

Susan Eley

Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Small Wonder

**Caryn Azoff, Jim Denney, Amber George,
Sasha Hallock, James Isherwood, Barbara Marks,
Lisa Pressman, Alicia Rothman and Liz Rundorff Smith**

Opens January 27, 2022

SEFA NYC
46 W 90th St, Floor 2
New York, NY 10024

Susan Eley Fine Art is pleased to present *Small Wonder*, a group exhibition of nine artists that features works measuring less than one square foot. *Small Wonder* will be on view beginning January 27, 2022 at our Upper West Side location. This is SEFA's first exhibition exclusively celebrating small-scale artworks. For inquiries or to schedule an appointment to view the exhibition in person, please contact Susan Eley: susie@susaneleyfineart.com.



Small works have large appeal. They are bite-sized, digestible; they can be visually consumed in a single glance while simultaneously containing entire universes—whether painting, drawing or encaustic; whether on canvas, panel or paper.

Small artworks have been especially embraced during the current pandemic—which continues to keep many of us at home, working remotely and spending significant time within the same four walls. We are seeking to decorate and beautify our rooms, thus enhancing our surrounding environment and diversifying our daily lived experiences. Yet, conscious of the reduced budgets and rising inflation at this moment, many of us have been compelled to consider where we have chosen to live, the cost of goods and raw materials, interruptions from supply chain issues and the relative importance of our worldly possessions. In general, small artworks are more affordable than larger pieces and can be

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accommodated on residential walls—hung in hallways and grouped with other works in a dynamic salon style arrangement. This element of practicality and flexibility serves both the artist and the collector.

There are artists who work primarily in small formats, and others who move between intimate and monumental scales, welcoming the challenges that the spectrum of size provides. Often a spatial constraint, either in their studio or in the home of a collector, prompts an artist to choose small canvases or wood panels. Or perhaps small is chosen over large because an artist prefers the process of creating a fully resolved artwork in a fraction of the space—perhaps an even greater challenge to execute their vision within a restricted plane. These artists can “pack the same punch” in a diminutive size, which is an impressive creative and technical endeavor. Another reason artists choose small is to work out ideas or create studies for larger work. However, the nine artists in *Small Wonder* all paint small as ends unto themselves, not as studies for larger pieces. In fact, it is often when artists face physical constraints that resourcefulness and innovation emerge.

The works in the exhibition *Small Wonder* invite the viewer to approach the wall and take a closer look. These precious, jewel-like objects prove that much can be said in a square foot or less. Artists must be discerning and judicious in what to include and what to leave out; no space is wasted, and yet, there is never excess—a testament to their skill and vision. This intimate viewing experience fostered by each object reveals that each work is indeed a “Small Wonder.”



Caryn Azoff explores the intricacies of pure geometric abstraction. She creates vibrantly-hued 6-inch square compositions in mixed media that lay atop her hand-drawn grids. Azoff is based in New Haven, Connecticut. This is the artist’s third time exhibiting with SEFA.

Jim Denney was born in Oregon and is currently based in Hudson, New York. SEFA Hudson presented a solo exhibition of his recent paintings entitled *Bearing Witness* in Fall 2021. Denney’s primary source of inspiration is the natural landscape of the Pacific Northwest—the lush foliage that dominates its sprawling forests, tempered by the wildfires that ritually engulf these vast acreages—cycles of destruction and, ultimately, regeneration and rebirth.

Amber George’s multimedia, encaustic paintings serve as a record of recent physical, mental and emotional journeys. George’s recent work explores the idea of the interior: the realm one physically

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occupies and the private, psychological space. The artist last showed with SEFA in *Inhabit* in Fall 2021 and lives and works in Southern California.

Sasha Hallock creates small-scaled drawings with watercolor, graphite and colored pencil on paper: vibrant gems, swirling with color and energy. Each piece emanates an enticing glow, inviting the viewer in to absorb the lush hues and subtle textures. By mounting the paper on panel, Hallock's work lies at the center of two-dimensional art and sculptural objects. The artist is based in Brooklyn, New York.

James Isherwood appropriates the generic, four-walled structure of the barn, using it as the architectural protagonist in his current paintings. He situates his buildings within layered, textured environments. The simple geometry of the rural structure intrigues Isherwood and allows him to reveal the ever-changing colors and angles of the architecture we reside in. Isherwood lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Barbara Marks is a multidisciplinary artist currently based near New Haven, CT. *Small Wonder* features a selection of paintings from Marks' series *Painting[s] from Recollection*. Rendered in her characteristic square shape, they comprise a visual record of places that she has visited and are titled with a number and the location. Upon closer observation—walls, angles and perspective lines—interiors and landscapes—emerge.

In **Lisa Pressman's** works on paper, materiality remains central: "a source and an influence on what happens within each work, the imagery and the composition." Crafted through Pressman's masterful handling of oil paints and pigment—her encaustic wax paintings demonstrate her continued interest in mark-making, as she layers these materials to build up surfaces. The artist currently lives and works between Andes, New York and West Orange, New Jersey.

Alicia Rothman combines silkscreen with oil paint on panel to create intricate portraits of animals, notably horses. Working in a simple, earth-toned color palette, the artist highlights patterns and backgrounds with bold blues and reds. Rothman is based in Brooklyn, New York.

Liz Rundorff Smith's practice is rooted in abstraction—prioritizing shape and color patterns. Her works evoke a sense of nostalgia and expose the sentimentality in memory. Color choice is tied to the decor and design trends of past decades that have become kitschy artifacts, while shapes imitate things that are no longer identifiable but retain familiarity. Rundorff Smith lives and works in South Carolina.