

Studio Montclair's annual *ViewPoints* exhibition once again offers a vibrant window into the breadth of talent emerging from New Jersey and beyond. This year, we're invited into the studios of artists working across a wide array of mediums—from oil painting and photography to computer-generated video and mixed-media assemblage. With many exceptional submissions, the selection process was highly competitive, making for some very difficult decisions. Congratulations to the award recipients, participating artists, and the many contributors who brought this remarkable event to life. It's been an honor to spend time with your work.

The exhibition reflects an expansive range of subjects and approaches. Joan Diamond's found-object collage paintings tackle sustainability through a political lens, while Meta Arnold's meticulously crafted tabletop miniatures celebrate Italian heritage and quiet resilience. Paulina Olivares and Rhiannon Janeschild take a more figurative route, exploring psychological states through nuanced depictions of the body. Photographers Mary Shadbolt, Michael Fleischhacker, Jo Ann Chaus, and John Masi collapse the boundaries between the everyday and the surreal—whether capturing the fleeting imprint of a wet footprint on velvet or the fractured shadow of a cat in late afternoon light.

Themes of family and community resonate throughout, offering personal yet deeply relatable narratives. Maria Valdivia's tender portrait of a fruit ice vendor and Lindy Blanchard's *Gym Friends* emphasize the individuality of their subjects while celebrating the warmth of human connection. Eric Rhinehart's vibrant silhouettes of men playing dominoes and Jonathan Ricci's collage of his grandparents by the sea turn memory into vivid visual testimony. Ann Antoshak's nostalgic oil painting and Ruth Geneslaw's carved basswood reliefs reinterpret family snapshots as lasting records of time, ritual, and tradition. Together, these works honor the relationships that shape us and the communities that give art its meaning.

Other artists turn their attention to the beauty embedded in everyday life. Yolanda Fundora and Susan Adler transform ordinary objects—glass bottles, sprigs of crepe myrtle—into entry points for formal experimentation. Similarly, Janice Belove's and Joseph Lozano's paintings, alongside Miriam Untoria's mixed-media shadow box, portray the artist's studio not only as a space of making, but as a source of visual intrigue and quiet inspiration. John Gummere's moody, lamp-lit bedroom, Merrie Koehlert's image of two girls walking at dusk, and Adam Gustavson's tessellating underwater swimmers elevate fleeting moments into quiet meditations, inviting us to see the familiar with fresh eyes.

Collage and assemblage also appear throughout the exhibition, as artists push beyond traditional methods to give form to complex ideas. Odessa Whitlock weaves fabric and braiding

hair—materials rich with cultural resonance—into a tender pastoral scene. Karen Engelmeyer’s fusion of acrylic and mixed media conjures an otherworldly sprite, while Judy Levy pairs watercolor with sewn fabric to set a basket of flowers in a dreamlike urban landscape. Beth Heit’s *United We Stand – Pear Apartment* humorously assembles clay pears and found-objects into a grid that recalls both a bustling apartment and a curio cabinet. In each case, material and meaning are inseparable—what’s assembled tells its own story.

Finally, abstraction offers a powerful lens for reimagining place, memory, and form. Oliver Lake and Nadia Estela incorporate fabric into their vibrant, playful compositions, while Daniel Stern’s *DIGS #5* evokes the process of excavation through textured, archaeological mark-making. Rick Freeman’s *Spectral* transforms the fleeting burst of fireworks into flowing ribbons of color and light. Andrea Placer’s *Canyon Wall Abstractions*, Mirjam Seeger’s *Laguna Roja*, and Maureen Fisher’s *Untitled, Africa (1)* root abstraction in landscape, reimagining topography through rhythm and hue. Erica Engfer Pizza’s floating monoprint mobile and Ida Pruitt’s digital drawing *Splish* imagine fantastical speculative terrains. Their use of abstraction invites deeper engagement with perception, opening up new ways of seeing and comprehending the world.

Through this wide-ranging collection of approaches, *ViewPoints* celebrates the capacity of art to capture, transform, and reimagine the world around us—one vision at a time. The exhibition is a testament to the richness of conversation among the works on view, where a single gesture, material, or image can spark deeper meaning. Whether rooted in memory, history, or observation, these artworks remind us that art is not only a reflection of the world but a way of reinterpreting it and ourselves.