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Seasonal Press Release–Winter/Spring 2023

Into the Light: Works on Paper from the Collection

January 11, 2023–January 14, 2024

Flying Woman: The Paintings of Katherine Bradford

February 4–May 14, 2023

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Into the Light: Works on Paper from the Collection

January 11, 2023–January 14, 2024

The Frye Art Museum is well known for its distinctive Founding Collection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European and American oil paintings. Lesser seen are the nearly eight hundred prints, drawings, photographs, and watercolors, which together comprise about half the museum's holdings. This is partly because works on paper present a paradox for public art institutions: they are light sensitive, so to be conserved in perpetuity they cannot be displayed too long or too often. *Into the Light* brings a rotating selection of works on paper "out of the vault," providing an opportunity for visitors to become (re)acquainted with this rich vein of the Frye's collection. On view for about six months each, the thematic groupings range across stylistic, geographic, and temporal boundaries to find shared points of interest among differently situated artists.

The first rotation, opening January 11, focuses on portraits created between 1929 and 1992 by Leon Schulman Gaspard, Alfred Leslie, Alice Neel, Winold Reiss, and Andrew Wyeth. Opening July 12, the second rotation keys off Charles Burchfield's exuberant *Clouds and Windblown Hay* (ca. 1954–64) to look at the fleeting effects of weather in watercolors made between 1950 and 1989 by four artists from Washington State: Gudrun Brask, Marie Elise Gray, James Peck, and William Sheppley. Exploring subjects that span from the emotional tenor of a portrait's sitter to the skies over the Skagit Valley, these artworks invite us to become immersed in the details of their more intimate mediums.

Into the Light: Works on Paper from the Collection is curated by Amanda Donnan, Chief Curator.

Generous support is provided by the Frye Foundation and Frye Members

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Image: Charles Burchfield. *Clouds and Windblown Hay*, ca. 1954-64. Watercolor on paper. 40 x 30 in. Frye Art Museum. Museum Purchase, 1964.017. Photo: Jueqian Fang



Flying Woman: The Paintings of Katherine Bradford

February 4–May 14, 2023

Flying Woman: The Paintings of Katherine Bradford is the first museum survey of the East Coast painter known for her vibrant palette, eccentric compositions, and personal, unpredictable approach to figurative painting. Organized by the Portland Museum of Art in Maine, this presentation features Bradford's semitransparent figures, which often defy society's expectations of women and all genders and serve as surrogates for a mother, painter, and lesbian coming of age at the turn of the twenty-first century.

Organized chronologically from 1999 to 2021, the exhibition highlights the artist's ongoing commitment to abstraction, figuration, and color, through the bathers, swimmers, superheroes, friends, and strangers that collectively chronicle Bradford's life. The presentation begins with oil paintings of single figures and androgynous characters who occupy monochromatic color fields and read as self-portraits early in her career. A critical shift from painting in oil to acrylic in the mid-2000s provided new possibilities to render the effects of water and sky, as well as a renewed formal inventiveness for portraying groups of figures. Yet Bradford's distinctive approach to her medium consistently activates her characters, who present universal themes of humanity as they float, swim, dive, and commune in neon cosmos of ethereal abstraction and terrestrial routines of daily life.

The artist, who splits her time between New York and Maine, has unapologetically blazed her own path in the art world, painting daily, and building a community of like-minded artists. She started painting at the age of thirty while living in Maine year-round in the 1970s and was later

among a group of artists who moved to Williamsburg, Brooklyn, in the 1980s. The artist, now eighty, is at a pivotal moment in her career, creating some of her most thought-provoking paintings. Charting Bradford's artistic development throughout her career, *Flying Woman* offers an intimate view of the artist's oeuvre and properly positions her as a key figure within the canon of American painting today.

Katherine Bradford (born 1942, New York City) has received a Guggenheim Award (2011) and a Joan Mitchell Foundation grant (2012), as well as two awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2005, 2011). Her work was presented in a solo exhibition at the Modern Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (2017), and has been featured in group shows at the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York (2020); Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas (2019); the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, Kansas (2019); the fourth Prospect New Orleans Triennial (2017); MoMA P.S.1, New York (2007); and the Brooklyn Museum (1997). In 2017–2018 she was Senior Critic on the faculty of the Yale School of Art. Her work is included in collections such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum; the Dallas Museum of Art; the Frye Art Museum; the Menil Collection, Houston; the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art; and the Portland Art Museum, Oregon.

Flying Woman: The Paintings of Katherine Bradford is organized by the Portland Museum of Art, Maine. The exhibition was curated by Jaime DeSimone, former Robert and Elizabeth Nanovic Curator of Contemporary Art, Portland Museum of Art, Maine. The presentation at the Frye Art Museum is organized by Amanda Donnan, Chief Curator.

Generous support for the Frye's installation is provided by ArtsFund, the Frye Foundation, and Frye Members. Media sponsorship is provided by KCTS 9.



Image: Katherine Bradford. *Woman Flying*, 1999. Oil on canvas dropcloth. 84 x 72 in. Portland Museum of Art, Maine. Museum purchase with support from the Friends of the Collection, 2012.14 © Katherine Bradford. Image courtesy Luc Demers



Marsden Hartley: An American Nature

February 11–May 21, 2023

Marsden Hartley's emotive paintings celebrate the grandeur and nuances of nature as expressions of American culture. Hartley (1887–1943) spent much of his career restlessly traveling between the United States and Europe. In 1937, he finally settled in his home state of Maine and, in response to the Depression-era cultural and commercial desire for all things homegrown, declared himself an American regionalist: "the painter from Maine." Hartley sought to define culture *in* nature, imaging—and in the process, constructing—new settler colonial myths of the American landscape.

This exhibition features two paintings from the Frye's collection alongside works by the artist on loan from national museums and galleries. Offering a selective snapshot of Hartley's vast oeuvre, the exhibition highlights a shift in the artist's approach, from early works that describe a pristine wilderness devoid of human presence, to later paintings that evidence an understanding of a complex natural world impacted by humankind—specifically white settlers whose dispossession and erasure of Indigenous peoples enabled them to characterize the land as an empty container ripe for development.

Hartley was greatly influenced by the American essayist, poet, and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), who argued that the United States should claim its own national culture by disavowing European aesthetic traditions and rooting its identity in the abundant land it was settling. This was counter to the pervasive colonial belief that culture is construed

separate from and in opposition to nature. Hartley's later paintings respond to Emerson's proposition. In *Lobster Pots and Buoy* (1936), the rugged Maine coast is dotted by signs of industry, tamed by Hartley's stylized organization of fishing equipment, rock, water, and sky. Other works, like *Nova Scotia Woman Churning* (1938-39) and *West Brooksville, Maine* (1939) similarly make room for agrarian spaces, like farmhouses or lumbermills, that exist between wilderness and urbanity. Hartley's vision of an American identity rooted in nature mythologized white American settlers and their industries, recasting them as pre-modern, native inhabitants of North America. In claiming Maine as his subject, Hartley illustrates the ways in which the notion of a "region" is as much culturally enabled as politically constructed.

Marsden Hartley: An American Nature is organized by Georgia Erger, Associate Curator.

Generous support is provided by the Frye Foundation and Frye Members.

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Image: Marsden Hartley. *After the Storm, Vinalhaven*, 1938–39. Oil on Academy board. 22 x 28 in. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine, Gift of Mrs. Charles Phillip Kuntz, 1950.8. Photography by Peter Siegal



Boren Banner Series: Laura Hart Newlon

April 22–October 1, 2023

Seattle-based interdisciplinary artist Laura Hart Newlon explores looking as a fully embodied practice, describing it as a “sensual, physical act that plays out both tenderly and forcefully upon a body.” Many of her works combine darkroom photographic processes with digital technologies to explore the material possibilities of virtual imagery. Frequently drawing from an idiosyncratic archive of found images with subjects ranging from architectural theory and phenomenology to beauty tutorials and instructional exercise routines, the artist exposes the often-invisible labor of image creation and consumption. For the next iteration of the *Boren Banner Series*, Newlon will create a new photographic work that further investigates these concerns at a scale similar to billboard marketing, lending new context to her subjects.

Laura Hart Newlon has recently exhibited work at the Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA; the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans; the Rhode Island Center for Photographic Arts, Providence; SOIL, Seattle; ADDS DONNA, Chicago; Los Angeles Center for Digital Art; and LVL3, Chicago. Honors include the Claire Rosen and Samuel Edes Prize for Emerging Artists; the John Quincy Adams Fellowship; and residencies at the Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT; Centrum, Port Townsend, WA; the Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY; and ACRE, Steuben, WI. Her work is included in collections such as the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; the Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection, Chicago; and Photographic Center Northwest, Seattle. Newlon, who holds an MFA in Photography from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MA in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Washington, is an Associate Professor of Art at Cornish College of the Arts and co-directs the artist-run gallery Specialist.

ABOUT THE SERIES

The *Boren Banner Series* is a public art initiative by the Frye Art Museum that reflects the museum's commitment to showcasing artists of the Pacific Northwest. Presented biannually, the series gives regional artists the opportunity to create new site-specific work or show a previously unexhibited piece at monumental scale in the form of a 16 x 20 ft. vinyl banner. The billboard-size work is prominently sited on the museum's east facade, facing Boren Avenue: the Frye's most visible and accessible physical interface.

Boren Banner Series: Laura Hart Newlon is organized by Georgia Erger, Associate Curator.

Generous support is provided by the Frye Foundation and Frye Members.

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Image: Laura Hart Newlon, *Load Capacity*, 2022. Archival pigment print, 32 x 40 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Kelly Akashi: Formations

June 17–September 10, 2023

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, candle making, bronze and silicone casting, and rope making. Organized by the San José Museum of Art, *Kelly Akashi: Formations* is the artist's first major exhibition and presents an overview of nearly a decade of work, including glass and cast bronze objects, multipart sculptural installations, and photographic work.

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. Subjects, such as weeds, flowers, and shells, as well as traditional craft forms—a footed vase and candle cup, for example—reoccur, each encompassing particular morphologies and lineages in botany, paleontology, and histories of craft.

The exhibition includes the newly commissioned *Conjoined Tumbleweeds* (2022), 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 on rammed earth pedestals from throughout Akashi's career, 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. Additionally, the Frye is proud to partner in a multi-site exploration of Akashi's work with the Henry Art Gallery, where the artist will present a new commission in fall 2023.

"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," Lauren Schell Dickens, senior curator, San José Museum of Art, notes. "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."

Kelly Akashi (born 1983, Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles. She earned her MFA from the University of Southern California. Akashi also studied at the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste - Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main and received her BFA at Otis College of Art and Design. The artist has presented solo projects at the Aspen Art Museum (2020) and the SculptureCenter, New York (2017). Other notable group exhibitions include those at the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts (2021); the Hammer Museum's biennial, *Made in L.A.* (2016); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit (2017); and the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, France (2017). As the winner of the 2019 Carolyn Glasoe Bailey Foundation Art Prize, the artist conducted a residency at the foundation in Ojai, California. Akashi's work can be found in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Brooklyn Museum; CC Foundation, Shanghai; M WOODS, Beijing; and Sifang Museum, Nanjing, China, among others.

Kelly Akashi: Formations is organized by the San José Museum of Art and curated by Lauren Schell Dickens, Senior Curator. The presentation at the Frye Art Museum is organized by Amanda Donnan, Chief Curator.

Generous support for the Frye's installation is provided by the Frye Foundation and Frye Members.

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Image: Kelly Akashi. *Hybrid Life Forms*, 2019–21. Lost-wax cast bronze. 3.5 x 7.5 x 9.5 in. Courtesy of the artist, François Ghebaly Gallery, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery