

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

THE PAINTING CENTER

The Shaping of America

Exhibition Dates: January 4 - 29, 2022

Reception: Thursday, January 6, 5pm - 8pm

The Painting Center is pleased to present *The Shaping of America*, a group exhibition organized by artist Carrie Patterson running from January 4 - 29, 2022. The artists in *The Shaping of America* include Pam Cardwell, Janis Goodman, Cecily Kahn, Ying Li, Kayla Mohammadi, Deirdre Murphy, Carrie Patterson, Jennifer Printz, Rebecca Rutstein and Kendra Wadsworth. An essay titled *Shaping of America: Medium-Specificity as Passive-Aggressive Resistance* was written by Art Historian Vittorio Colaizzi.

From the very beginning of life, every person learns how to negotiate the spaces they live in, constructing ideas about the world. If I show you a group of maps drawn by children all living on Elm Street, each one would be different. Places of familiarity that are drawn boldly by one child would be left off completely by the other. Literal fact has no use in a children's map. If grandma's small house was THE place, then grandma's house might be the largest of all. Places of personal history or importance might crowd the street on some maps and those same spaces may be absent in another. Our perceptual and analytic understanding of our world begins with our experience of space. We learn through trial and error, conforming to the rules of culture, and maximizing our potential for survival and success within a landscape. As we grow older, we prioritize and negotiate our prefabricated versions of new experiences with the spaces of old in our memory. For me and many others, painting is a way of learning about the histories embedded in the ground, buildings, landscapes, and thus humanity.

The Shaping of America features the work of ten women artists. Each artist embodies the tradition of negotiating space and translating lived experience into abstract painted form, pivoting our understanding of the American Landscape. The paintings in this exhibition suggest that the idea of landscape expands exponentially when the meaning and context of the artist are also considered. The ten women artists and their work illustrate that landscapes cannot be interpreted without considering the connections artists have to memory, experience, and ownership. By doing so, you, the viewer, have the opportunity to see and experience the full picture.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the support of St. Mary's College of Maryland and Mount Gretna School of Art, where the whole idea started. I want to thank all of the artists, Vittorio Colaizzi, Shazzi Thomas, my family, and The Painting Center. - Carrie Patterson

The Shaping of America Exhibition History:

2019 AnnMarie Sculpture Garden and Art Center, Solomon, Maryland

2022 The Painting Center, NYC

Rebecca Rutstein

Rebecca Rutstein – whose work spans painting, sculpture, interactive installation and public art – creates work at the intersection of art, science and technology. With interests in geology, microbiology and marine science, Rutstein is passionate about creating visual experiences that shed light on hidden environments, forging a dialogue about stewardship in the face of climate change. Rutstein has been an artist-in-residence at locations around the world, including five expeditions at sea and two dives to the ocean floor in the Alvin submersible. Her collaborations with scientists through residencies and workshops have been funded by the National Science Foundation, National Academies of Science / Keck Futures Initiative, Ocean Exploration Trust and Schmidt

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Ocean Institute. Rutstein has received the prestigious Pew Fellowship in the Arts, an Independence Foundation Fellowship, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts grant, is an MIT Ocean Discovery Fellow, and was recently named the Delta Visiting Chair for Global Understanding – awarded to leading global scholars and creative thinkers who do groundbreaking work at the University of Georgia. Rutstein's work has been featured on ABC, CBS, NPR, and in the Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post and Philadelphia Magazine. With over 25 solo exhibitions, Rutstein has exhibited widely in museums and institutions, and her work can be found in public collections including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Georgia Museum of Art, Yale University, University of New Mexico, Temple University, Johns Hopkins Hospital, AT&T and Delta Airlines. Rutstein holds a BFA (magna cum laude) from Cornell University and an MFA from University of Pennsylvania. She has been represented by Bridgette Mayer Gallery in Philadelphia since 2001, and also works with Sherry Leedy Contemporary in Kansas City, Space Gallery in Denver, and Galleri Urbane in Dallas.