

Jan 29, 2021, 09:00am EST

Challenge Your Notions Of Photography And Landscape With Two Exhibitions Exploring Decades Of Processes And Ideology



Natasha Gural Contributor ⓘ ⊕

Arts



Tory Fair 'Tory Fair: Portable Window' installation view (2021) JOEL TSUI, COURTESY THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

Nestle your phone into a rectangular window in a wooden wheel that functions as a rollable viewfinder and let it capture the slow pace of pandemic life on Congress Street in downtown Portland, Maine. The topsy-turvy images are meant to be disorienting, like everyday life during quarantine and social upheaval that's sparked mass frustration and anxiety.

Every user experience is different, and artist Tory Fair shares stills from a variety of her own revolutions of *Portable Window* landscapes, on view through February 28 at the Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art. Some of her snapshots depict a Superfund site from various perspectives, challenging the viewer to look beyond images in the shape of a digital screen and confront the urgent need for a long-term response to clean up hazardous material contaminations. Fair's playful spirit isn't lost in the project, with stills including shots of the Cartoon Network fantasy animated series *Adventure Time*. Create your own [video](#) and share it with the hashtag [#portablewindows](#).

"Normally framing an image is done to stabilize, but her process is to destabilize," said ICA Director of Exhibitions Julie Poitras Santos.

The Boston area artist devised the idea for *Portable Window* in a cross-generational feminist dialogue with a 1968 sculpture of the same name by New York-based artist Mary Miss, who since the early 1970s has been redefining how art is integrated into the public realm. [Register](#) to engage with both artists on February 18 during free Zoom discussion about art and the environment.



Tory Fair 'Tory Fair: Portable Window' installation view with video stills and Table top Portable ... [+]

JOEL TSUI, COURTESY THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

An exploration of video, photography, and sculpture that invites collaboration and scrutiny of landscape, *Tory Fair: Portable Window* is organized by Poitras Santos with Assistant Director Nikki Rayburn. The 86-inch-by-28-inch plywood tabletop *Portable Window* with track for use by visitors was constructed in collaboration with Lee Zamir, a furniture designer based in Owls Head, Maine.

MORE FOR YOU

Recently Rediscovered Mary Cassatt Painting Highlights Spain's Erudite Influence On American Art In Groundbreaking Exhibition

American Folk Art Museum Celebrates Sixty Years Of Promoting Self-Taught And Underrepresented Artists

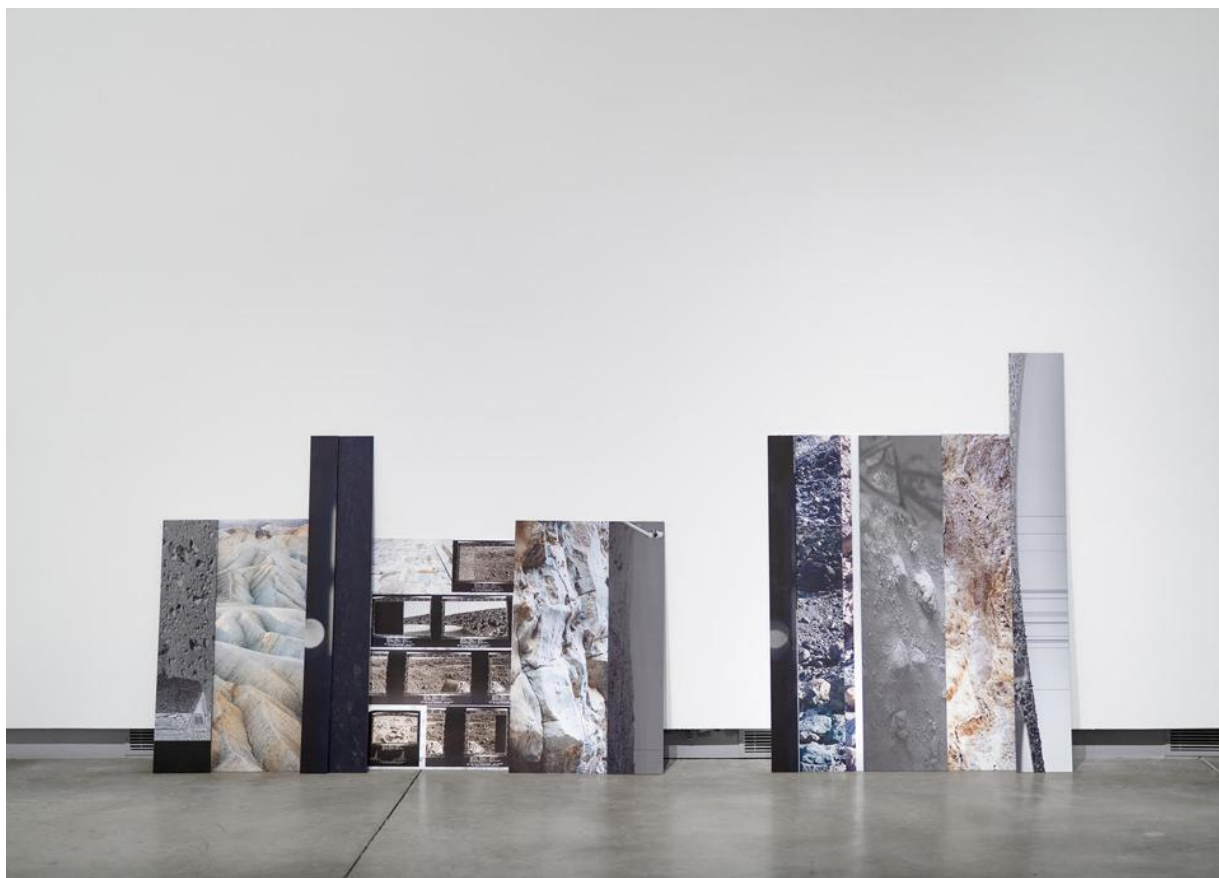
Uncovering Hope And Transformation In The 2020 Art World

“It makes you ask ‘what is your experience and relationship to art history?’ and how to take it further in different directions,” said Poitras Santos.

The exhibition runs concurrently with *Parallax/Geography*, featuring work by Elizabeth Atterbury, Tad Beck, Sage Lewis, and Amanda Marchand.

“The notion is seeing differently from two eyes and creating our sense of depth and distance, and how we approach things,” said Poitras Santos, explaining why some pieces rest on the ground to emphasize the landscape theme. “All the artists use experimental or conceptual forms.”

Lewis' *Grounded lightbox No. 1* features inkjet prints mounted on acrylic and installed vertically, depicting a vast array of landscapes — ranging from the Mojave Desert, an arid rain-shadow desert and the driest desert in North America, to Chryse Planitia, a smooth circular plain in the northern equatorial region of Mars — guiding the eye to investigate and question the horizon and the concept of landscape.



Sage Lewis 'Grounded lightbox No. 1 (Mojave Desert, Amargosa Range, Agra, Grapevine Mountains, and ... [+]' JOEL TSUI, COURTESY THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

Reset your focus to gaze deeply at Beck's *Lovell 08.28.18*, a 24-square-inch archival inkjet print from the series *Blanks*. Beck photographs white gloss

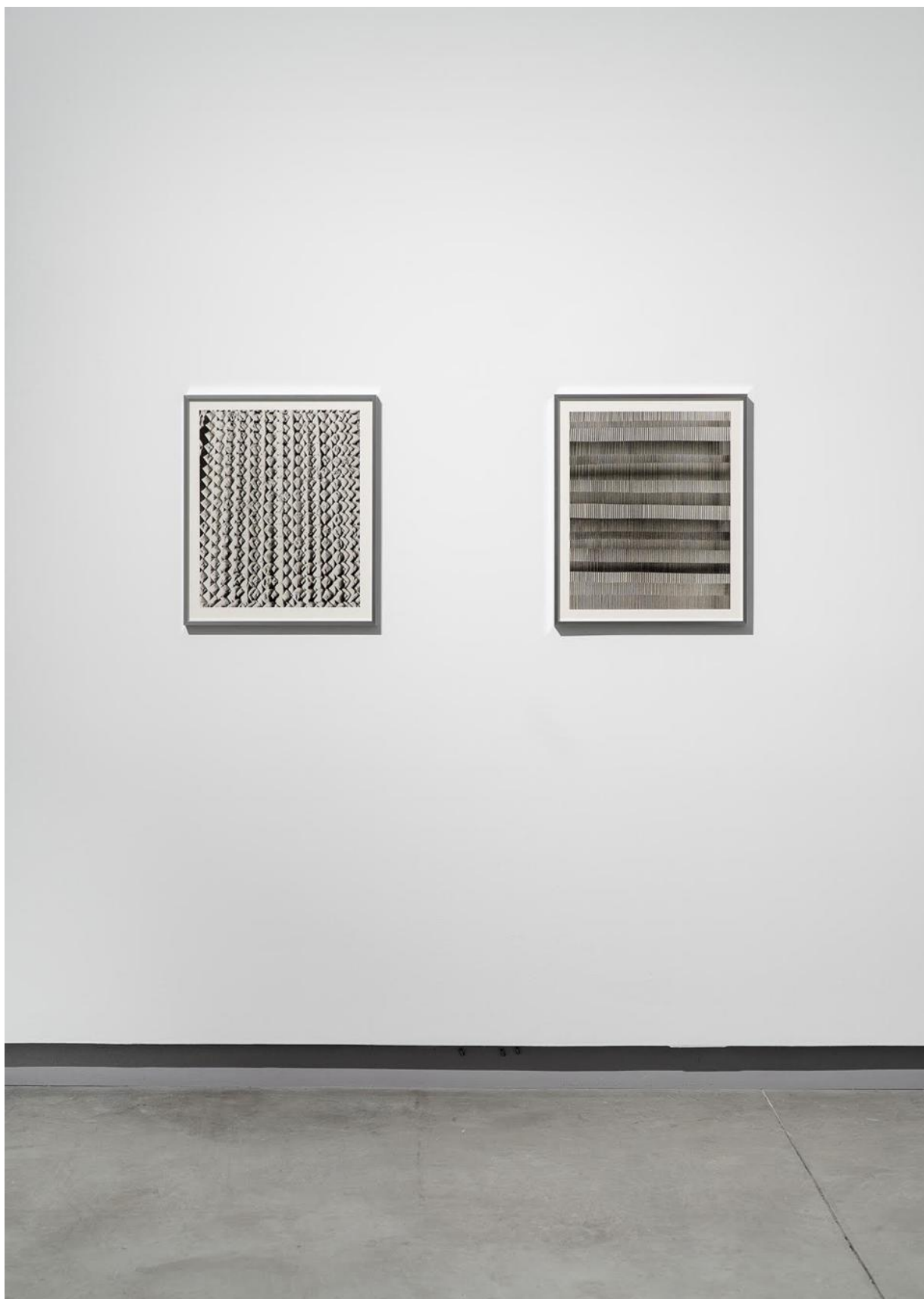
photographic paper, manipulating shadow and window light from his studio reflected on the print, surveying the evolution of photographic processes and how we view photographs. Inspired by Cy Twombly and sound artist Alvin Lucier, Beck is preoccupied with the mediums he chooses. *Blanks* is reminiscent of, if not a homage to, Robert Rauschenberg's 1951 series of stretched white canvases that coyly hint at minimal brush or roller marks.



Tad Beck 'Lovell 08.28.18' (2018) from the series 'Blanks' archival inkjet print, 24 x 24 inches IMAGE
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND GRANT WALQUIST GALLERY

Challenge the eye further with Atterbury's photographic work, exemplifying her enchantment with abstract painting and sculpture. Her silver gelatin prints demand close examination, as she rearranges repeated forms to

mimic how the composition would be seen through a camera. The two-dimensional works test the viewer's perception and spatial awareness.



Elizabeth Atterbury 'Beach Works (Marks of a Tool II)' (2016) silver gelatin print, 20 x 24 inches, ... [+]

JOEL TSUI, COURTESY THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

Continue questioning what defines photography through Marchand's lumen printing process, which marries legacy analog and state-of-the-art digital processes to blur the boundaries of the medium and test our understanding of landscape and time.

"Lumen printing is one of the earliest photographic processes, and Marchand is using the newest scanners to fix them into a digital image to hold it in time chronologically," said Poitras Santos.



Installation view in the main gallery featuring works by Amanda Marchand (2021) JOEL TSUI, COURTESY THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT MAINE COLLEGE OF ART

Climb the Career Ladder with Forbes

Land the job, get a raise and learn to lead with advice from Careers Staff Writer Kristin Stoller

Sign up

You may opt out any time. [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

Check out my [website](#).



Natasha Gural

A multiple-award-winning journalist, I've held top editorial roles at The Associated Press and Dow Jones. A former student of literature, studio art and art history with...

Read More

Reprints & Permissions

ADVERTISEMENT
