

shape_shifting_support_systems

A GROUP EXHIBITION CO-ORGANIZED BY
LEAH TRIPLETT HARRINGTON AND MALLORY RUYMANN



Exhibition Dates: July 14 - August 24, 2022
Public Reception: Thursday July 14, 6 to 8 pm

(May 24, 2022 -- Brookline, MA) Praise Shadows is pleased to present *shape_shifting_support_systems*, a group exhibition featuring seven contemporary artists working at the nexus of weaving, painting, and performance. Co-organized by guest curators Leah Triplett Harrington and Mallory Ruymann, it highlights the ways in which contemporary and historical craft practices offer novel ways of merging material and political expressions. For the artists presented, the support system – a grid, a warp, stretcher bars – is a formal and conceptual material to exploit, imbuing ways of being into the space where weaving and painting meet. Their work is an alive entity, taking, making, and offering space for others to explore selfhood and identity formation.

After two years of adapting to virtual conditions due to the global pandemic, the artists in *shape_shifting_support_systems* extend tactile screen-based experiences through which to create community, or support systems. **Bhen Alan** (Providence, RI) is inspired by a traditional Filipino technique commonly found in woven *banig* mats and baskets, accentuating its conventional properties in grid-based blends of painting, sculpture, and weaving. **Emily Auchincloss** (Boston, MA) similarly exploits the grid; a painter who recently turned to weaving, her intimately-sized compositions play with seductive combinations of color, shape, and texture. **Jeffrey Nowlin** (Boston, MA) fuses found materials and

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various craft techniques through shifting shapes that deconstruct perceptions of everyday experiences. Similarly, **Loretta Park** (Boston, MA) amalgamates painting, sculptural, and craft methods into technicolor assemblages that yield to, and resist, gravity. **Denise Treizman** (Miami, FL) assembles everyday materials into unexpected juxtapositions through nuanced weaving patterns. **Courtney Stock** (Boston, MA) hews most closely to traditional weaving and painting, but instead of threads, uses painted paper to construct three-dimensional paintings manipulating space. **Natiana Alexandra Fonseca** (Providence, RI) uses natural materials, such as cotton and wool, to investigate the memory potential of craft-generated objects.

Together, these seven artists reject art historical understandings of the grid, instead, embracing approaches that center on personal and communal experiences. *shape_shifting_support_systems* presents these artists together for the first time.

Additional programming to support the exhibition include podcast interviews and public programs. More information to come.

Curatorial Statement

Over and under. Back and forth. Turning and pivoting. The hand weaves across, stopping at the edge, considering and executing its next move. The practice of craft and its adjacents exists at these edges, where material bends and furls, expanding and stretching.

Art hangs off of skeletons – paintings, the stretcher; sculpture, a finely balanced mix of points resisting and interacting with gravity. Weaving, however; weaving hangs off of itself and becomes its own material origin point. It is its own support system.

Sometimes the transformative possibilities of material and method generate political resistance. Sometimes this resistance is aesthetic. Whatever the generated space, it pushes against and pulls apart dogmatic thinking, offering new orientation points, manifesting its support as it discovers its form. Stretcher bars, pins, frames: these are all launch points for metamorphosis.

The artists presented here blend painterly and weaving practices, but more importantly, each exploits the sculptural and conceptual potential of the support. Their work is an alive entity, inviting us all to take up space by finding our own shape.

– Leah Triplett Harrington & Mallory Ruymann, Co-Curators

Mallory Ruymann is a curator working with emerging artists in all media. She is the Managing Partner of *art_works*, an art advisory partnering with individuals and companies to build significant collections of contemporary art through a mission-driven lens. Her writing can be found in academic journals and local publications, including *Big, Red & Shiny*, *The Rib*, and *Boston Art Review*.

Leah Triplett Harrington is a curator, writer, and editor. As curator for *Now + There*, she facilitates the Public Art Accelerator and organizes large-scale public art commissions. She is also editor-at-large for *Boston Art Review*. Her writing has most recently appeared in that publication as well as *Sculpture*, *Public Art Dialogue*, *Flash Art*, *Hyperallergic*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, and others. As an independent curator, she has organized projects for Boston University Art Galleries, Trestle Gallery, Herter Gallery, and others. In 2021, she was the inaugural curatorial mentor for Praise Shadows Art Gallery and taught in the MFA program in Painting at Boston University.

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About Praise Shadows LLC

We believe that the art ecosystem is filled with untapped potential, and our work is rooted in partnering closely with artists to develop opportunities in emerging models of creativity and entrepreneurship — exhibitions, commissions, brand partnerships, new technologies, original concepts that no one has ever tried before. Praise Shadows Art Gallery is a commercial gallery space in the Boston area showing the work of emerging and mid-career artists. It opened in December 2020. Praise Shadows Art Partners advises artists and companies in the creative industries on strategic partnerships and marketing. Our work is local, global, and virtual. www.praiseshadows.com

313A Harvard Street, Brookline, MA 02446

Wednesday - Sunday 11am - 6pm

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Image credits: (Left) Bhen Alan, *Mermaid's Tail*, 2022, Rattan, fabric, abaca, and industrial plastic fence on stretcher bar. 72 x 51 inches. Photo courtesy of the artist. (Right) Emily Auchincloss, *Stand Up Child*, 2022. Gouache on matte board, linen, cotton. 17.5 x 9.5 inches. Photo courtesy of the artist.

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