Los
Angeles
Municipal
Art
Gallery

COLA 2024

Gallery Guide

It is important that the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery prioritize respect for both the historic culture and the contemporary presence of indigenous peoples throughout California, and especially in the Los Angeles area. To that end, and particularly as a public and civic institution, we acknowledge that our gallery resides on what was historically the homeland of Kizh, Tongva, and Chumash peoples who were dispossessed of their land.

If you would like to learn more about the land you are on please visit: https://native-land.ca.

Founded in 1997, the City of Los Angeles Independent Master Artist Project (COLA IMAP) is an annual grant awarded by the Department of Cultural Affairs to a selection of the City's most exemplary mid-career artists to support the creation of new works.

Artists are chosen by a peer review panel that includes curators, cultural workers, and past COLA IMAP grantees. ***COLA 2024***, the COLA IMAP design and visual artists exhibition, honors the synergetic relationship between Los Angeles, its artists, its history, and its identity as an international arts capital.

COLA 2024 premieres a new body of work by five Los Angeles-based artists, featuring dynamic installations of ceramic, sculpture, photography, video, painting, and drawing. This year's recipients of the COLA IMAP grants in design and visual arts are **Jane Brucker**, **Mariah Garnett**, **Janna Ireland**, **Debra Scacco**, and **Bari Ziperstein**.

In this gallery guide, you will find a Q&A with each artist by Curator, Nancy Meyer in collaboration with Art Associates, Samantha Alexis Manuel and Jennifer Payan.

Jane Brucker

Nancy Meyer: Tell us about yourself, where did you grow up and what brought you to LA?

Jane Brucker: I grew up in San Diego, California in the 1960s and 1970s, but my family history there goes back to before the 20th century. My grandmother built her house in 1926 in San Diego, and until a few years ago, this house was still a gathering place for us. I came to realize that kind of family longevity and continuity of place in California is not typical.

After graduating from San Diego State University (SDSU), I came to LA in the early 1980s, first to the eastern edge of the county to attend Claremont Graduate University for my MFA in painting and performance art. I moved to the westside in 1993 when I accepted a teaching position at Loyola Marymount University, where I still teach courses in drawing and contemplative practice.

NM: What led you to becoming an artist?

JB: Growing up in Southern California during the 60s and 70s was fun but a bit insular. My dad was an educator and my parents were very supportive of my creativity. I explored pottery, drawing, and poetry writing. When I was ten, I offered art lessons to the neighborhood kids and cut up our family collection of National Geographic magazines for collages. As a teen, I liked art but was always figuring out how to spend more time on the beach or up to visit at my brother's organic farm/off-grid homestead in Northern California.

My grandmother's experience as a single mother living through the 1929 depression prompted her to save everything. Everything could be used again or adapted for another purpose. Matchbooks, photographs, newspaper clippings, fabric, chipped ceramic, clothing, knick-knacks and buttons. In my generation, a similar resourcefulness helped my brother to build an off-grid homestead in the 1970s while I created my own art practice a decade later.

When my grandmother passed away in 1995, I inherited her treasure trove of objects. From that point on, her collection of many small items became the reference point for all my aesthetic decisions. My performance and installation work began to feature these tiny objects alongside larger things like furniture. I saw my own history or the histories of others in them. People started giving me lots of items and sharing their memories associated with them. This was the beginning of using these materials to shape a story, or a fragment of a story to present not just the past, but the current moment. Sometimes I feel drawn to tell someone else's story or introduce the viewer to a real person from the past whose story speaks to me.

NM: What were/are some of your influences and what was the trajectory to performance art and an installation based practice?

JB: I like the idea that art is a gift. When I attended Skowhegan School of Sculpture and Painting in Maine in 1987, I met artist Agnes Martin. Meeting Agnes prompted me to acknowledge the relationship between the spiritual and the physical, a connection I already felt. After returning from Maine that year, my interests in spirituality led me to the Claremont School of Theology where I completed an MA in Religion and the Arts, focusing on the complicated nature of women in religion and feminist traditions.

While Agnes Martin spoke to my minimal and spiritual side, my graduate training with people like artist Connie Zehr encouraged me to think about the space of the gallery, (or even a garage or a closet) as part of the work. The spaces where I exhibit or perform dictate what I do in the work. Telling and performing stories or creating a felt sensibility through the organization of objects—categorizing, listing, stacking, and carefully placing each item—is an extremely satisfying activity. Maybe there is some element of human care and gift in that alone.

In my performance work, I carefully consider space and the audience. The work's meaning then naturally emerges from relationships between performers and objects, space and audience. I hope to give the viewer an experience of movement, tactility, and or an activity that adds to the visual, aural, textual and physical content of the work in calm and reflective ways. Sometimes these works are solo but more often others collaborate with me. Even the viewer is sometimes asked to collaborate by inviting their participation.

NM: Please tell us about the body of work for *COLA 24*. How does it relate to your interest in personal and collective histories as well as family heirlooms?

JB: The new work created for *COLA 24* started with my grandmother's bed frame. My brother had it stored in his barn and it was broken with parts missing since 1995. I have been thinking of it for a few years, but it seemed beyond repair. I felt a responsibility to make the bed into something for everyone living in LA. It seemed like we needed to rest and needed a place to rest. But of course, the bed is empty—because it seems like there is nowhere to find safety, calm, and peace.

I also have been deeply affected by my sister-in-law's struggle with Alzheimer's disease, so all the works in the exhibition are partly for her. My sister-in-law, Meca Wawona, was known for her environmental activism. The mirror I made for Meca is not

reflective. It instead uses stained glass painting techniques to render a dense but delicate arrangement of painted redwood leaves and bright yellow of the silver nitrate stain. Here, the mirror cannot reflect the disappearing self, but it does invite the viewer to glimpse someone that I love and to consider the tragedy of losing vital souls whose work in the world is not done.

The *Redwood Spring Snag* is the top of a redwood tree from my brother's farm that fell this winter. Meca can no longer live at the homestead and I always saw her as a keeper of the ancient trees. The *Redwood Spring Snag* is an ancient tree with a 10' diameter base. A spring flowed from its hollow trunk and we drank from it. I feel like it fell over in sorrow.

NM: Please tell us about the intersection of your practice and the concepts around mortality and the fragility of life.

JB: My practice with mortality and fragility comes from my own experiences of loss as a witness to death and dying. I care about the objects I use to make my work, especially if they were important to those who owned them. These things have a way of sustaining a social thread and a connection to a time, a place or persons. Telling the story or capturing a feeling quality or remembrance through materials creates longevity even as the materials themselves—like our bodies—are fragile.

The objects I use have developed a patina over time. They are meaningful to me because they authentically represent a sense of history or story. Clothing gets softer, wood and metal show signs of wear and physical damage, all caused by handling, friction, abrading, or fading. Stains, marks and scratches become markers that show the energy of living and dying.

NM: Can you discuss the importance of revisiting and adding certain bodies of work and how that relates to your practice overall?

JB: Time moves slowly, and chances are that in my lifetime, I will repeatedly explore the same ideas. My colleague Paul Harris has called my work "cumulative and incremental." I think this is correct. Ongoing work can be adapted to new spatial opportunities, or move me deeper into the content and I never really get tired of it.

An example in *COLA 24* is *Bed (rest)*. It builds off of my series, *Spiritual Furniture*, the title of which was inspired by one of my theology professors, Dr. Jack Coogan. During my study, I was going through an existentially difficult time and was late turning in a paper. When I explained my situation to him, he said to me, "That is understandable Jane, you are moving a lot of spiritual furniture around."

The series of mirrors I have been making since 1995 was not really planned. In art history, mirrors as the subject of artworks are completely void until a figure (often the viewer or the artist) enters its field of reflection. The mirrors I make reference a person (as in a portrait or self-portrait) or act as a physical tool used for a symbolic purpose (like understanding the self). Even if they encourage only a simply curious or passive gaze, it is an opportunity for the viewer to reflect.

NM: What's the most exciting part of your art practice?

JB: Collecting heirloom items from others or that come from my own family is very different from any other type of collecting. There is often a deep, sentimental value attached to objects that have been passed down from one generation to the next. Understanding who these items belonged to, or how they were used, or the possibilities for meaning they employ, helps me navigate what I need to do with them. In an ethic of care, material choices are intentional, even if intuitive. Gathering and touching these materials affects the outcome of the work. Considering the sensorial information present in these heirlooms becomes an essential part of the story my work tells.

Image Credit: Jane Brucker, Top left: Stack of letters, detail from *Bed (rest)*; Top right: Brucker's sister-in-law, environmentalist Meca Wawona, 1975; Lower: Work-in-progress detail, painted glass redwood leaves. Courtesy of the artist.

Mariah Garnett

Nancy Meyer: Tell us about yourself, where did you grow up and what brought you to LA?

Mariah Garnett: I grew up in the Hudson Valley, several hours north of New York City. I came to LA after college because I wanted to be a director.

NM: What led you to becoming an artist?

MG: I was directing ads and music videos and was relatively miserable in LA. So I went back to school to Calarts where I studied Film/Video. People thought I was crazy because I was already a working director, but it was there I found my voice as a filmmaker, not in the industry. I began showing in art spaces because that is where most of my social life was, and the audience there seemed warmest. That led me to explore installation and other forms.

NM: Please tell us about the body of work for *COLA 24*. Is it a departure from or align with your previous body of work?

MG: In some ways yes in some ways no. All my work is project-based, so they can often look or seem quite different on the outside. I'd say the production value has gone up, and I'm working with a lot of other people in a way that feels collaborative, so that is a departure for sure. I haven't really made a film with performing artists doing their thing, so that is definitely different from making a documentary style portrait of someone. It aligns with my previous work in that

I include multiple tangents, locate everything squarely in my own subjectivity while making space for others and trying to portray them in a light they'd be happy with.

NM: Where did your interest in opera originate from?

MG: My interest in opera originated from this score written by my great-great aunt. I became interested in it in 2020 after reading some of her diaries, which were filled with fear about money and how to continue making her work (I think a lot of us were feeling that way in 2020), and advice she got from a spirit. I had this picture of her isolated, talking to ghosts and trying to make work, which is a bit how it felt to be in covid lockdown – all our communication disembodied. What has kept me interested in this project and I suppose in opera in general is my relationship with the performers and other artistic collaborators. It is really something else to stand near an opera singer when they sing full volume, or to witness a performer like Holland Andrews create universes of sound out of thin air. My work has always been about connecting with people outside of my immediate circle. While many of these folks could easily be considered "within my community," we've never connected in *this* way, around what they do. I've always admired them from a distance and never tried to look inside how it's done, so that forges a different connection.

NM: Can you elaborate on the concepts around "domestic ethnography" and how it relates to your practice?

MG: I haven't ever heard or used that term, but I just googled it. In many ways I object to both the terms "domestic" and "ethnography" and have barely thought about either of them in the execution of my work. As a filmmaker, I *always* consider my relationship to the subject – I believe it's an ethical imperative when pointing a camera at someone. Sometimes they are blood relatives, others not. In life, my sense of family is fairly expanded and not at all limited to bloodlines. My films are also

decidedly unscientific, nor do they claim to amount to anything really when it comes to data or conclusions about other people or groups of people. I think of my films as portraits of relationships between people and what the camera does to those relationships. I think of my films as anti-documentaries. What they record is often my own ambivalence around representation. So, I suppose, having just googled "domestic ethnography," I reject it completely.

NM: What other influences and concepts inform your body of work?

MG: I love Werner Herzog. He is a huge influence on all my work. I hope he sees one of my films before he dies. When I was in college, I took a class called "the problem of documentary" with Tony Cokes, and that had a huge influence on me. The idea that documentaries were as much portraits of a filmmaker's subjectivity as they were statements of Truth about a subject blew my young mind. I've kind of taken that idea and just run with it, trying to push it as far as I can in a playful way. I think this is why I love Herzog so much. He leans into that idea rather than trying to hide the apparatus of cinema and doesn't shy away from the theatricality of the whole endeavor. It seems a more honest way of making films to me than most.

NM: What's the most exciting part of your art practice?

MG: Making new friends! Whether that's people, or places or political movements or writings. Also, starting things and finishing them. The middle part can be hellish but those two parts are very exciting.

Image Credit: Mariah Garnett, still from *Songbook*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles and Mexico City.

Janna Ireland

Nancy Meyer: Tell us about yourself, where did you grow up and what brought you to LA?

Janna Ireland: I grew up in Philadelphia. I met my husband in New York, when we were both in college, and we spent the next several years moving around the country, taking turns going to school. We moved to LA so that I could attend a grad program at UCLA, and it became clear to me pretty quickly that I wanted to live here forever. I love the weather and the food, of course, but it's really the strength of the art community here that makes it the place I want to be.

NM: What led you to becoming an artist?

JI: My parents are both artistically inclined people (though neither would call themselves an artist), and they always encouraged my interest in the arts. When I was growing up, we spent time with their friends who were writers, painters, filmmakers, actors, and musicians. Becoming an artist was the thing that always made the most sense to me.

NM: Can you tell us about how the body of work for *COLA 24* relates to or is a departure from your previous body of work?

JI: I am presenting two small bodies of work in the COLA show. For the work in the first room, I took pictures from my family archive into the darkroom and made contact prints of them. The essential character of each duplicated photograph is the same as that of each original: the image size is exactly the same, and each detail of the photograph is preserved. However, each

image is also abstracted by the process, which both flips each photograph like a mirror and renders it in negative. My dog's black hair becomes white. Instead of being clearly identifiable as people I know and love, faces become almost anonymous–we could be looking at anyone's family.

This work came out of *Pauline* (2023), a body of work I made using photographs of my grandmother taken over the span of about 80 years, from the time she was a teenager until the day of her funeral. From looking at a wide range of photographs of one person in my family, I moved to looking at photographs that have specific importance to me for the COLA show. *Mantel* (2024) consists of every family photograph on display in my living room. These are the photographs of my family, my husband's family, and the family we built together, that I carefully selected and placed in frames in order to give my children a sense of where they come from. A piece called *1967/2023 (Dad at 20)* (2023) was made using a self portrait my dad took in the Army when he was 20. *Eye/Teeth* (2024) is a collaboration with one of my sons–I made the original photographs, and one day when we were working in the darkroom together, he selected them from his photo album to make a new work.

The work I'm showing in the second room is a continuation of the work about my homelife that I've been doing for the past few years. It deals a lot with human interactions with nature, which is a theme that has been running through my work for quite some time. The form of *The Bird and the Bees* (2024) and *Bow and Arrow/Orb Weaver (Target)* (2024) is something new. I've been making multi-panel works for a long time, but I wanted to try something different in the way the pieces relate to each other.

NM: Please tell us about your interest and the transition from architectural photography to a more personalized documentation of your home life.

JI: Pictures of my life and the people in it came long before

pictures of buildings. I think the shift in the way I documented my life after I began photographing architecture was really in my approach. For a long time, my work about my homelife was staged, to the point of being fictional. After I began photographing architecture, which meant walking into buildings I'd never been to before and trying to do the best job I could making pictures of whatever I found there, I was able to approach photographing my family in a more spontaneous way.

NM: Can you please elaborate on your recent exploration of three-dimensional sculptural works/readymades in your artistic practice? What have you learned so far?

JI: Several years ago, I began making large, photographic altarpieces that were meant for viewers to open and close. Work meant to be touched can create confusion in a gallery space: sometimes people don't touch things they are supposed to because they're trying to make sure they follow the rules. Other times, people may touch something they aren't supposed to because it looks inviting. Through the newer sculptural works, I try to create opportunities for people to change their experience of a piece by moving around it and changing their bodies' relationship to it, instead of by manipulating it with their hands.

The altarpieces open and close on hinges, and in some ways resemble the same kinds of hinged frames you might see on someone's mantle. As I was thinking about ways to create sculptural work that was more accessible to viewers (and to me–making those big altarpieces was very expensive), tabletop frames came to mind. I decided that I wanted to make sculptural work using very easily accessible domestic objects, like 8x10 picture frames. So much of my work is about home and family life that I saw a clear logic in using the kinds of objects I might find in someone's house.

NM: What do archival and memorial work mean to you as you incorporate your family's archives into your work?

JI: I see using pictures from my family archives in my work as an act of transmutation. Images that may only have had value to me become something else, with the potential to have value to strangers, while remaining connected to their source. Family pictures become disconnected from their families of origin all the time; albums that were once precious, vital family records end up in flea markets or on eBay when there is no one left who feels a connection to the images inside. Perhaps if I take pictures that are precious and vital to me and put them in an art context, that moment when they cease to have a specific meaning to anyone and lose their value can be delayed.

NM: What is the most exciting part of your art practice?

JI: The process; having an idea, figuring out the steps to make it happen, and performing the necessary tasks. Having the finished work to look at and show to other people later is just a bonus.

Image Credit: Janna Ireland, *Eye/Teeth*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist.

Debra Scacco

Nancy Meyer: Tell us about yourself, where did you grow up and what brought you to LA?

Debra Scacco: I grew up in a mostly Italian neighborhood in Staten Island, New York. We had family (both blood and chosen) up and down the block - grandparents, cousins and folks that both sides of my family had immigrated with. In 1985 my dad's job moved us to a suburb of Atlanta. This was a total culture shock for my whole family. I returned to New York (Manhattan this time) the day after my 18th birthday. In 1996 I went to London for a year abroad, and then one year turned to 16...

I started showing in Los Angeles in 2007 and quickly fell in love. The people, the light, the landscape, the genuine warmth and curiosity of the community I was welcomed into. So, my partner and I finally made the move in 2012 and haven't looked back since.

NM: What led you to becoming an artist?

DS: That's a big question! I was a dancer growing up and was sure that would be my path. I have so much respect for performing artists - it's a tough life and one injury can take you out. I had some health issues that made me question if this was the best path for me. It was a hard decision as I didn't know how to be anyone else. I was lucky to have an opportunity for a year abroad in London, so I took it. This changed my life in so many ways.

I had zero experience with visual art and was curious. I enrolled in an art history course that sent me to the Tate (there was only one then!). The minute I walked into the Rothko room everything was different. I was so moved not just by the work but by everything about that specific space. I wanted to be able to make people feel that deeply.

NM: How and when did you become interested in cartography and waterway systems?

DS: My family's immigrant history and the fact that we continue to span three continents was the catalyst for my interest in geography as it relates to policy. When I learned that Immigration Act of 1924 is the source of my family's ongoing separation, policy as it relates to geography (which is articulated through cartography) became a core focus of my work.

My earliest cartographic memories are of my father unfolding giant maps as my family drove from Georgia back to New York for holidays. I still have the same hopeless sense of direction, as well as the same fascination with who gets to decide where the lines fall, what the legend looks like, and what is foregrounded in these seemingly neutral documents.

On arriving in Los Angeles in 2012, I looked to the Los Angeles River as a compass for the city. On studying the history of the river as it related to ecology and First Peoples, I came to recognize the Los Angeles River as a physical manifestation of both colonization resilience. Violence against water is violence against all living beings. This began my inquiry into waterways that is now at the heart of my practice.

I was recently asked if there are bad maps and good maps. My response was that all maps are an exercise of power. Whether they're bad or good depends on the intention of those drawing the lines. Over a decade ago, while researching the

history of the Los Angeles River at Los Angeles Public Library, I remember asking now retired Map Librarian Glen Creason where I could search for maps prior to the late 1800's. His response was that the intention of maps was to document ownership; so there weren't many publicly available maps dating to pre-colonization. This single comment, which now seems so obvious, caused a radical shift in how I think about and move through the world.

NM: Can you elaborate on the influences, processes and techniques used for the drawings featured in *COLA 24*?

DS: The work I'm creating for *COLA 24* is the culmination of the last decade of research and work about and with California waterways.

My research has taken me to rivers, aqueducts, dry lake beds and slot canyons. I've worked with mark making through automatic drawing, engraving, marbling, rubbing and cartographic representation. *Shifting Baseline* brings many of these processes into view, while using the land and history of water as the base form of the drawings.

The piece collapses multiple geographies onto a single plane in honor of the fact that we are all connected by water. Each location is assigned a mark marking tool, enabling a decoding of the drawing to understand evidence from each site. The base layer (graphite) is a rubbing take at the Los Angeles River - an engineering project that attempts to strip the river of its life-giving capabilities. The concrete channel means the river can no longer absorb water into the ground and replenish aquifers that support living systems. The final layer is burying the work in the sand of a dry lake. These areas are often regarded as devoid of life yet support adapted vegetation and insect species that enable the survival of multiple other species.

NM: What role do you think artists play in social activism?

DS: I think artists who choose to participate can play a critical role in social activism. This isn't for everyone, and that's totally fine. For my practice, however, I cannot in good conscience make work about ecological concerns without being involved in the work of improving our shared ecology.

There are many ways artists can contribute and/or support in this space - we each have to determine the way that is most sustainable for our lives and our practice. I defer to Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson's Climate Action Venn Diagram. The three areas are: What brings you joy? What are you good at? What is the work that needs doing? The place where these three meet is what you should do. I love this model as it really sets us up for success by integrating the work into existing areas of joy and specialization.

NM: How do you connect with the communities or individuals involved in water activism and/or water management? How have these relationships developed throughout your career?

DS: Generally speaking I connect with folks involved in activism by showing up. Most of the people I end up working with are folks I have met by attending panel discussions, webinars, site visits or activations. This helped establish trust and community through action before the opportunity to work together even arises.

Working with water managers tends to be a little less organic, but still very intentional. Sometimes folks are recommended by colleagues, sometimes I approach people cold after reading an article they have authored or following the path of a particular policy. I learn whatever I can online first to make sure I'm not asking repetitive questions, and generally send an email detailing a little about me, the project I am working on and what

I hope to gain through our conversation. Reciprocity is hugely important. While I'm often unclear on how I can reciprocate with certain folks, I do offer and stay in touch about the project so that they can see how things turned out. This is also how I've established long-term relationships with so many folks, as we follow one another's actions.

NM: What is the most exciting part of your art practice?

DS: The most exciting part of my art practice is being a life-long learner. The research and process aspects of my work result in relationships with scholars, activists, cartographers, fabricators, puppeteers and everyone in between. I am eternally grateful to every person who takes time to talk with me or spend time with my work - to share their practice, their knowledge, their skills, their thoughts. These relationships make my practice and my life infinitely richer.

Image Credit: Debra Scacco, *Shifting Baseline*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist.

Bari Ziperstein

Nancy Meyer: Tell us about yourself, where did you grow up and what brought you to LA?

Bari Ziperstein: I am a Los Angeles based visual artist working primarily with ceramics. I was born and raised in a predominantly Jewish suburb northwest of Chicago, Illinois. Visits to Chicago, with its vibrant cultural diversity, historic architecture, and legendary music scene were foundational moments in my youth. I attended Ohio University (1996-2000), where I double majored in art and women's studies, showing an early interest in intersectional feminism. I went on to receive my MFA in Studio Art from The California Institute of the Arts (2002-2004). It drew me in with its incredible faculty and history, from Michael Asher and his ideas about post-studio practice to the radical pedagogy of the Feminist Art Program.

NM: What led you to becoming an artist?

BZ: Early on, art was used as a tool, refuge and a site for exploration of color, emotional expression, philosophy, and skill. It was a way to get out of my hometown and to explore the country. As I continued my educational pursuits, the interest in choosing a life in the arts became much clearer and grounded with the help of key mentors and surrounding myself with a strong community of artists. The curiosity and desire to realize a fantastical sculpture or installation remains the driving force of my practice today.

NM: How has your artistic practice evolved? Please elaborate on your transition from two-dimensional (2D) to three-dimensional work (3D).

BZ: In undergrad, I was a frustrated painter who was always looking out of the windows of the fourth floor painting studios below - seeing the kiln pads and sculpture studios. My ideas eventually lead to paintings that were off the grid on linoleum tiles and years later to ceramic objects that are intricately drawn on with detailed surface decoration and imagery. The researched based rigor of my practice led me to choose clay as a medium and to design elaborate installations based on the content of those historical research.

NM: Please discuss your interest in Wiener Werkstätte and how that has influenced your latest body of work.

BZ: Research is a key component of my work and, to date, I have had two seminal opportunities to immerse myself in archives that I have mined for material. I first researched at the Wende Museum of the Cold War in Culver City, California, and then recently during a residency in 2022 / 2023 as a scholar at The Wolfsonian-Florida International University in Miami, Florida. In both these research residencies, I focused on historical and archival research on the aesthetics and ideas deployed in Soviet Era agitprop from plates, figurines, textiles, rare pamphlets to oversized political posters. These were momentous as this research feeds my artwork concepts and forms. This generative research has led to the ceramic sculptural work produced for my solo exhibitions and for *COLA 24* which will be material that I will work with for years to come.

Then, in 2023 at the Wolfsonian, I began to broaden the scope of my interest and look further back in history to parallel textile and artisan manufactured objects from Vienna at the turn of the century. I focused on Wiener Werkstätte—an organization of primarily Jewish architects, artists, and designers working

in ceramics, fashion, silver, furniture, and graphic arts. The Wiener Werkstätte laid the foundation of what would later be coined 'modernism.'

NM: Is there a particular era or aesthetic that you reference and resonate with the work in *COLA 24*?

BZ: The *COLA 24* exhibition manifests an imagined collision of the Wiener Werkstatte's 1900-30's catalog; wallpaper patterns on top of scaled-up vessels, metal baskets interpreted as oversized ceramic baskets, and failed, elegant, lighting fixtures. Ceramic stoneware works are arranged in clusters, on top of draped customized geometric pedestals covered in lush mint fabric. The sculptures are veiled with intricately carved and hand-painted collages of patterns, color, and ornament; at once, a celebration of craftsmanship and a cautionary tale of the metaphorical and fiscal cost of the exuberance of more is more.

NM: Can you elaborate on the domestic aspects of your installation and how it may address the larger sociocultural issues or topics?

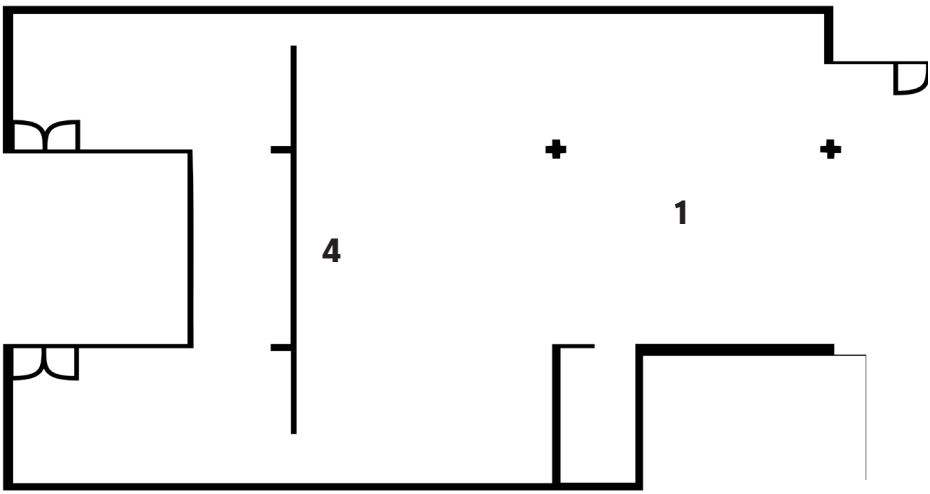
BZ: I use my work to explore the connections I find between our present socio-political moment and Cold War-era Europe, conflating historical eras by transposing imagery and ideas from various contexts into our current time. I pull from my own history as someone of Russian, Polish and Ukrainian heritage to make my work that is deeply personal, conceptually rigorous, and that is timely for both the political and social circumstances we find ourselves in today.

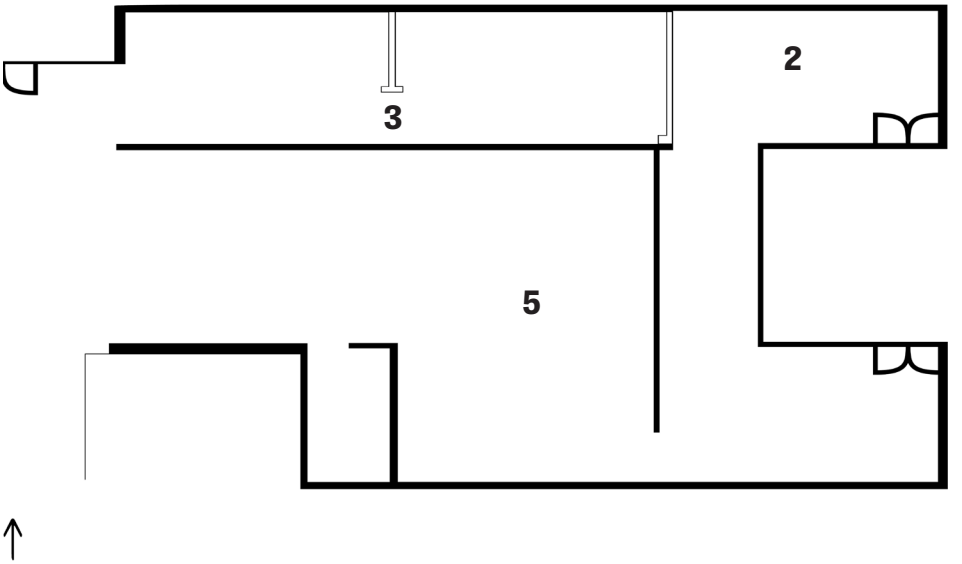
The work is not domestic - only in that it references historical domestic objects by the Wiener Werkstätte, specifically Josef Hoffman's metal baskets. The particular tableaux for these objects are more in reference to a corporate gathering with custom drapery or a trade show display for an idealized object.

My objects and sculptural tableaux reflect my interest in the political dimensions of capitalist economies and challenge the construction of desire and aspiration in contemporary American culture through a historical lens.

Image Credit: Bari Ziperstein, *Flowering Chandelier*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles; Charles Moffett Gallery, NY; Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami. Photo credit: Jeff McLane

Gallery map

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List of works

1. Jane Brucker

Bed (rest), 2024, grandmother's restored maple bed, antique matte painted glass, heirloom linens, and other heirloom materials

Blanket Chair, 2024, grandmother's maple chair, and heirloom quilts and blankets

Blanket Piece, 2024, blanket, linens, cotton on wood panels

Crucible, 2024, heirloom cast bronze mantel corbels, and other heirloom materials

Family Tree, 2024, hand carved lemon tree and acacia wood, glass and clay leaves, and other heirloom materials

It's been a long time..., 2024, heirloom mirror, plaster, clay, and Meca Wawona's handwriting taken from a letter to her mother

Hand Mirror for Meca, 2024, antique matte painted glass, antique stained glass, hammered brass, wood, chain and hanger

Mirrors, 2021-2024, set of hand mirrors

Poetry Cards, 2024, poems on paper for giveaway in two vintage heirloom recipe boxes (one metal, one wood)

Redwood Snag Spring, 2024, top of a recently fallen Coastal redwood tree from the artist's family farm in Northern California, heirloom bird salt and pepper shakers, wood shelves

2. Mariah Garnett

Songbook, 2024, 4K video, runtime: 55 minutes

3. Janna Ireland

Bow and Arrow/Orb Weaver (Target), 2024, pigment prints

Eclipse, 2023, pigment print

Eye/Teeth, 2024, gelatin silver print

Four Gestures, 2024, gelatin silver prints

Mantel, 2024, gelatin silver prints

Oak Tree, 2023, pigment print

The Bird and the Bees, 2024, pigment prints

Turning, 2024, pigment prints, metal frames, glass, wooden table

1967/2023 (Dad at 20), 2023, gelatin silver print

1990/2024 (Sheba), 2024, gelatin silver print

1992/2024 (Honor Roll), 2024, gelatin silver print

1998/2024 (Before and After), 2024, gelatin silver print

1998/1993/2024 (Two Birthdays), 2024, gelatin silver print

4. Debra Sccaco

Shifting Baseline, 2024, graphite, oil stick, sand on paper

Video documentation of making *Shifting Baseline*

Arroyo Secco, 2024

Artist assistant: Emory Hall

5. Bari Ziperstein

Angled Handled Basket, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Bowed Fence Post Basket, 2023, stoneware and glaze

Double Layered Waterfall Basket, 2024, stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Four Headed Vessel, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Flat Basket, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Floating Patterns, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Flowering Chandelier, 2023, stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Framework for Gridded Gears 1, 2023, stoneware and glaze

Generous Perfume, 2024, stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Heart Bricks, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Large Basket Building, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Long Stemmed Vines, 2023, stoneware and glaze

Melting Flowers, 2023, stoneware and glaze

Olive Satellite Home, 2023, stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Opposing Handle Basket, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Portraits of Decorative Decorations, 2024, stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Twisted Arms, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Rectangle Self Award, 2024, stoneware, underglaze and glaze

Round Basket, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Sloped Handled Basket, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Star Vessel, 2024, stoneware and glaze

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

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COLA 2024
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Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

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