles, in 2016, “Being as a Thing.” As names go, it was an especially good one. It posited existence itself as a thing, encouraging a reading of the sculptures contained therein—so many material skins out of which Akashi slithered—as harboring independent states of being, despite emphatic registrations of origin. Hands are surrogates and metonyms, extremities that preserve in bronze the friction ridge on a fingertip; an odd, talon-like nail; or plump pockets of skin elsewhere giving way to bone. At the entry, Akashi installed *At Rest*, 2016: two bronze hands, each dangling from a rope draped over a partition and counterbalanced on the other side by another disembodied hand tethered to the same taut line. Just farther inside, *Finger Figure*, 2016, multiplied the titular appendage, the crook of one supporting a free-floating constellation of still more digits hanging from twisted wire. The work suggests the imbrication of the maker in the thing made, albeit as a distantiated relationship recalled in the passage of body to cast to part-object.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

From model to mold to bronze: This ancient sequence is a miniature cosmogenesis, with the fabricator wresting form from a molten primordial inferno. Yet Akashi's surrogates are equally resonant within a lineage of countermyths traceable to Giacometti's attenuations, Duchamp's perverse supplements, and so on. Wax, for Akashi, is not just an essential component of the casting process; it stands on its own as self-immolating sculpture. Candles have been a mainstay in Akashi's work since 2012, sometimes evoked in serpentine bronze shapes that preserve the contours of the igneous substance that engendered them, but more often presented rather than represented. They curl in on themselves, forming brightly hued knots and blobs, or stand erect as blocky columns; sometimes they grow like parasites off of a wreath or pool to snugly fill a glass bowl. They may hang from the ceiling in interlocking chains, as in *Tangle 3*, 2015, or adorn a chandelier, as in *Candle Filter Structure (Axis Mundi)*, 2015, at LA's Château Shatto gallery. In all instances, they sweat when lit, their deliquescence a ritual memorialized by dripped traces. These cast-off patterns become focal elements of Akashi's installations, resinous excrement granted aesthetic status; yet they also alert viewers to the fact of a candle's having been present at some earlier point and having undergone irrevocable alteration. The "when" of this ceremony has shifted from site to site, as the candles in one show may remain unlit for weeks, while in another they might be melted away by the end of opening day, the expiration of the only candles for a specific work (e.g., in London in 2016, when Akashi showed her *Downtime Machine* sculptures, 2014–, at the David Roberts Art Foundation). The parameters for use notwithstanding, all of Akashi's wax sculptures put whomever Akashi nominates as the "host" in charge of their display—the artist herself or a curator, gallerist, or collector—in the position of steward of experience rather than custodian of objects, unless one maintains these changeable works in a state of unchanging prolepsis, totems of perpetual futurity.

In Akashi's oeuvre, longevity is nowhere assumed. Impermanence takes scintillant form in her effervescent glassworks, which taunt her with their fragility in the course of blowing them. Her photograms index these strange vessels as otherworldly shapes, warped by filters and rendered nearly ectoplasmic. Positioned on tabletops, where they are clustered like votive offerings in intricate display vignettes, they tempt the seismic gods. A ride in a hot car trunk is enough to soften and deform them. Akashi, a graduate of Otis College of Art and Design and the University of Southern California and an LA native, seems drawn to a site-specific eschatology of earthquake and heat wave, with her choices of material admitting corporeal precarity within the aspirant safety of the white cube.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, *Activity Table*, 2016, cherrywood, wax, glass, wicks, 40 × 72 × 63".

Given her penchant for material mobilizations of risk and uncertainty, it's not surprising that Akashi's art often entails suspension as the physical correlate of suspense. *At Rest* and *Finger Figure* are only two of many works by Akashi in which objects hang or dangle—ungrounded, unstable, at rest only provisionally, if at all. *Ring*, 2015, shown in Charlie White's curatorial endeavor "SOGTFO" at Ghebaly two years ago, was a large bronze donut that appeared more than heavy enough to snap the rope that encircled it, its hypothetically imminent free fall not unrelated to our own. For her contribution to the Hammer Museum's 2016 edition of *Made in LA*, "a, the, though, only," Akashi insinuated a group of sculptures, collectively nominated *Eat Me*, into the courtyard. Here, too, cast bronze hands pulled on cords, though this time their counterweights were cast rubber forms. Draped from the building's architecture like an oversize necklace, a lovely pink amulet—ostensibly doubling a decomposing onion and also summoning the exquisite contours of a seashell—unapologetically looked most like genitalia. Although this object appears fixed in photographs documenting the show, as does the knotted, open-weave, nest-like form that rounded out Akashi's contribution, each participated fully in the ambient environment: They swayed in the breeze, hoisted above eye level but just near enough to make their visceral materiality the precondition for a stymied tactility. Out of viewers' reach, they were also out of Akashi's, stirred by wind and compromised by slackening wire, gravity, and exposure to the elements outdoors.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

These agentless operations and nonsentient energies are as much a part of Akashi's craft—where craftsmanship alternately figures as process, nominal subject, and makeshift cosmology—as the lungfuls of air that conjure her glass objects. The title of *Five Breaths Piercing a Wall*, 2015, a glass halo in coruscating colors, embedded in gallery drywall, suggests that the sculpture is formed by breath. This is a chestnut of the medium, life breathed into something exogenous, the proverbial clay. There *are* enlivening forces at work here, an animation of inert matter, as in our most atavistic conceptions of sculpture. But the transubstantiation by which Pygmalion supposedly bestows subjectivity on his feminine ideal (in fact, he's just turning one kind of object into another) is divested of magic, reimagined around a different politics. Instead of the static binary of creator and subaltern creation, we find a physics of friability and contingency, nonhierarchical concatenations of elements that act on and with one another in ways that can't be predetermined. As propositions, Akashi's works are both/and rather than either/or.

She herself is everywhere and nowhere in her art. *Figure 14 or My Alphabet*, 2014–15, the long table that anchored her exhibition “&” at New York's Tomorrow gallery in 2015–16, displayed her fingernail clippings, antique beads, wood, alabaster, and so much else, histories sloughed off and reaggregated. That work, like the more recent arrangements at Ghebaly—newly stacked higher, as towers that recall shelves in Akashi's studio, where things were long kept before being deployed for public presentation—shows glass to be permeable to light and, more broadly, art necessarily beholden to separation, then penetration from without. Akashi wrote, for “&”: “You are the Objects that grew up around Me for the past few years. I named you My Alphabet and hung you on the wall as a relic of last year. You are scorched and broken like our world. . . . Can't help but love to watch you grow. I was your mother after all.” What Akashi models here is something like the intentionality of care, and an intimacy that is also an otherness.

*Suzanne Hudson is an associate professor of art history and fine arts and the director of graduate studies, art history, at the University of Southern California.*

*Frieze*

10 January 2017



## Kelly Akashi

François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, USA



BY EVAN MOFFITT IN REVIEWS | 10 JAN 17

'Now I am ready to tell how bodies are changed into other bodies,' Ovid wrote in his *Metamorphoses* (c.8 CE). Like the poet, I found myself bewitched by bodies in transformation when I visited Kelly Akashi's show at Ghebaly Gallery, 'Being as a Thing'. A singular alchemist, Akashi seems to smelt her sculptures in a furnace much older than mankind.

The show centres around four blonde-lacquered shelving units, *Arrangement I-III* and *Activity Table* (all works 2016), dripping with candle wax and gooey glass sculptures, like altars for some New Age religion. *Arrangement I* is laden with lumpy glass balloons in brown, blue and pink; I imagined Akashi inflating their molten cores like the subject of Jean Siméon Chardin's *Boy Blowing Bubbles* (c.1734). The table's legs break its surface, extending up several feet, where they are garlanded with candles – some lit – like bunches of drying herbs. On *Activity Table*, the candles assume even wilder forms, twisting like hideously gnarled tubers or cascading over corners like skeins of silken hair. The glass balloons reappear here, one resembling a burnt-out Edison bulb, resting atop a rye-dark purple cake of soapy wax. Other, more even forms lend the arrangement their placid presence; one, a ribbed glass cucumber, glistens like a brand-new dildo.

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, 'Being as a Thing', 2016, exhibition view, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles. Courtesy: François Ghebaly, Los Angeles; photograph: Marten Elder

At sundown each night, the candles are lit, and Akashi's precious craft begins to liquefy. By the time I visited the gallery, two weeks into the run of the show, table legs were caked with drips of hardened wax. The air was filled with a sweet, organic fragrance. The ice-blue core of *Wax Candle (North)* had burned a mottled purple, difficult to distinguish from the bronze cast candle that held it in place – two coiled, nesting turds. As *Wax Candle's* flame snaked up towards the ceiling, an ashy bruise grew on the white gallery wall, and I imagined for a moment that its scorched plaster might embalm me there alive.

Two large cracks in the gallery floor have sprouted bronze-cast weeds, covered in hand-cut and etched copper leaves. *Tall Weed* and *Hairy Weed* are meticulously finished works but, like the melting candle wax, they refer to an entropic drive in Akashi's work. These sculptures celebrate the beautiful chaos of the wild – those parts of the natural world that art, for most of its history, has tried to pacify. A series of ghostly chromogenic photograms, resembling the wormhole in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), are like microscopic cross-sections of these unruly organisms. Akashi revels in nature's asymmetry. Her small labours reveal a deep love not for part, but for whole. She worships not just the flower, but its entire messy ecosystem.

# LISSON GALLERY

In its title, 'Being as a Thing' at once recalls Martin Heidegger and the mind–body problems of cognitive philosophy. What would it be like to exist as an unconscious object, a mute mineral or fruit? Akashi's sculptures hint at the answer. Her passion for materials imbues each with a kind of soul, animating their forms. *Be Me (Japanese-Californian Citrus)*, a stainless-steel cast of a pockmarked orange with a jolly top-knot, sits in a square window cut into one of the gallery's walls like a kind of self-portrait, its title referring to the artist's Japanese-American heritage and upbringing in California. Two loosely packed stacks of bricks, *Ways of Being (Arched, Extended)* and *Ways of Being (Figure)*, offer small votive objects in wax and iridescent molten lead, dripping between the cracks, quietly thriving in small spaces. Animal, vegetable, mineral – each malformed in different ways, each beautifully and uniquely imperfect, each in a state of continual transformation.



Kelly Akashi, *Hairy Weed*, 2016, bronze, copper and plant ash, 8 x 8 x 69 cm. Courtesy: the artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles; photograph: Marten Elder

# LISSON GALLERY

*Artforum*

30 November 2016



**Kelly Akashi, *Activity Table*, 2016**, cherry wood, wax, glass, wick, 72 x 40 x 63".

LOS ANGELES

## **Kelly Akashi**

FRANÇOIS GHEBALY DOWNTOWN

2245 E Washington Blvd.

November 12–December 23, 2016

The objects in this exhibition take shape slowly, crystallizing through a careful, layered process of looking. These works have been blown, cast, twisted, burned, assembled, dipped, duplicated, and printed, creating little trails of existence.

Kelly Akashi has clearly contemplated her materials. Devoid of apparent narrative, however, they manifest as stoppages in time.

*Hairy Weed* (all works cited, 2016) looks like a dead plant, placed strategically in the cracked concrete floor of the gallery. But it is a re-creation, its delicate leaves made of copper, not decaying organic matter. You wouldn't know it unless you studied it, just as Akashi likely studied the plant that inspired this piece. Sentimentality, or some approximation of it, plays a quirky, sometimes humorous role in other, equally rigorous works, including *Be Me (Japanese-Californian Citrus)*, a stainless-steel cast of a lumpy, lovely citrus fruit, and *At Rest*, made up of bronze casts of the artist's hands, hung delicately through slipknots tied in rope.


In *Arrangements I, II, and III* as well as *Activity Table*, twisted, shapely candles and sensual blown-glass vessels are assembled on wooden furniture, foregrounding relationships between objects and bodies. Clearly, our environment isn't shaped solely through space, architecture, or even nature. The slow, tender mutability of Akashi's work quietly asks us to accept the complexity of objects and the unexpected, in order to remain engaged in a process of discovery.

— Honora Shea

*The New York Times*  
15 June 2016

# Four Up-and-Coming Angeleno Artists to Know Now

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 Share full article



By Kevin McGarry  
June 15, 2016

This week, the third edition of Los Angeles’s homegrown biennial survey of art from SoCal, “Made in L.A.,” opened at the Hammer Museum in Westwood. Curated by the institution’s own Aram Moshayedi with Hamza Walker from Chicago’s Renaissance Society, this year’s show is tighter than previous iterations in the number of artists featured — just 26 — but somehow more expansive in the breadth of disciplines and practices that are integrated. Case in point: The subtitle of the show is itself an artwork: a poem by the biennial’s most senior artist, the minimalist writer Aram Saroyan. It goes “a, the, though, only,” a string of words that evoke particularity and universality at the same time. Here are four other highlights from “Made in L.A. 2016.”

# LISSON GALLERY



Kelly Akashi, "Eat Me (Interior)" and "Eat Me (Exterior)," 2016. Sarah Golonka, courtesy of the artist.

Swooping over the Hammer's courtyard are a suite of tenuous new sculptures by **Kelly Akashi** called "Eat Me." Long pieces of rope stretched across or hung from ledges on the museum's upper level variously cradle and dangle a pink shell, bronze castings of hands miming hoisting gestures and threadbare shavings of rope that look something like a nest of human hair. Making an exhibition space out of a seemingly impossible void suspended in the air, Akashi captures her disparate, organic subjects at different points of degradation, freezing them in an artful, aerial limbo.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Around the corner is a new installation by **Rafa Esparza**, “tierra.” Its foundation is a swarth of roughly hewn adobe bricks which he fashioned with the assistance of his father and others in northeast Los Angeles, following a tradition of brick-making common in Mexico. Before moving to the United States, Esparza’s father constructed a home in Mexico by the very same means. Here, it serves as a kind of stage upon which a silent play unfolds: Esparza invited peers and collaborators to dig up items buried in Elysian Park — the site of the Dodgers Stadium, which was once a traditionally Mexican neighborhood. Those they elected to contribute to the exhibition — a cactus, a tin mailbox, a retro blue armchair — sit on the brick flooring as a metaphoric reoccupation.

Inside the museum, **Lauren Davis Fisher**’s “SET TESTS” is a dynamic installation which will change throughout the course of the summer. But visitors will not actually see her reconfigure the boxes or their contents, and that’s precisely the point: to underscore the invisibility of labor. To begin, a cartoonish sculpture that resembles an egg yolk splashing into a white will take center stage — but throughout the show, what is at center stage one day will likely end up waiting in the wings the next.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

**Kenneth Tam's** new video, "Breakfast in Bed," an excerpt of which is above, continues the artist's work drawn from encounters with strangers. In this case, Tam solicited men from Craigslist, Reddit and other proto-social networking online forums to bring them together for a thoroughly analog workshop of sorts in male bonding. Rather than having the participants led by an expert or curriculum of some kind, he leaves the nonactors more or less to their own devices, to role-play, team-build, dance and otherwise generate intimacy in a process that resonates on screen as both authentic, in its loosely directed realness, and bizarrely stilted by ritual.

*"Made in L.A. 2016: a, the, though, only" is on view through Aug. 28 at the Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, [hammer.ucla.edu](http://hammer.ucla.edu).*

*ArtReview*  
23 March 2016

# Future Greats: Kelly Akashi

**Andrew Berardini** Future Greats 23 March 2016 ArtReview



Kelly Akashi, *sslm or 5 breaths piercing a wall*, 2015, blown glass. Photo: Zack Balber. Courtesy the artist and Michael Jon Gallery, Miami & Detroit

## Selected by Andrew Berardini

Sculptures are bodies. Objects inscribed with a human stain, often shaped by hands and existing in space, their generally inanimate tangibility a thing to measure our soft tissues against, their time moving at different speeds than the squelch and splurt of our soft-tissue corpora. Sculptures are Frankenstein's monster, Pygmalion's dreamgirl, leftovers from one of a hundred gods who breathed life into clay to make humans. In her curved undulating glass and bronze, the fleshy fragility of her wax, both cold and candled to melt, the coiled knots like hair braids, Kelly Akashi makes bodies. These forms are not Pygmalion's cleanest ivory but rather contain the gross magic of viscera, made of materials that attract rather than repel. Akashi's wax candles and structures tentacle out with slippery skins and sweat when heated. Sea creatures from Rubens's nightmares, sinister fingers from some otherworldly garden of earthly delights.

# L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

When Kelly frames her visceral objects in the display of a freestanding wall, it is only a tease of containment: the walls punched with holes look splooped with spacey paint, they rest, fallen, on pillows. When her sculptures arc and hang in rooms, they fill their containers like viscous liquid. Her series of chandeliers might, unlit, look self-contained, but when alight they leak like ruptured flesh often onto pillows placed beneath to capture the splatter and the chance beauty that comes with hot wax and gravity, or they drip into ritual patterns directly onto the floor, leftovers from some strange mass, black or otherwise. The human hand, the artist's hand, often gets cited by writers and theorists on art, its disappearance or appearance in any given work an excuse for ideology, and in Kelly's work her hand literally appears, cast in wax, again and again, resting on a half-globe of melted candle, suggestively fingering a glass container. So much of sculpture may be shaped by fingers, but the glass works by Kelly Akashi are shaped by breath. In *Five Breaths Piercing a Wall*, 2015, each marbled, candied blown glasswork, shaped by a wet gust of the artist's breath made form, breaks the solidity of architecture. Poking out and through the wall, their slick skin invites a toke. Though static beyond breezes and drips, these objects carry the vivid physicality of their maker in a tension of sensual allure and corporeal repulsion.

*Kelly Akashi is based in Los Angeles. She studied at the University of Southern California and the Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main. She has had solo shows at Michael Jon Gallery, Miami; Chin's Push, Highland Park; and Beige Cube, Frankfurt am Main.*

*This article was first published in the January & February 2016 issue of ArtReview.*

# LISSON GALLERY

*Eyes Towards the Dove*  
24 December 2015

## KELLY AKASHI AT TOMORROW GALLERY, NEW YORK

DEC 24, 2015

At first glance, Kelly Akashi's exhibit "&" is deceptively uninteresting. From the entrance of the gallery, one can see objects laid out on an unusually high table that is painted at the surface and three additional works; an object that resembles a mop on the left side wall, another that mimics a dreamcatcher hung on the far wall, and a glass sculpture on a pedestal that looks like a rock in a nook at the back of the gallery.

This "deception" is in part caused by a pitfall that any artist faces when deciding to incorporate a material (in Akashi's case, glass) with a rich history and tradition, specific to that medium. When craft and technique are specific to the material being used, it can overpower the whole sculpture and become 'ordinary' rather than a unique contemporary sculpture. Even though there are a few objects in her sculptural installation, "Figure 14 or My Alphabet" (2014-2015), that are blown glass, Akashi is able to avoid the aforementioned pitfall through her clever juxtaposition of various materials, most notably by combining glass with wax and bronze.



Kelly Akashi, "Figure 14 or My Alphabet", 2014-2015 Bronze, lead, blown and sculpted glass, wax, cotton wick, alabaster, nickel, urethane, borosilicate glass, fingernails, antique beads, Solomon's borosilicate glass, enamel paint, wood, silver gelatin, oil 55 x 24 x 96 inch / 139.7 x 60.9 x 243.84 cm Unique, "&" Installation view at Tomorrow Gallery, New York, Photograph courtesy of the gallery, 2015

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# LISSON GALLERY

Her use of lead, fingernails, wax, cotton wick, alabaster, silver gelatin (photographic emulsion), and oil additional materials in “&” initially seems haphazard, but expand upon an active dialogue where each object doesn’t necessarily stand alone but exists as part of a whole. For example, there are two sculptures on the table made using rock, one where a piece of hand-pulled glass stems out from a rock and is wrapped in hand-pulled wax that resembles in both texture and form a tentacle, and the other where a bronze cast hand is sensually placed on top of a rock, bronze and silver gelatin poured on the rock’s surface. This piece draws a parallel to the work installed near the wall farthest from the entrance, *Geode* (2015), where a piece of bronze is embedded in glass. Due to the differing coefficient of expansion in these two materials while trapping the bronze in glass, cracks formed and are apparent. Each material is used to comment on its own unique quality and function in each of her sculptures, including but not limited to their malleability, fragility, and artificiality. By exploring contemporary objects and symbols through such charged materials like glass and wax, Akashi unexpectedly captivates the audience in the dialogue created by her works.



Foreground: .Last Year (Downtime Machine), 2014-15 Wax, wick, smoke, copper, bronze wire, hardware, brass hooks 44.5 x 45 x 8 inch / 113.03 x 114.3 x 20 cm Unique, Background: Geode, 2015, Oil sand cast glass with embedded bronze, enamel paint, wood 11.5 x 10 x 8 inch / 29.21 x 25.4 x 20.32 cm, Photograph courtesy of the gallery, 2015

Kelly Akashi’s solo show “&” is on view at [Tomorrow Gallery](#) in the Lower East Side until January 10th, 2016. She is represented by both [Michael Jon Gallery](#) and [François Ghebaly Gallery](#).

Jongho Lee is an artist and student at New York University. He is currently working with ETTD as our Editorial Intern.