

ALISON
WOODS

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Alison Woods: Among Realms

By Peter Frank

The “collage aesthetic” has been the predominant sensibility of the western world since the advent of modernism. It defined the original break with pictorial and teleological coherency that drove modernism itself; it allowed post-modernism to scramble temporal and historical logic; it prompted a neo-modernism to seek a workable discourse in a synthesized reality; and it now provides logic to a digital metaverse. Einsteinian time and Heisenbergian space manifest beyond the stars and beneath the atoms, our instruments tell us. The medium we occupy is discontinuous but not dissolute. Every edge, every border, is at once a crisis of perception, a microcosm of chaos, and an opportunity to multiply experience, a celebration of difference.

We all operate, aesthetically and socially, in this condition of fracture. Some of us recognize it. Some of us exploit it. Some of us admire it. None of us cultivate it more than do the artists in our midst; but not that many artists embrace the collage aesthetic at once as a method and as a mindset. Alison Woods does just that, engaging old and new tools, the old and new materials of classic modernism and cyberspace. In Woods’ hands the dynamics of early abstraction are re-vitalized by the power of the computer, giving a broad new dimension to the choreographies of gesture and geometry that comprise the advanced art of the last century’s first half. Woods’ visual fields consist – usually simultaneously – of large, broken and/or textured passages, interrupting other such passages or being

interrupted by them. They heave against and upon one another like iceberg floes or (one imagines) tectonic plates, their collisions and elisions dramatic and clamorous. Their optical density gives them weight but threatens to shiver with every jolt. Often, the hues and patterns of contrary incidents show through, rendering the overlays, whole or in part, transparent or translucent. The “hand” of the computer shows here, allowing such discontinuity to contradict and yet fit into the opaque layering of incident, rendering panels and barriers disconcertingly ghostly.

Woods defines the edge – the edge on which the entire collage aesthetic turns – not as the moment of contact between forms, but as the moment of contact between analog and digital form itself. A Woods painting or drawing exists not so much as a locus of compositional strategy (although it is that, too) as a node at which the (supposedly) disjunct realms of the mechanical and the electronic conflate. Even her three-dimensional work, notably the “Psychostasia” series of free-hanging cloth assemblages, gives evidence of this unity of fabric and pixel. This material-to-electronic segue capitalizes, at least obliquely, on the persistence of the analog in the digital realm (i.e., hardware like keyboards and printers) – or, more to the point, the nostalgia embedded in analog objects for their forerunners (e.g. typewriters, pencils). Woods refuses to become a “digital

artist,” but refuses as well to pass up the momentous opportunity to engage the new universe of cyber-tools.

With one foot in the virtual and the other in the actual, Alison Woods may seem to be positioning herself as a transitional figure between two art forms. But that position she adopts is syncretic, not transitional: the virtual and the actual are not art forms themselves, but platforms, discrete but not mutually exclusive contexts, bridgeable and even fusible in many ways.

Working in what we recognize as traditional formats and traditional media, Woods undergirds those media with new techniques, expanding the digital realm into the analog studio while maintaining the primacy of fabrication – and the centrality of perception.

Los Angeles
December 2021

Peter Frank

Peter Frank (born 1950, New York) is an American art critic, curator, and poet who lives and works in Los Angeles. He was the Senior Curator at the Riverside Art Museum and served as art critic for the SoHo Weekly News, the Village Voice, and the LA Weekly.

Psychostasia 9 (detail)
24 x 24 x 99 inches
mixed media, paper
plastic sheeting
chicken wire and screen
2020



On the Brink

By Bill Moreno

It would be apt to describe Alison Woods as a modern-day renaissance woman. Her work as visionary artist, curator, and arbiter encompasses the totality of contemporary art's pre-occupation with media, technology, global citizenry, and the reality of 21st Century social and environmental turmoil. Spanning the gamut of mediums such as painting, drawing, sculpture and installation, her approach is meticulously deliberate, forceful, and urgent.

The resulting works, while seemingly disparate, are thoughtful, premeditated provocations. Employing her graphic arts background, Wood's begins a work with a considerable amount of technical intermediation, experimenting with form and line, resulting in a working outline – much like a writer. The initial working "map" is a precursor and guide for what is to take shape. She subsequently deploys several techniques to form a finished painting, experimenting with line and texture, stencils, painting, collage – until a work reveals itself. She is unafraid of color and invites the collision of hues and structure utilizing an experimental, laborious, and time-consuming process. Such Sisyphean efforts attempt to reveal what can't be easily articulated. Yet what ultimately transpires is compelling and energizing - an assured, potent narrative imbued with tensions between form, line, texture, and color.

Her abstracted sculptures represent a leap from the canvass - composed of paper, plastic, screen, and various detritus these constructions demand attention resulting in an often-provocative encounter.

Woods proffers no answers or solutions. Her works - a thought-provoking miasma of psychological intrigue - leaves it to the viewer to parse the visual language. The inorganic and organic coexist in an uneasy stasis - yet there is undeniable beauty and freedom in the resulting cultural Rorschach explorations.

William Moreno

William is a consultant, curator, writer, art advisor and director of William Moreno Contemporary Consulting & Advisory. He was founding executive director of the Claremont Museum of Art, Los Angeles and also served as executive director of the Mexican Museum in San Francisco.



Previous Page:
Durden and Ray Gallery
Los Angeles, California
2018



City of Gold Studies
12 x 12 inches
acrylic on wood
2019



The Shape of Us
Bourglinster
Cultural Center
Luxembourg

Phenomena
70 x 66 inches
acrylic on canvas
2018

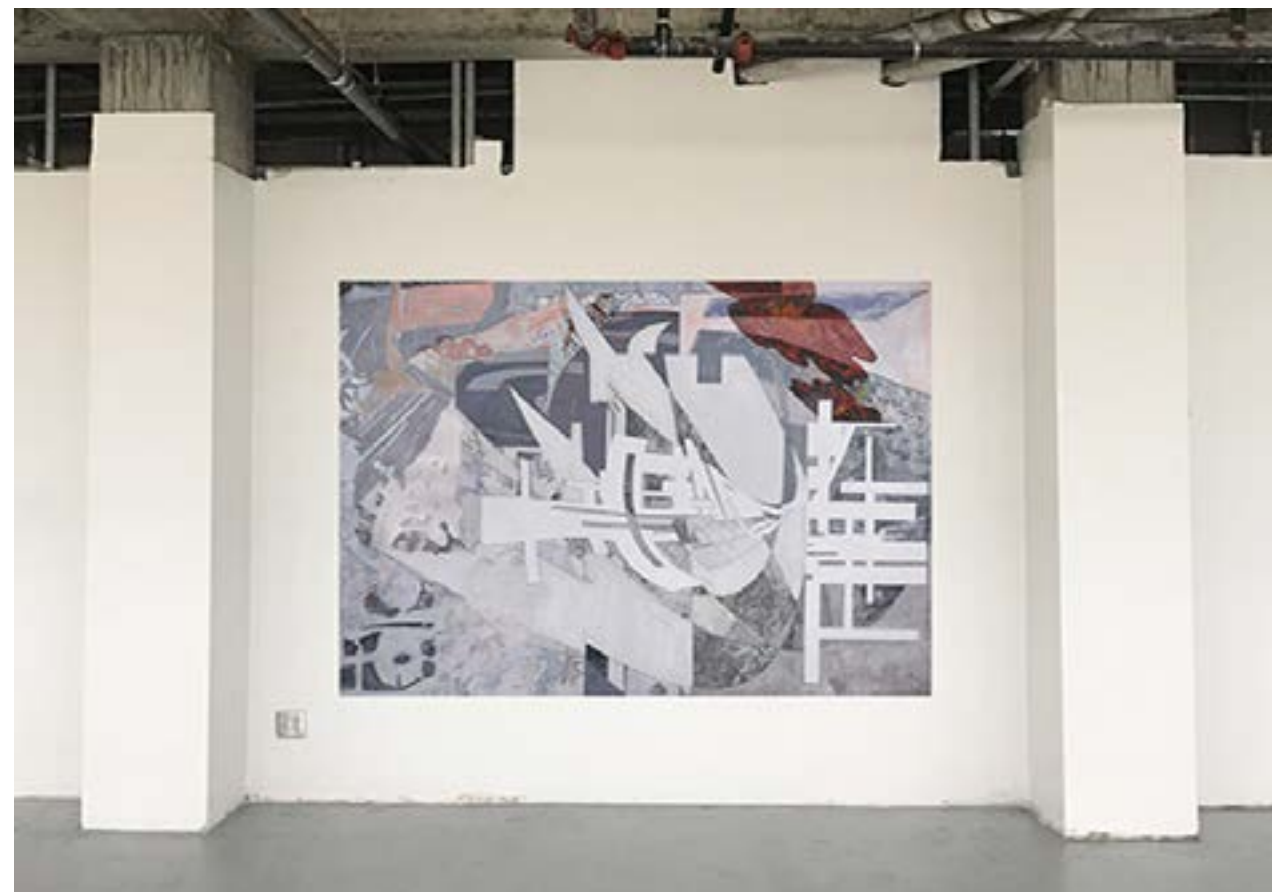


Ask Mr Science
50 x 40 inches
acrylic on canvas
2020

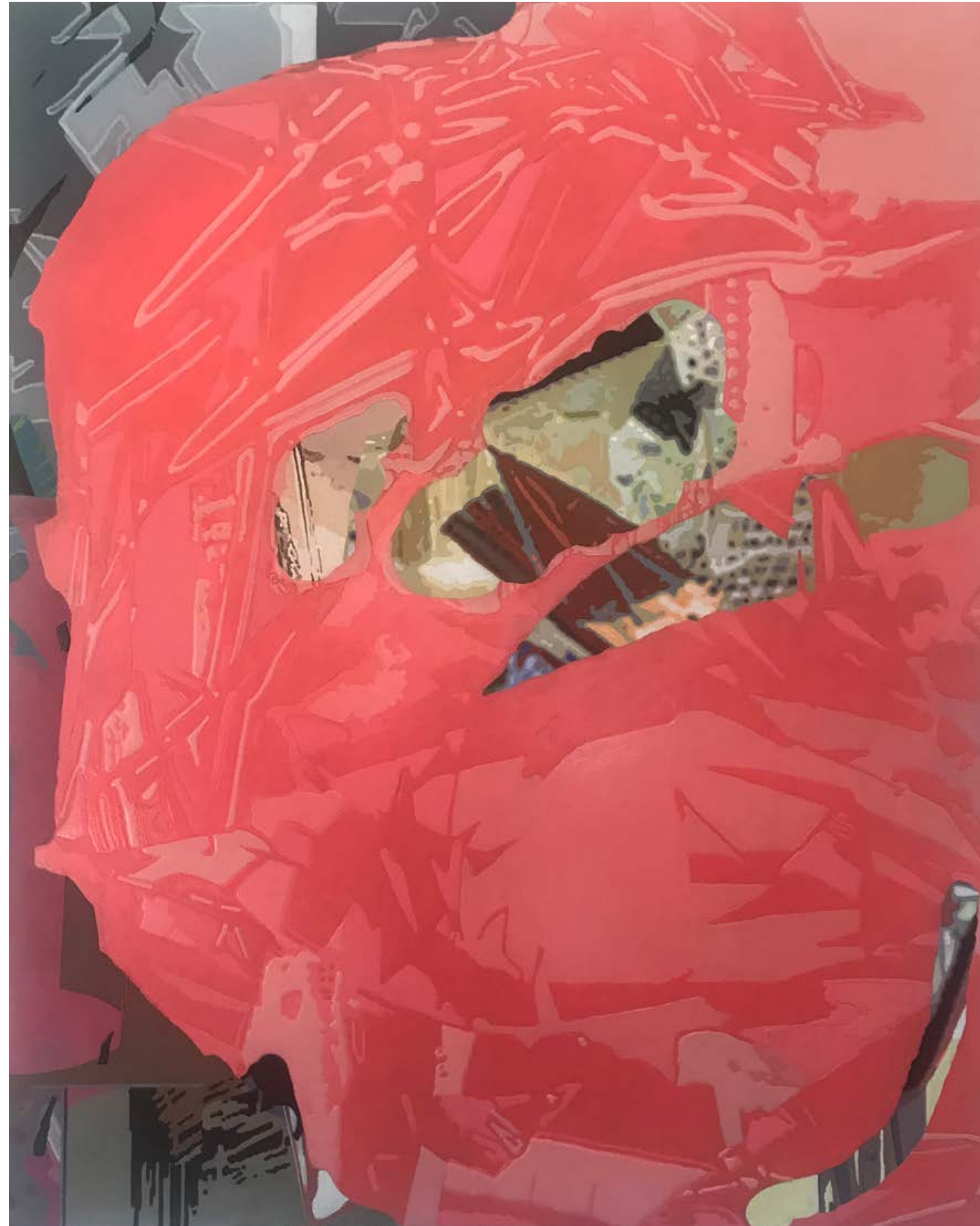


Glimmer
72 x 96 inches
acrylic on canvas
2019

Nomad
Hosted by
Torrance Art Museum
Torrance, California



Science Junk
50 x 40 inches
acrylic on canvas
2020



Psychostasia 7 and 8
(series)
99 x 24 x 24
mixed media, paper
plastic, chicken wire
and string
2019



Psychostasia 1
(series)
99 x 24 x 24
mixed media on paper
2019



Artslant
8th Showcase Winner
2013

Big Science
Site Specific Installation
acrylic on canvas
paper, balloons, tape and
video projections



Spring Break Art Show
Los Angeles, CA

The Happy House
Site Specific Installation
Mixed media, fabric
balloons, paper, acrylic
paint, and found objects
2020





Selected Biography

Alison Wood's images discuss the relationship between the human mind in all of its complexities and technology and its ramifications on culture.

Her process is informed by the intersection between the work of Wassily Kandinsky and the hidden world of our intuitive senses, C.G. Jung and his research regarding the collective unconscious, and the use of modern technology.

She has exhibited Internationally — in Rome, Greece, Berlin, Stockholm, Luxembourg, Australia, Budapest, Johannesburg, Mexico City, Iceland — and closer to home at The Torrance Art Museum (2021), The Korean Cultural Center (2018), Stanford University Art

Spaces (2013), and featured on Art Critic Charles Desmarais' Blog (2011).

From 2017-2020 she curated international arts exhibitions in Berlin, Luxembourg, and Greece, and at Durden and Ray Project Space, Los Angeles. She went on to represent Durden and Ray at the "Supermarket Art Fair" in Stockholm, Sweden, to introduce international arts opportunities to artists attending the fair.

In 2014 she founded the Bridge Residency, an invitation for artists to explore the Los Angeles art scene. In 2013 Woods was an Artslant Showcase Winner and the Art Trends Artist of the Year, published by Pardee, Canada.

Education

MFA, With Honors
San Francisco Art Institute
San Francisco, CA
2012

BFA
California College of the Arts
Oakland, CA

Awards & Fellowships

2019
Residency
Hangmen Projects
Stockholm, Sweden

2013
Artslant
8th Showcase Winner

Art Trends Artist of the Year
2013 edition
Pardee Publisher, Canada

Fellowship at The Critique
Program Berkeley, CA

2012

Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant
SFAI Faculty Nominee

Professional Affiliations

2000

Guest Lecturer
California College of the Arts
San Francisco, CA

Exhibitions

2021

Open Call
Curated by Peter Frank
Gallery 825, Los Angeles, CA

Nomad

Hosted by
Torrance Art Museum
Torrance, CA

2020

Shape of Us
Bourglinster, Luxembourg

Personal Contacts
Durden and Ray
Los Angeles, CA

We Are Here, Here We Are
Greater Los Angeles, CA

Hobson's Choice
Torrance Art Museum
Torrance, CA

The Happy House
Spring/Break Art Show
Los Angeles CA

The Vista
Durden and Ray
Los Angeles, CA

QiPO 02 Art Fair
Mexico City, Mexico

2019

Parallex
Axel Obiger, Berlin, Germany

Set Today/Set Future
Gallery Mod, Istanbul, Turkey

Figura: Micro Macro
Neumünster, Luxembourg

West by East Coast
Hangmen Projects
Stockholm, Sweden

Figura: Micro Macro
Durden and Ray
Los Angeles, CA

B-LA Connect,
Axel Obiger, Berlin, Germany

Outward Bound
Galleri Kalashnikovv
Johannesburg, South Africa

Supermarket Art Fair
Stockholm, Sweden

CoLab IV
Torrance Art Museum
Torrance, CA

Dreams Upon Awakening
MT, Budapest, Hungary

QIPO 01, Art Fair
Mexico City, Mexico

Spring Break Art Show
Invitational, Los Angeles, CA

From the Edge of the World
Ekkisens, Reykjavík, Iceland

2018
Los Angeles is, Once Again
curated by Camilla Boemio
Temple University, Rome, Italy

*A heap of broken images
where the sun beats*
Aegean Center for the Arts
Paros Greece

Vernissage
Musée du Vin
Ehnen, Luxembourg

*In the stillness between
two waves of the sea*
Durden and Ray
Los Angeles, CA

*Odd Convergences:
Steps/Missteps*
Korean Cultural Center
Los Angeles, CA

Supermarket Art Fair
Stockholm Sweden

CoLab III
Torrance Art Museum
Torrance, CA

Inverted Realities
McNish Gallery
Oxnard College, CA

2017
Cache_LA
Mint Moue, Los Angeles CA

Satellite One
TW Fine Art
Brisbane, Australia

Entangled Loci
HilbertRaum, Berlin, Germany

Far Bazaar, Invitational
Cerritos College, Cerritos, CA

The Collectivists
curated by Kara Walker Tome
The Brand Art Center
Los Angeles, CA

2016
The Night/La Nuit
BLAM Projects, Los Angeles, CA

Faux Dada
curated by Kio Griffith
Muzeumm
Los Angeles, CA

Mondrian Died for Our Sins
BLAM Projects, Brooklyn, NY

LA n CV3
curated by Mike McLain
Coachella Valley Art Center
Indio, CA

stARTup Fair, Featured Artist
Juried by Kim Abeles,
Dan Cameron, Andi
Campognone, Christine
Duval, Peter Mays, Hillary
Metz, William Powhida,
Highland Gardens Hotel
Los Angeles, CA

2013
Stanford Art Spaces
curated by Marilyn Grossman
Stanford University
Stanford, CA

Curatorial Projects

2020
We Are Here, Here We Are
Greater Los Angeles, CA

The Happy House
Spring/Break Art Show
Los Angeles, CA

2019
Figura: Micro Macro
Neumünster, Luxembourg

B-LA Connect, Axel Obiger
Berlin, Germany

2018
*A heap of broken images
where the sun beats*
Aegean Center for the Arts
Paros Greece

*In the stillness between
two waves of the sea*
Durden and Ray
Los Angeles, CA

CoLab III
Torrance Art Museum
Torrance, CA

2017
FUtopia
BLAM Projects, Los Angeles, CA

Publications

2021
Nomad Traverses Realms
Diversions LA, Genie Davis
September 14, 2021

*Meet Alison (Ali) Woods,
Fine Artist and Accidental
Curator*, ShoutOut LA
Interview June 24, 2021

2020
Meet Alison Woods, Voyage LA
Interview, July 6, 2020

An Exhibition Across Los Angeles Takes on New Meanings in Times of Protest
Hyperallergic
Jennifer Remenckik
June 11, 2020

Review: Miss seeing art? 100 artists come to the rescue with work in public view across L.A., Los Angeles Times
Christopher Knight
May 22, 2020

Spring/Break Art Show 2020
Los Angeles, Art and Cake
Lorraine Heitzman,
February 26, 2020

Spring/Break Art Fair's Los Angeles Excess
LA Weekly, Shana Nys Dambrot
February 15, 2020

The Vista at Durden and Ray
Art and Cake, Lorraine Heitzman, Feb 20, 2020

2019
Figura: Micro Macro Offers Stunning Art from Luxembourg and the U.S, Art and Cake
Genie Davis, August 23, 2019

2018
Memorable Art Events of 2018: From our Contributors and Readers, Art and Cake
December 31, 2018

In the Stillness Between Two Waves of the Sea: A group show at Durden and Ray, Art and Cake
Patrick Quinn, June 25, 2018

Art as Poetry, "In the Stillness Between Two Waves of the Sea", Diversions LA
Genie Davis, June 22, 2018

Co/Lab III at the Torrance Art Museum
Art and Cake
Genie Davis, April 18, 2018

2017
BLAM says goodbye to its physical space with a look at a dystopian future, Art and Cake
Genie Davis, March 6, 2017

How Donald Trump presidency is fueling political art
Los Angeles Daily News
Sandra Barrera
January 19, 2017

2016
Celebrating DADA through Fauxism, Art and Cake
Genie Davis, December 9, 2016

Equal Representation for All AEQAI, Anise Stevens
April 23rd, 2016



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