



Inman Gallery at EXPO Chicago, April 13–16, 2023
Booth 214

I N M A N G A L L E R Y

Inman Gallery is pleased to participate in the 10th anniversary of EXPO Chicago, April 13-16, 2023, on the Navy Pier. We are presenting a dynamic group of abstract works by three generations of Midwest-born women—**Dorothy Antoinette (Toni) LaSelle** (b. 1901, Beatrice, NE, d. 2002, Denton, TX), **Jana Vander Lee** (b. 1945, Lansing, IL) and **Emily Joyce** (b. 1976, Arlington Heights, IL). Each utilizes the formal language of geometric abstraction to further their understanding of natural and spiritual worlds. We will also debut the work of Houston-based **David McGee** (b. 1962, Lockhart, LA). McGee creates a variety of two-dimensional work spanning painting, printmaking, watercolor, and drawing, ranging from highly figurative works on paper to abstract, material-forward works on canvas. Oscillating between abstraction and figuration, his work explores a variety of subjects expanding towards the emotional weights of race, language, signs and signifiers, art history, and the recognition of existence, both individual and collective.

The following pdf contains information about each artist, the booth checklist is available here:

[Inman Gallery at EXPO Chicago, April 13–16, 2023](#)

Further questions? Contact Kerry Inman at kerry@inmangallery.com or 713.412.5730.

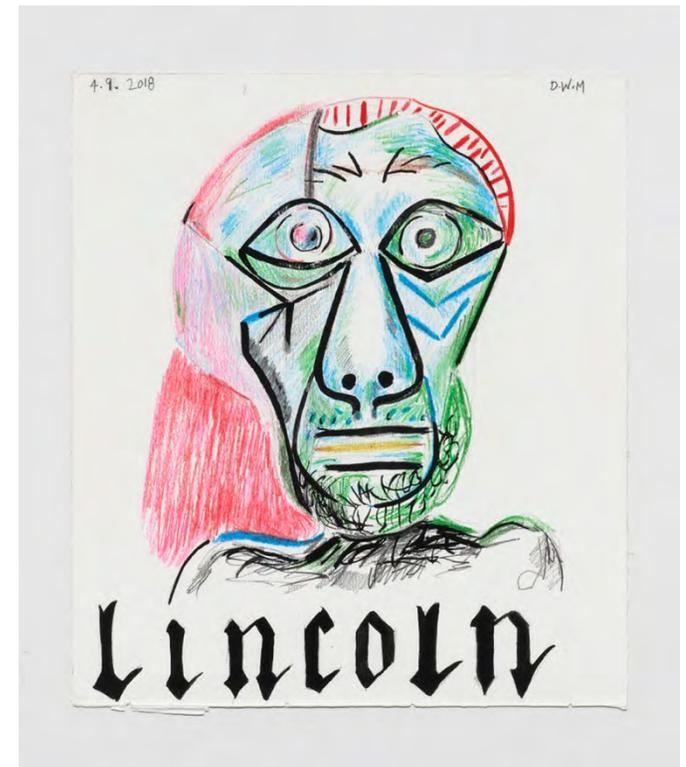


DAVID McGEE

David McGee at Expo Chicago 2023

Artist **David McGee** (born 1962 Lockhart, LA) creates a variety of two-dimensional work spanning painting, printmaking, watercolor, and drawing, ranging from highly figurative works on paper to abstract, material-forward works on canvas. Oscillating between abstraction and figuration, his work explores a variety of subjects encompassing the emotional weights of race, language, signs and signifiers, art history, and the recognition of existence, both individual and collective. Often working serially, McGee returns to visual themes freely to explore ideas with continuous curiosity and interrogation, allowing meaning to continually build within and across each respective series.

Inman Gallery will exhibit selections from three distinct yet interconnected bodies of works in the booth for McGee: a group of works on paper from the **Tarot Cards** series, a work from his **Gloria Paintings** series, and a large watercolor on paper. McGee's "The Teller of Fortunes" is an example of the artist's recent series of portraits of African-American women that he conceived as an homage to Black women and the strategies they have effected for their survival, both past and present.



David McGee, *Lincoln*, 2018
 From the *Tarot Cards* series
 colored pencil, ink and watercolor on paper
 10 x 8 7/8 in (25.4 x 22.5 cm)



David McGee, *The Teller of Fortunes*, 2023
watercolor on 300 lb cold press watercolor paper
60 x 40 in (152.4 x 101.6 cm)
65 ³/₈ x 45 ¹/₈ x 1 ⁷/₈ in (166.1 x 114.6 x 4.8 cm) framed

Although the work is meant as a sweeping homage, the artist is particularly inspired by the women in his own life—his mother, sister, and grandmother. McGee has discussed the work as being rooted in reality, not fantasy; he is presenting a depiction of a life lived. Furthermore, he looks to the Flemish Baroque painter Anthony van Dyck as the source of inspiration for his own character's flowing dress. In "The Teller of Fortunes," McGee is referencing the Black woman as a fortune teller and the complex issues she evokes: the role of women in society generally but Black women in particular who are often a bellwether of changes or trends that may be percolating in American society.

Instead of atmospheric space, the figure is surrounded by birds and butterflies. The hummingbird, a spiritual metaphor for life's renewal, is falling away, out of favor in this story, while the symbolically rich blackbird, is at her side, perhaps aiding her fortune-telling with its intelligence, and adaptability.

The **Tarot Cards** series, comprising approximately 160 small works on paper, is rooted in a rich visual juxtaposition of image and text whose meaning is sometimes obvious while at others is more inconspicuous or obscure. However, in each of these works on paper, the reading of the image itself is governed by experience. For McGee, the artist's intent is immaterial; the viewer's background and experience are paramount. The Tarot Cards must be read or unpacked by the viewer who brings to the table their own biases, judgments, and experiences as they encounter these works and engage in what the artist calls a process of "transformational looking." As McGee notes, these evocative works aim to tell the truth about images and how they work upon or impact the viewer who engages with them.



David McGee, *THE NORTH*, *ABOLITIONIST*, *monument*, all 2018
watercolor, graphite and ink on paper
each 9 ⁷/₈ x 8 ⁷/₈ in (25.1 x 22.5 cm)



David McGee, *The Black Tulip*, 2021
from the Gloria Paintings series
oil on burlap
24 x 18 ⁷/₈ x ³/₄ in (61 x 47.9 cm x 1.9 cm)

McGee's *Gloria Paintings* are an ode to the artist's mother, and the works are meant to signify what he calls "a continuous bouquet to her spirit and vigor." The subject of the paintings revolves around themes of nature, flowers, trees, modern art, the Harlem Renaissance, jazz improvisation, and the whimsical act of "first thought, best thought." For McGee, these paintings are meant to be about the act of healing but also deal with a serious look into human nature.

Since moving to Texas in the 1980s to attend Prairie View A&M University (BFA 1985), McGee has had solo exhibitions at numerous regional institutions, including The Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, (Houston, TX), Museum of African American Culture (Houston, TX), The Art Museum of Southeast Texas, (Beaumont, TX), The Gallery at UT Arlington, Texas, The Galveston Art Center, (Galveston, TX), and others. His work is featured in numerous permanent collections, including the Grand Rapids Art Museum (Grand Rapids, MI); Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy (Andover, MA); Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Boston, MA); Rhode Island School of Design Museum (Providence, RI); W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA); The Menil Collection (Houston, TX); The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and Dallas Museum of Art.

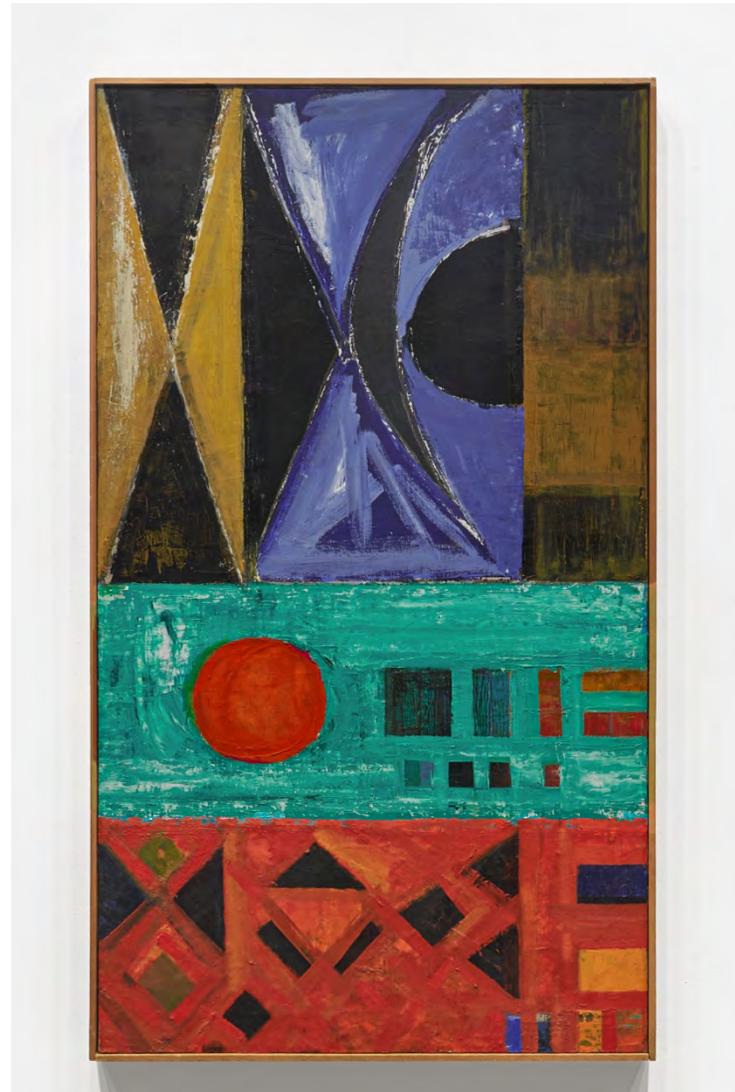


DOROTHY ANTOINETTE (TONI) LaSELLE

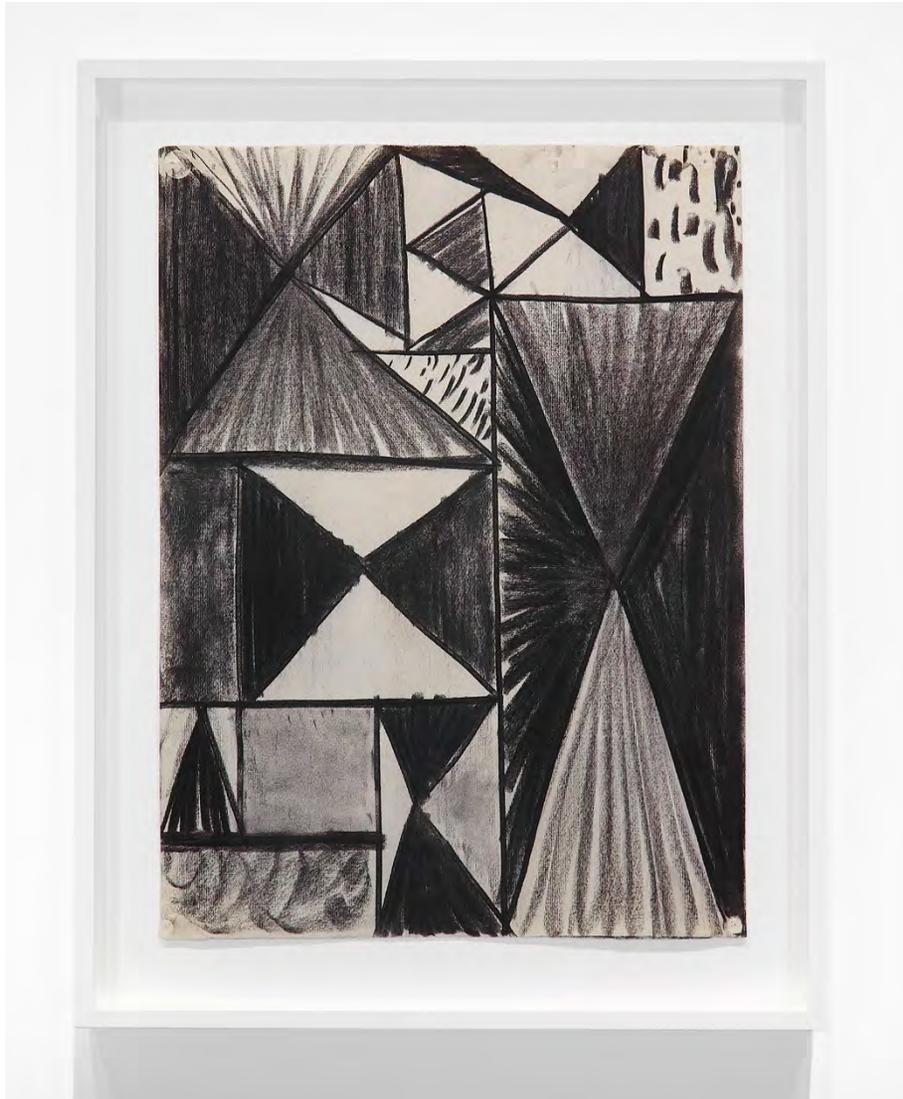
INMAN GALLERY

Dorothy Antoinette (Toni) LaSelle (b. 1901, Beatrice, NE, d. 2002, Denton, TX) is one of Texas' most celebrated modernist painters. Having been exposed to European modernism in college in Nebraska (BA. Nebraska Wesleyan, 1923), she went on to study at the University of Chicago, where she received an MA in Art History (1926). Subsequent studies in Europe before World War II and then in the US with Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Hans Hofmann in the 1940s cemented her modernist credentials. From the 1950s until the 1990s, LaSelle practiced her own unique style of geometric abstraction, characterized by bold color and enthusiastic paint application. From the 1960s on, she increasingly worked on paper, in series, using oil pastel, watercolor, and ink.

Not unheralded in her lifetime, she had solo exhibitions at the Dallas Museum of Art (1948) and the Fort Worth Art Center (1959). She was recently included in the exhibition "Texas Artists: Women of Abstraction" at the Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi in 2022. Our Expo presentation will include a dynamic 1952 painting along with a selection of works on paper from the 1950s and 1970s.



Dorothy Antoinette (Toni) LaSelle, *Theme 1-C*, 1952
oil on canvas, vintage frame , 44 x 25 in (111.8 x 63.5 cm)
44 1/2 x 25 3/4 in (113 x 65.4 cm) framed



Toni LaSelle, *Untitled*, 1956
charcoal on paper, 25 x 19 in (63.5 x 48.3 cm)
30 1/2 x 24 1/4 x 1 3/4 in (77.5 x 61.6 x 4.4 cm) framed

What started as a temporary position at Texas State College for Women (now Texas Women's University), in Denton, Texas, in 1928, turned into a full-time position when LaSelle became responsible for the development of the art history program at the school. She remained at TSCW/TWU until her retirement in 1972, a dedicated teacher for 44 years. Despite her dedication to teaching, she asserted in a letter dated 1986 to her dealer Murray Smither that she was "a Painter who tried to teach – (and not the other way around.)"

During her time at Hans Hofmann's schools (she attended both, in Provincetown during the summers from 1944-1953, and in New York on several occasions, when she took leave or sabbatical), the sessions focused on working in charcoal on paper, and LaSelle continued working on the requisite 25 x 19 inch Strathmore paper in charcoal until the end of the 1950s. We are exhibiting one very dynamic charcoal drawing from 1957 in the booth.

Works on paper were core to LaSelle's practice; she worked in series, experimenting with dynamic arrangements of shapes and colors in sketchbooks, with several drawings completed in one sitting. Stylistically, the 1955 black and white "P-Town, Studio #8" group of three drawings show the influence of her mentor Lazlo Moholy-Nagy. LaSelle studied with the Bauhaus master-turned émigré the previous decade in Chicago at his New Bauhaus school. Her use of both positive and negative space via the black and white shapes of various sizes echoes Moholy-Nagy's own highly influential Bauhaus design elements of planar shapes within his own compositions. LaSelle's self-described space-plane exercises, for example, run parallel with Moholy-Nagy's interest in the intersection of space and time and how these basic elements interact.

In 1972, LaSelle retired from teaching at Texas Woman's University and was able to spend more time in her beloved Provincetown. She was thrilled when the Fine Arts Work Center invited her to be a visiting visual artist for the fall of 1975. During this time, she produced a number of small works on paper using Cray-Pas (oil pastel) which had become a preferred medium for the artist starting in the mid-late 1960s. We have selected 6 works from one notebook to showcase her experimental mode of working.



Toni LaSelle, *P-Town, Studio #8 -1*, 1955
ink on paper, 14 x 11 in (35.6 x 27.9 cm)
19 x 16 x 1 5/8 in (48.3 x 40.6 x 4.1 cm) framed



Toni LaSelle, *Untitled*, 1975, 6 Cray-Pas (oil pastel) on paper
12 x 9 in (30.5 x 22.9 cm) each, 16 1/2 x 13 1/2 x 1 5/8 in (41.9 x 34.3 x 4.1 cm) each framed



JANA VANDER LEE

I N M A N G A L L E R Y

Jana Vander Lee (b. 1945, Lansing, IL) is an American fiber artist. A summer program in fiber (Illinois State Normal, 1963) sparked her lifelong commitment to the woven form; she was immediately passionate about the tactile quality of the material and the act of weaving. After receiving a BA from Calvin College (1967), she moved to Houston, TX where she began her career as an artist, educator, writer, and curator. Her work during this time, large and medium scale tapestries, was inspired by her early life in the Dutch Calvinist church, travels to the American Southwest to learn about Navajo weaving, and her deep knowledge of the American Fiber Arts tradition through self-education.

She became a champion of fiber arts in Houston, and was instrumental in organizing important exhibitions introducing fiber art into the mainstream art world in Houston. She was represented by vaunted gallery Hadler/Rodriguez, a fiber arts gallery from New York that opened in Houston in 1977. Vander Lee credits the gallery for supporting her when others in the region did not accept weaving/fiber as fine art. The gallery represented fiber artists such as Claire Zeisler and Lenore Tawney, affording Vander Lee exposure to these pioneers in the field. For Expo, we will be showing one vintage tapestry as well as a selection of new weavings that Vander Lee has recently produced.



Jana Vander Lee, *Spring: Hope*, 2021
Linen warp, rayon/nylon, wool/mohair, wool, acetate,
cottolin, cotton, acrylic, mohair weft
18 ³/₄ x 23 in (47.6 x 58.4 cm)



Jana Vander Lee, *Gateway to the Dawn*, 1987
linen, wool, rayon, acrylic, ramie, mohair
72 x 46 in (182.9 x 116.8 cm)

Vander Lee's tapestries appear at first to be formal engagements in fiber with geometric shapes and vibrant colors, but they also hold deeply personal meanings and iconographies that are meant to inspire and give hope amidst adversity. The artist's Calvinist background, ecumenical experiences, as well as an interest in sub-atomic physics all play a role in her exploration of the order and energies of the natural world.

In *Gateway to the Dawn* (1987) the yarn variations—space-dyed maroon wool, and blue nylon “seed”—create a random rhythm within the symmetrical shapes, taking one inside the side-by-side forms to feel their presence. The artist speaks about representing two individuals standing in harmony, with life's blood flowing between them. At the lower edge of each, colored squares signify the ancestors from which each arise. Her use of symmetry lends the work a sense of classical form and a universality meant to coalesce into a collective whole. Vander Lee comments, “Symmetry is seeing yourself in the other one and thus finding yourself, becoming one, whole.”

In her "Seasons" series of tapestries woven over the past few years, Vander Lee draws inspiration from her new environs in Chicago after having relocated there from Houston in 2019. This series references the distinctive change of seasons that Midwesterners experience each year.

As she notes:

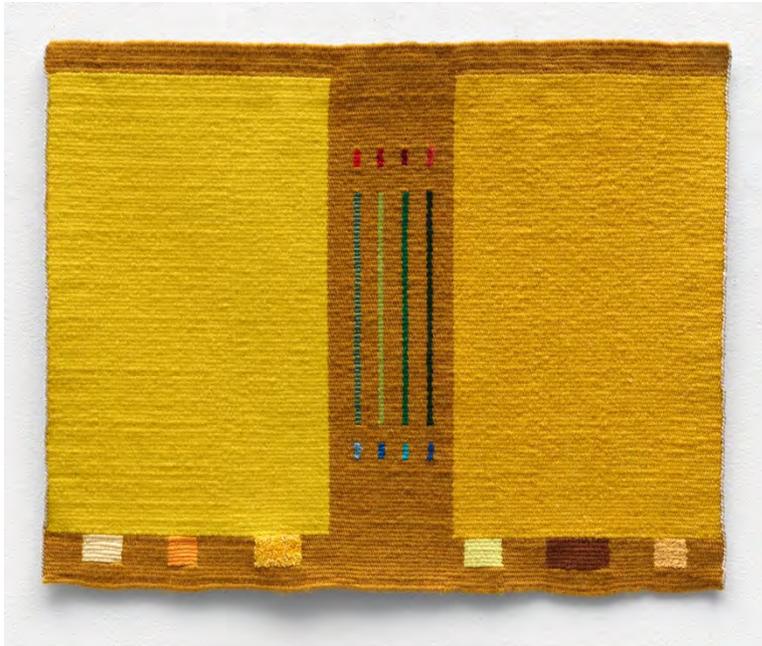
"In each year's cycle of seasons, there is a break, a transition between them, a passage that is different each year, and in that in-between period, energies emerge that will define how the next season will be unique to that year.



Jana Vander Lee, *Winter: Duration*, 2021
linen warp; wool, rayon, mohair, viscose, synthetic weft
18 1/4 x 23 1/4 in (46.4 x 59.1 cm)



Jana Vander Lee, *Spring: Hope*, 2021
linen warp, rayon/nylon, wool/mohair, wool, acetate,
cottolin, cotton, acrylic, mohair weft
18 3/4 x 23 in (47.6 x 58.4 cm)



Jana Vander Lee, *Summer: Flourish*, 2021
linen warp; cotton, wool, acrylic, mohair, rayon weft
16 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 20 in (41 x 50.8 cm)



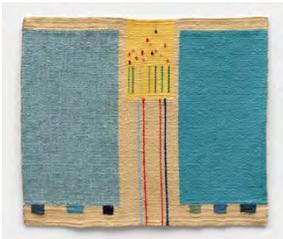
Jana Vander Lee, *Autumn: Fulfillment*, 2021
linen warp, rayon/nylon, wool/mohair, wool, acetate,
cottolin, cotton, acrylic, mohair weft
18 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 23 in (47.6 x 58.4 cm)

The artist's descriptions of each Seasons tapestry:



Winter: Duration

The chenille evergreen/eternal life is opposite the bitter cold synthetic sky. Between them, buried in the earth, a seed waits to rise and bloom in spring. The lower vertical browns are like tree trunks marking time.



Spring: Hope

Spring breeze with rain is opposite a clear sky while in between is the potential growth hoped for. The bottom rectangles are like memory chips containing past experiences that support future endeavors.



Summer: Flourish

The yellows indicate sunshine/natural growth and school bus yellow knowledge generated growth that between them can produce growth based in truth so love can flourish. Again, memory chips validate the accumulated past that underlies future possibilities.



Autumn: Fulfillment

A radiant orange rayon with green nylon filament is opposite a reddish-brown wool—the components of harvest: richness of spirit and fertile earth. Together they frame achievements that will endure.



EMILY JOYCE



I N M A N G A L L E R Y

Emily Joyce (b. 1976, Arlington Heights, IL) explores hidden systems of nature, the built world, and the cosmos in her symmetrical paintings. The works are composed of modular and interlocking hexagons, triangles, and concentric circles interspersed by the occasional lily or gilded text. In her early years after art school (BA Rhode Island School of Design), she worked as a decorative painter and those techniques have seeped into her newest work. Joyce utilizes faux-bois, gold leafing, spatter painting, stenciling, rag-rolling, and marbelizing, sometimes all in one composition. Containing each technique to its own shape, Joyce creates an unfolding pattern and off-beat rhythm wherein these decorative finishes function as sophisticated painting solutions rather than tromp-l'oeil trickery.

Math and in particular, geometry is at the core of our universe, forming the structure of the natural world.

Joyce notes: "I think artists like me use geometry to try to understand the world and the big questions of time, metaphysical mysteries, to try to understand what we can't see but we can feel. I often speak about letting an anomaly interrupt the geometric patterns. It's what I often call "the wobble". Those moments where things fall apart or glitch or don't line up are essential to my compositions. That's why all my math is hand-made (rulers, and simple hands-on methods). I want harmony, not perfection."



Emily Joyce, *Blue Nile*, 2022

Flashe vinyl paint, acrylic, and metal leaf on canvas over panel
16 x 16 in (40.6 x 40.6 cm)



Emily Joyce, *Spring in Her Green Dress*, 2022

Flashe vinyl paint and acrylic on canvas

54 x 72 x 1 1/2 in (137.2 x 182.9 x 3.8 cm)

Joyce is fascinated by the amateur mathematician, Marjorie Rice, who worked out complicated pentagon tilings with her own invented system with pencil on paper and kept her research in a drawer in the kitchen. Joyce sees Rice's approach to her work, integrated in her life, as parallel to her own practice. The booth will feature two small and one larger painting from Joyce's most recent body of work.

Emily Joyce earned a BFA at Rhode Island School of Design (1998) and participated in the Core Artist Residency program at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (1999-2001). Joyce's work is included in many public and private collections, including the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita, KS, and the Plains Art Museum, Fargo, ND. Additionally, Joyce is the lyricist and vocalist in the band Puzzle Blood whose debut album was released in 2021. Once annually, she performs stand-up comedy as Piera Nucca da Montefeltro, a world-weary 15th century Italian comedian.

Joyce lives and works in Claremont, CA.



Emily Joyce, *Turk's Cap Lily*, 2022
Flashe vinyl paint, acrylic, and metal leaf on canvas over panel
18 x 18 x 1 1/2 in (45.7 x 45.7 x 3.8 cm)