

Susan Eley
Fine Art

Black & White Show

**Karin Bruckner, Charles Buckley, Ted Dixon, Marianne van Lent,
Donna Levinstone, Maria Manhattan, Josh Meillier, Alicia Rothman**

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Susan Eley Fine Art, Hudson

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October 19—December 10, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, October 28, 5-7PM

SEFA Hudson presents a group exhibition entitled *Black & White Show* featuring eight artists—both mainstay Gallery artists and new local creators. This presentation moves us into the late autumn season. In Upstate New York, the colors of the leaves change rapidly, and then fall almost within a week. Thus, we seek to harness the beauty of the world seen through the monochrome of the bare trees that await us. The black and white palette is an invitation to this transitional period of the year.

The exhibition is on view from October 19 - December 10, 2023. The opening reception will take place on Saturday, October 28, 5-7PM with many artists present to greet viewers and speak about their work.

Black & White Show will connect figurative, landscape and abstract artworks by a number of SEFA's prized artists: from Karin Bruckner's embossed multimedia prints with swirling imagery; to Charles Buckley's striped drawings of retro characters; to Ted Dixon's richly layered acrylic studies of line, form and color highlighting their transitional natures; to Marianne van Lent's cellular constructions reflecting symbolic and ecologic complexities; to Donna Levinstone's dramatic pastels of seaside vistas, simultaneously precise and soft; to Maria Manhattan's porcelain busts of women crowned with broken plates to project their strength and perseverance; to Josh Meillier's studies of botany, geometry, and vibrating contrasting squares; to Alicia Rothman's fantastical animals, each possessing a universe of patterns within.

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In *Black & White Show*, we witness how the most “basic” tonalities can reveal the most truths. Details come alive, such as luminous clouds and stars against a night sky, or the energetic borders between irregular shapes. Many of these artists also work in color, yet here we are zooming in on their monochrome mysteries. In *Black & White Show*, the featured artists perceive their surroundings and experiences via a pared-down palette. Perhaps this more minimal aesthetic, or technique, allows viewers to contemplate more deeply too.

Press Release Text by Liz Lorenz



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KARIN BRUCKNER

Artist Biography:

Karin Bruckner was born in Zurich, Switzerland and currently lives and works in New York, NY. Bruckner studied architecture at the Technical University in Munich, Germany and ETH in Zurich, Switzerland. She received her Masters Degree in Architecture from TU Munich in 1986 and a Masters Degree in Science from Columbia University in 1990. Bruckner came to printmaking through architecture after working in the offices of Richard Meier & Partners and Philip Johnson Architects. Due to a structure not unlike architecture's layers in space—printmaking offered a unique way of reconnecting Bruckner to her life-long passion of creating art. Her work has been exhibited in galleries around the United States, including Carter Burden Gallery (New York, NY); FibreArtsGallery (Palo Alto, CA); House of Yes (New York, NY); Good Question Gallery (New York, NY); The Brooklyn Collective (New York, NY); and Exhale Gallery (Carson, CA). Her work has sold worldwide and is held in private collections in Europe, South America, Australia and the United States. Bruckner is represented by Susan Eley Fine Art (New York, NY and Hudson, NY) and has shown at both of the Gallery's locations.

Artist Statement:

Printmaking became a focus in my work in 2006. I found the medium a congenial way of creating art given my professional background in architecture. Its unique combination of creative flow and process requires a structured, sequenced way of thinking in layers, shapes and colors not unlike architectural plans. Printmaking has allowed me to gradually make my way from the strictures of architecture to a looser form of creative expression, while engaging all of my artistic and design skills. Over the years, constant experimentation has propelled my unique monotypes from a graphic into a more painterly direction, thoroughly embedded and complexly layered visual landscapes of considerable depth. My work is process driven, responding to the materials and techniques at hand, resulting in a widely varied yet distinctive portfolio.

This led me to a consummate Work on Paper practice that encompasses repurposing and engages paper spatially—from small intimate works to larger scale explorations. At the core of the dialogue between the artist and the work is an attempt to push media to their limits, straddling the lines between printmaking, drawing, painting, collage, installation and sculpture in an authentically mixed media way. Printmaking carries with it the element of surprise and the inevitability of the “happy accident” which I credit for immensely expanding my artistic sensibilities. The work evolves and resides in the space created by Pull and Push.

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CHARLES BUCKLEY

Artist Biography:

Charles Buckley is an American artist who currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Buckley received a BFA in painting from the California College Of Arts in Oakland, California in 1994 and an MFA from Hunter College in New York in 2000. To the artist, the practice of drawing and painting is a means of engaging with the world and investigating preconceived notions. His notable "Progression" paintings are rendered on multiple canvases and are an investigation of the construction of narrative and progress. Often, Buckley's oeuvre deals with the concept of "leakage," which he describes as "the area where things cannot be explained rationally, yet fit within the logic of the painting and seem to be known." His works have been acquired by national and international private collections. The artist has exhibited at venues including Madarts (Brooklyn, NY); Giacobetti Paul Gallery (Brooklyn, NY); Hunter College (New York, NY); Gallery Here (Oakland, CA); and CCA Gallery (Oakland, CA). Buckley is represented by Susan Eley Fine Art (New York, NY and Hudson, NY) and has shown at both of the Gallery's locations.

Artist Statement:

My current work, which I refer to as "The Striated Drawings", is about memory and nostalgia. They are ink drawings made up of horizontal lines (hence, striation) and negative, undrawn space. Their narrative subject matter, based on photographs (both found and my own), provides the work with an initial sense of familiarity, but upon close inspection it falls into abstraction. Though much of the pictorial information has been removed, the general sense of narrative integrity remains. The particulars are hazy and give way to the interactions of the lines. We fill in the details ourselves.

Forgetting is a necessary part of remembering and nostalgia is produced through selective memory. While the line creates the representation, it's the space in between (the absence & the forgetting) that produces the effect. And much like nostalgia, the closer we get to these drawings the less representational they become.

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TED DIXON

Artist Biography:

Born in New York City in 1953, Ted Dixon has lived in the Hudson Valley beginning in 1992. Since 2009, he has lived in Rosendale, NY, which is near Kingston. The artist attended Fordham University, the Fashion Institute of Technology, and School of Visual Arts. He worked for over 25 years as a graphic and Web designer, and in 2009 began devoting himself full time to his artistic practice.

Ted Dixon's exhibitions have included Montgomery Row Art Space (Rhinebeck, NY); Woodstock Artists Association & Museum (Woodstock, NY); ADS Gallery (Newburgh, NY); Arts Society of Kingston (Kingston, NY); Gallery at the Rosendale Theatre (Rosendale, NY); Albany Center Gallery (Albany, NY); and Susan Eley Fine Arts (Hudson, NY).

Artist Statement:

When working in the studio, I try to capture a moment in time that has a certain feeling and meaning. I have a particular interest in what enables and stimulates artistic expression.

How do we learn to see what we cannot yet see? What are the things that influence our ability to perceive? I describe my paintings as abstract compositions influenced by personal experiences and efforts to capture moments in time.

As the second child of seven, my idea of less being less and more being more has always been relative. My work reflects the investment in the belief that less is more. And in today's world of visual and verbal overload, I attempt to send the viewer on a journey of discovery and clarity across the painted surface.

I hope the viewer experiences "abstract" sensations—finding quiet, serenity, restlessness, or tension. My goal is to create paintings that speak to a point in time that someone will embrace, be moved by... and cannot live without.

MARIANNE VAN LENT

Artist Biography:

Since 1978 Marianne Van Lent has been an artist painting and living in New York City and Athens, NY. She lives and works between the two—city and Upstate. Van Lent received a BFA from Temple University and an MFA from Cornell University. She has exhibited at local and international venues. *Black & White Show* marks her first exhibition with Susan Eley Fine Art.

Artist Statement:

My series “Biological Anthropology” concerns the evolution of man and his biological and behavioral aspects. The social implications of biological science and technology are central to the vision of my painting. Within this oeuvre the paintings incorporate ancient archeological symbols: images from art history and the collective unconscious, acting as a reminder of material culture, mysticism and a connection with our roots.

“Modern Art is not dislocated but something with roots, tradition, and continuity (Cy Twombly).”

My work embraces the aesthetic of fragments and ruins. Traveling in the physical as well as the metaphysical worlds, telluric currents of ancestry populate the terrain in forms of Icons from lost civilizations layered with cell and synapse forms, suggesting the body ecology.

Multi-faceted images—skewed landscapes, decomposing grids, disturbed networks, ancient symbols, texts and cell structure forms—collide and float and come at you from all directions. Suggesting a chaotic shifting of the earth’s and the bodies’ ecology, both positive and negative—organic forms are employed, representing a disparity in our ecology and in our psyche.

Johannes Itten’s “Law of Contrast” is in play visually and philosophically. “The eternal riddle encompasses points in time; it considers decay and rejuvenation. Its innermost secret is revealed in the “other” the spirit world; the ancestral footstep walking behind us.”

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DONNA LEVINSTONE

Artist Biography:

Donna Levinstone lives and works in New York City. Her pastel landscapes invite the viewer to reflect on the duality of permanence and transience. She often structures her images around dichotomies of tranquility and volatility, solidity and etherealness and light and dark. Using handmade pastels, she renders landscapes with near-photographic realism and an impressionistic softening of detail. Levinstone is especially interested in depicting the sky. The tragic beauty of the smoke and dust clouds in the midst of 9/11 took on spiritual overtones for Levinstone. She focused on that aspect in the series of pastels she created in late 2001 and 2002.

Artist Statement:

My pastel landscapes, drawn both in color and black and white, capture a moment in time. They present the beauty as well as the powerful forces of nature. My work expresses the qualities of light, mood and atmosphere more than it depicts any specific location.

This aspect allows the viewer to interpret and reflect on their own emotions. I hope my drawings will elicit memories of a place once visited or a place one yearns to experience.

My recent triptychs and grid series explore the relationship between imagery. Through this process, be it conscious or unconscious, a story unfolds.

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MARIA MANHATTAN

Artist Biography:

Maria Manhattan's ceramic life began in San Francisco in the 1970s, working in small private studios where she learned hand-building, eventually setting up her own studio, and receiving a grant from the California Arts Council. Returning to NYC in the early 1980s led her in other directions. Manhattan created *The Box Lunch*—a large multi media exhibition with feminist overtones. In 1982, she unwittingly became a computer graphics pioneer. *Nancy Reagan Takes the Subway*, produced under a National Endowment for the Arts grant at NYU, received recognition as the first interactive comic strip leading to a twenty-five year career in computers, contributing to early Internet experiments.

Moving to Hudson, NY in 2009 made it possible to return to ceramics. Having previously worked in *trompe l'oeil*, she changed course and began riffing on the vase form, with hand-built, slab constructed porcelain. Following the movement of the clay resulted in a series of sculptural vases that convey the idea of spontaneous motion. These graceful and serene vessels unfurl with a sense of inevitability. In some, surface designs reflect the Nerikomi technique for coloring clay, incorporating chance and randomness into the work with less predictable and more abstract results.

Manhattan's work has been exhibited at Hallam Antiques Gallery (Hudson, NY). Earlier exhibition venues included McDaris Fine Art, The New York Historical Society, The Bronx Museum of the Arts and Parsons Gallery. *Black & White Show* is her first exhibition with Susan Eley Fine Art. Her teaching life included 15 years at the School of Visual Arts in NYC. She is a ukulele aficionado and her radio show, The Hudson Café, can be heard on WGXC 90.7.

Artist Statement:

I hope my work transmits a sense of serenity and inevitability. My current focus, the porcelain busts, evolved from a desire to move from the vessel to a fully sculptural form. These "Constellations" have a kind of global connection and honor women in their strength, evoking feminist themes which I've addressed previously in other media.

Renaissance busts in museums including the Frick, the Morgan Library and the Cloisters provided inspiration. Unlike those however, this series portrays a diverse range of subjects and incorporates broken china plates embedded to form crowns or head dresses.

The plates are largely from my personal collection. I've saved every plate I've ever broken.

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JOSH MEILLIER

Artist Biography:

Josh Meillier was born in 1990 in Northfield Minnesota and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Meillier completed his BFA in drawing and painting at Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 2013 and received his MFA in painting at Pratt Institute in 2020. He has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in New York, Minnesota, Washington, Connecticut, Maryland, Missouri, and South Carolina. Some of his most recent shows have been *NO LONGER A GAME* at SEASON (Seattle, WA); *Emergent Poise: Persona* at On Canal (New York, NY); *Contempo Tempo* at NE Sculpture (Minneapolis, MN); *inheritance* at Super Dutchess Gallery (New York, NY); *Lately* at CIRCA Gallery (Minneapolis, MN); and *i dont understand this world* at Space369 (Saint Paul, MN). His work has been featured at Susan Eley Fine Art in both New York City and Hudson, NY. Meillier's debut with SEFA was inclusion in a juried exhibition of recent graduates.

Artist Statement:

My generation is the last to remember a time before the internet. The internet is understood as a progressive resource for information and education; it has created the 'Information Age'. We often forget that it is also a space of intentional misinformation. To this end the internet has a complicated and fraught relationship with art making and viewing. I am fascinated by representations of a lack of information or data, or redactions on documents, lost and missing signals. What does it mean when the tools that are meant to make us aware, conscious, educated, informed – are intentionally broken.

In my paintings and sculptures there is a sort of sleight of hand, that is meant to trick the browsing viewer into inspecting. Tape may or may not be real functional tape. Surfaces contrast between shiny and matte to play with a camera as it documents. Images of plants, TV static, and tools are stacked and layered using transfers, collage and paint. Found and ready-made objects are sometimes cast or fabricated. I use these techniques to call attention to something being fake, or real. Without making a claim at either.

While growing up I worked with my family building the homes we lived in, which would then be sold and another built. My paintings and sculptures begin with a similar building process, relying on every day and construction products. This history in construction informs my relationship with the environments that I am exposed to in NYC. My work is informed by an interest in material,

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process and physicality. Using these raw processes and materials I reflect on and question the architecture we live and work in.

In my "Still Life" series, I explore caring for plants in a general sense but painting in the strictest sense. In a poetic way maintaining plants parallels the act of painting: pruning is to cropping as watering is to pigment saturation as soil condition is to surface quality. Over years of keeping plants I have aligned it to painting through attention to time, research, shaping and growing. My work is informed by an interest in material, process, physicality and my surroundings. Using process and material I reflect on and question the world we live and work in. For me, painting has many ways to access the process and material, but at the end of the day all it needs is itself.

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ALICIA ROTHMAN

Artist Biography:

Alicia Rothman received her MFA in printmaking and drawing from Indiana University, Bloomington. She has a BA from Hunter College, NYC and Binghamton University and graduated from Music & Art H.S. in NYC. She has taught drawing at NYU SCPS, Hunter College, and conducted drawing workshops at the Art Students League in NYC in Dec. 2007, 2011, 2013, National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. NYC 2008. Rothman was an associate instructor at Indiana University and received a Ford Foundation Grant there.

She exhibited her work in numerous group and solo shows for many years including Dillon Gallery (New York, NY); Lanoue Fine Art (Boston, MA); Laurel Tracey Gallery (Red Bank, NJ); Thomas Deans (Atlanta, GA); Pepper Gallery (London, UK); and Nadia Waterfield Fine Art (Andover, UK). Her work was accepted in the Royal Academy in London Exhibitions, Summers 2012 and 2015, National Academy Faculty exhibits, Painting Center in Chelsea, NYC in 2016, Butler Institute of Art, Governors Island Art Fair 2009 in NYC. Her work was reviewed in "Artists to Watch in Art in America" during the Fair.

Rothman was commissioned to design the Hampton Classic Poster in 2003, HITS Horse Shows cover in 2010 and White House Easter Display for New York in 2002. Her work is in the collections of Muscarelle Museum of Art, The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, The White House, Prudential Bache Securities, Inc., Binghamton University Art Museum and many private individuals.

The artist is represented by Susan Eley Fine Art and has been featured at both their NYC and Upstate, NY locations.

Artist Statement:

Alicia Rothman's unique style of painting and drawing has developed a full vocabulary of mark-making using original printmaking techniques, silkscreen, hand-cut stencils, resists, relief, and intaglio, combined with painting in oil on panel. She uses her own handmade templates, digital pattern-making, and resist techniques to create patterns that enliven her work.

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I try to use simple dots and x's to keep the image simple. To limit the palette to black and white is another method of simplifying imagery. But when I work in black and white it often has to be reworked over and over again.

What remains can be the most interesting part. This reminds me of something Samuel Beckett said. "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better."

Influences range from ancient wall paintings, Byzantine mosaics, medieval, and renaissance art Fra Filippo Lippi, Breughel and Islamic art. Other influences include twentieth-century textile design including Anni Albers, the collages of Anne Ryan and woodcuts of Helen Frankenthaler. I would like to make a landscape that is both abstract and at the same time is a representation of the atmosphere we live in. I am interested in the process of how prints and paintings are made.

Recent works are about climate change and its effects on various urban and rural areas and animal habitats. These climate events show the inevitability of places that become uninhabitable. They are also about isolation during the pandemic. Right now, fires, hurricanes, floods and excessive heat are devastating many places.

The below quote relates to art as well because every mark you make matters so it has to be well made. Samuel Beckett said "every word is like an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness."