

## ***Trompe L'oeil Provocations***

**Lenka Clayton, Josephine Halvorson, Daniela Rivera**



**July 10 to August 8, 2025**

**Opening Reception: July 10, 2025 from 5 to 7 pm**

(Brookline, MA – June 25, 2025) This summer, Praise Shadows brings together artworks by Lenka Clayton, Josephine Halvorson, and Daniela Rivera in a playful interpretation of *trompe l'oeil*, a practice in which the depiction of the object, or objects, tricks the audience into perceiving the created space as part of our realm. Translated from the French as “deceives the eye,” the selected artworks range from Clayton’s drawings made with an old typewriter, to Halvorson’s acrylic gouache on panel paintings of Massachusetts road signs, to Rivera’s meticulously rendered oil-on-canvas depiction of the iconic rug from Holbein’s 1533 painting *The Ambassadors*.

Lenka Clayton’s *Typewriter Drawings* is an ongoing series (2012 to present) that the Pittsburgh-based, British conceptual artist makes using only punctuation and letter keys on a standard mechanical typewriter, a 1957 portable Smith-Corona Skyriter, on antique, letter-size typewriter paper. A statement about a *Typewriter Drawing* in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art refers to Clayton’s work as engaging “with everyday situations, extending the familiar into the realms of the poetic and the absurd.” Four *Typewriter Drawings* will be on view in *Trompe L'oeil Provocations*, including a recent diptych, *Face Towel 03/26/2025 and Hand Towel 03/27/2025* (2025), a humorous juxtaposition of everyday objects rendered in great detail, particularly as they hang side-by-side, as they might on a bathroom towel rod.

Massachusetts-based artist Josephine Halvorson makes paintings from observation of objects and surfaces that she encounters by chance or on the periphery of her daily life. In this exhibition, the two works on view were made on-site over several weeks, allowing for longform and embodied attention. Halvorson sets up her easel and materials within close proximity, and

renders physical form as it changes in daylight, season, and meaning. The two paintings in the exhibition – one made on Cape Cod, the other near her home in the Berkshires – represent signs, a recurrent motif within her wider interest in still life, and memento mori. The most recent, *Slow Sign* (2025), nearly forces the viewer to stop in their tracks. A familiar “Slow Children” street sign leans askew in a patch of the woods, seemingly knocked over by people or cars that were perhaps not slow at all. Halvorson captures moments like these as portraits of time, where the presence of others is palpable but not visible. In these two works, the artist contends with warnings in plain sight, where signs direct us to places and issues beyond themselves.

Chilean-born, Boston-based interdisciplinary artist Daniela Rivera’s *Small Holbein Pattern Design (Oriental Rug or 552,000 Painted Knots)* (2006) is an oil painting on unstretched canvas depicting the full glory of the draped rug from Hans Holbein the Younger’s *Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve ('The Ambassadors')* (1533), one of the most iconic pictures from European art history, currently in the National Gallery in London collection. Rivera did not have access to the Holbein Small Pattern Design rug while creating her work, and instead referred to written text about the rug, and depended on her own first-hand research of oriental rugs to understand the knotting of the rugs from the region. According to the artist, “More than a hyper realistic painting, I attempted to replicate the rug’s physical presence and materiality. At the same time, I sought to bring the ornamental otherness of the rug into the foreground as the new subject of study of the work. I showed the Holbein rug as an object in space, freed from its stretchers. I presented it as my own cultural product with the intention of claiming my own part in the history of western painting.”

### **About the artists**

**Lenka Clayton** is an interdisciplinary artist whose work considers, exaggerates, and alters the accepted rules of everyday life, extending the familiar into the realms of the poetic and absurd. Clayton is the founder of An Artist Residency in Motherhood, a self-directed, open-source artist residency program that takes place inside the homes and lives of artists who are also parents. Clayton’s work has been supported by The Warhol Foundation and The National Endowment for the Arts. Her work is held in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, SFMOMA, Mount Holyoke College Art Museum and the Carnegie Museum of Art, among others. Clayton is represented by Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco.

**Josephine Halvorson** (she/her) makes paintings from observation, foregrounding the firsthand experience of noticing, describing, and learning from the physical world. She studied at The Cooper Union and Columbia University, and is a recipient of a Fulbright fellowship to Austria, the Rome Prize at the French Academy at the Villa Medici, and the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. Her work is represented by Sikkema Jenkins & Co., NY, and Peter Freeman, Paris, and she has exhibited internationally across institutions such as Storm King Art Center, the

Georgia O’Keeffe Museum, and the ICA Boston. Halvorson is Professor of Art and Chair of Graduate Studies in Painting at Boston University.

Born in Santiago, Chile, **Daniela Rivera** received her BFA from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in 1996 and her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts, Boston in 2006. She is currently Professor of Studio Art at Wellesley College. She has exhibited widely in Latin America as well as in the United States and awarded residencies at Surf Point, Proyecto ACE, Headlands Center for the Arts, and the Skowhegan School of Paintings and Sculpture. She has received many notable fellowships and grants, most recently, the Wagner Arts Fellowship.

### **About Praise Shadows Art Gallery**

Praise Shadows Art Gallery is a contemporary art program based in the Boston area with a focus on exceptional artists working in all artistic disciplines. Our worldview is informed by the notion that the artworld's untapped and unrecognized potential is worth cultivating, supporting, and championing. Since our founding in December 2020, the gallery has placed artworks by our artists in esteemed public collections, and our exhibitions have been covered widely in major international media outlets. Our work is grounded by partnering closely with artists to develop opportunities in traditional and emerging models of creativity and entrepreneurship—exhibitions, commissions, brand partnerships, new technologies, and original concepts that no one has ever tried before. [www.praiseshadows.com](http://www.praiseshadows.com)

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