

Look Up to the Sky  
Hung Liu's Legacy of  
Mentoring Women Artists







"Your red shoes are good luck"  
- Hung Liu

I believe that you were sunshine  
in human form -  
blessing us all with your light.

You are a dandelion seed  
sent forth by Hung Liu.

A visit to her studio We shared tea  
We found we share a birthday 2-17  
And that she was a Rat and I an Ox

Work Hard!

Gratitude:  
Here together  
For awhile.

"Don't make your brushstrokes  
too cocky"  
- Hung Liu

When the world feels too heavy,  
look up to the sky-  
It is so much bigger than us.

With Hung being  
So real  
I became realer



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# Look Up to the Sky Hung Liu's Legacy of Mentoring Women Artists

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

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Jeff Kelley

Rosana Castrillo Díaz

Nicole Phungrasamee Fein

Danielle Lawrence

Monica Lundy

Nancy Mintz

Sandra Ono

Mel Prest

Susan Preston

Rachelle Reichert

Yoshiko Shimano

Lien Truong

Gina Tuzzi

Bambi Waterman

Mills College Art Museum  
Northeastern University  
Oakland, California

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Front cover: Hung Liu, *White Rice Bowl*, 2014  
Mixed media, 80 in. x 80 in., Collection Mills College Art  
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Pages 1, 72: Fortune cookie messages written by the exhibiting  
artists, inspired by Hung Liu.

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Hung Liu  
*Fu (Happiness)*, 2005  
Jacquard tapestry  
79 in. x 81 in.  
Collection of Kathleen Burke  
and Ralph Davis, Tiburon

# Foreword

**AN EXCEPTIONALLY GIFTED EDUCATOR,** Hung Liu (1948–2021) was a vibrant and vital part of the artist community in the Bay Area and beyond. Just before her untimely death in 2021, Liu began conversations with Mills College Art Museum to organize an exhibition showcasing the work of an amazing group of women artists that she taught and mentored during her tenure as a professor in the Mills College Art Department. This legacy exhibition is the realization of that idea and features the work of Hung Liu, alongside Rosana Castrillo Díaz, Nicole Phungrasamee Fein, Danielle Lawrence, Monica Lundy, Nancy Mintz, Sandra Ono, Susan Preston, Mel Prest, Rachelle Reichert, Yoshiko Shimano, Gina Tuzzi, Lien Truong, and Bambi Waterman.

Liu's legendary generosity was both professional and personal, and she encouraged artists across generations to find beauty and inspiration in small moments or unexpected places. Her positive outlook on life and work was infectious, telling students, "When the world feels too heavy, just look up to the sky."

She was also a tenacious worker who devoted countless hours to painting in her studio, and she used her passion and energy to push her students to work to their fullest potential. This work ethic was born from Liu's experiences growing up in China, where she lived through Maoist China and experienced the traumatic upheaval of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Trained as a socialist realist painter and muralist in China, she came to the United States in 1984 to attend the

University of California, San Diego, where she received her MFA. One of the first people from mainland China to study abroad and pursue an art career, Liu moved to Oakland, California, in 1990, where she was a tenured professor in the art department at Mills College for over 20 years.

Recognized as one of America's most influential Chinese artists, Liu's paintings mine her personal and cultural history to create artwork that calls on the most poignant and intimate aspects of her own memory as well as how place shapes memory and identity. Through her work, Liu had the ability to reveal herself as both immigrant and emigrant, insider and outsider. She spent her career focusing on the dispossessed, foregrounding the stories of people who have been traditionally elided from historical narratives.

Her paintings and installations explore subjects ranging from still life imagery to portraiture and landscape in innovative works that reflect upon history, memory, tradition, migration, and social justice. She often incorporated unidentified figures from historic photos into her paintings with the intent of uplifting and empowering these individuals—often women and girls—by surrounding them with auspicious Chinese motifs. Using washes and drips, she visually dissolved the historical photographs that she painted from. In doing so, Liu hoped to wash her subjects of their exotic otherness and reveal dignified and even mythic figures.

Celebrated for her evocative paintings, teaching played a critical role in

Liu's practice and life. Through her guidance, students were encouraged to stretch beyond their usual modes of thinking in terms of media, concepts, and skills. Instead, students were taught to think and work both intuitively and conceptually in ways that forced them to go beyond their artistic comfort zone, leading them in new directions and possibly changing the focus of their work. Liu never imposed a strict aesthetic or narrative underpinning on her students, but rather, valued and fostered each of their authentic voices. As a result, the works included in *Look Up to the Sky* represent a wide range of materials, themes, and techniques. Throughout all the artists' practices, however, the idea of *agency* resonates strongly.

In particular, the theme of affirming women who are objectified or deemed invisible by dominant factors in our society permeates the work of several of the artists, who use materials that both frame and complicate this content with layers of texture and imprints of memory. Lien Truong's paintings present Asian female protagonists who are forceful, autonomous counterpoints to Western misogyny. She is interested in the magical, resilient nature of the Asian female body, a body that has had to endure war and trauma. Through the addition of flowing, hand-painted silk strips, Truong constructs compelling and visually arresting narratives that toggle between the past and present.

Sandra Ono's recent work references the 1979 Greensboro Massacre and Ono's namesake, activist Sandra (Sandi) Neely Smith, who, at the age of 28, was



slain by the American Nazi Party and Ku Klux Klan during a protest rally against racial injustice in Greensboro, North Carolina. Composed of compacted sand or layers of towels, Ono's pieces evoke landscapes and the depth of geologic time. Objects inserted throughout the work—ceramic pieces, a cast resin ring, or seashells—serve as forms of embedded history and memories of people and places. Fingerprint-like impressions on the surfaces of her works become a trace of both the artist's hand and those whose memory she holds.

Similarly, Monica Lundy creates mixed media paintings and drawings that commemorate places and people who have been historically marginalized: psychiatric hospital patients, prison inmates, sex workers, and other lost, forgotten souls. Lundy's series *Deviance: Women in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime* explores the incarceration of Italian women and girls who were deemed unable or unfit to participate in society as determined by the demands of the Fascist Regime of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. Using coffee, burned paper, and charcoal on handmade paper, Lundy creates visceral portraits of the dispossessed.

By embracing unconventional materials, including brown paper bags, dirt, river water, and olive oil, Susan Preston presents feminist themes, myths, and folklore. A form of visual poetry and storytelling, Preston's mysterious and idiosyncratic images are personal responses to cultural and political events. Whether referencing motherhood through the Aztec belief in a fourth heaven, where trees trickle milk for babies waiting to be reborn, or celebrating the creative vision of German choreographer Pina Bausch, her works serve as acknowledgments of the weight and significance of uniquely female experiences.

The physical deconstruction/construction of materials becomes a metaphor for reworking and rethinking cultural norms such as sexuality, gender, and class in Danielle Lawrence's works. She cuts and tears raw canvas and reconstructs it into patchwork surfaces that serve as the backdrop for other

hand-made elements. In her work, Lawrence points to the power of the art, music, and literature of our time as the connector between communities and generations that can force dialogue and open an exchange of ideas. The titles of each piece give clues to culturally significant people, places, and ideas that have influenced her practice. For example, *Sky Cathedral*, *Sally Ride*, *Metis* and *Déjà vu* refers to: American sculptor Louise Nevelson's important work of the same title; the first and youngest American woman to have traveled in space; Zeus' first wife, a god who was simultaneously a threat and an aid to him; and a Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young album title.

Gina Tuzzi's practice incorporates references inspired largely by counter-culture ideologies and a romanticized neo-bohemian aesthetic. Tuzzi appropriates symbols and icons from popular love songs, spiritual divination, pop culture, familial history, and an intimate personal narrative. Her recent work emerged from a deep desire to find sanctuary in the magical landscape of California's far northern coast. She considers the natural world to be a temple and a sacred place of worship, one where she can exist in a transcendent and sublime state of joy, free of eco grief, pandemic anxiety, and any sense of shame.

Ecological concerns inform the work of Rachele Reichert, who explores landscapes permanently altered by climate change and industrialization. Her research focuses on sites of specific extracted materials: salt, clay, lithium. Research findings are interpreted through drawings, photographs, and mixed-media artworks that focus on materials found at the sites. Reichert's series of photo-realistic drawings is inspired by three global lithium ponds impacted by technology and located in the Salar de Uyuni in Bolivia, Silver Peak in Nevada, and the Mojave Desert in California. She tracked each site with earth imaging satellites, then created drawings to make the private images publicly accessible and to highlight extractive zones that are in conflict with national parks, clean water, and indigenous traditions.

Sculptor and printmaker Nancy Mintz creates sculptures using brass and paper to examine the diversity and fragility of natural biological communities, the complex processes of growth and succession, and the interaction between the natural and built worlds. Creating a visual language from forms that exist in nature, she is interested in hybrid states that exist between the natural and synthetic, as well as between the referential and the abstract. Mintz captures the moments and energy of the transition between these states. While her structures incorporate intricate geometric patterns, the overall physicality of each piece reflects the organic imperfections found in nature.

Bambi Waterman also uses her artwork to start discussions about the natural world, specifically, conservation and the need to protect endangered species. The primary focus of her paintings and sculptural works has been the investigation of form in the natural world. Her paintings present underwater gardens, while her porcelain sculptures echo the fragility of these ecosystems and the lives that are sustained within them. Waterman aspires to lend clarity and beauty to the subtle complexities found in the process of how life forms. The work reflects her search to find something simple and beautiful in contrast to the difficulty of life.

This sense of optimism in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges is evident in Yoshiko Shimano's large-scale prints, which are inspired by a universal human determination to live with pride and hope even under difficult circumstances like wars, natural disasters, poverty, and discrimination. The works from her series *Healing Land & Healing Souls* reference the lands in Japan and Ukraine that were radiated by natural disasters or destroyed by wars. In 2011, Japan was hit by a great tsunami and earthquake that caused the Fukushima nuclear power plant to suffer a major radiation leak. In February 2022, the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in Ukraine was threatened by a Russian attack. Sunflowers were used to absorb radiation at the site of the 1986

Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Russia, and the sunflower is the national flower of Ukraine. Shimano uses sunflowers as a symbol of strength and healing.

The artists in this exhibition share a commitment to being fully immersed in their process and materials. For Nicole Phungrasamee Fein, the deceptively minimal simplicity of her works challenges the conventional use of watercolor and defies the limitations often associated with the medium. For the watercolors in *Look Up to the Sky*, she uses a meticulous hand and singular focus to build fields of complex, luminous color and create patterns using a technique she calls “speckle,” a highly controlled way of manipulating overlapping veils of color. Droplets intermingle on the paper, creating rich fields and dense composites of color. Fein’s works are typically abstract but often suggestive of landscapes or falling rain. In her most recent work, she painstakingly applies layers of primary colors to reveal a pointillist skyscape.

Like Fein, Mel Prest is a non-objective painter whose work is focused on color and perceptual visual relationships. Prest explores color phenomena observed in landscape and light, using color combinations to create optical mirages. The intersecting lines in her works are hand painted, creating a soft geometry that amplifies our perception of movement and color. Her paintings are often inspired by nature, which is always changing. *Sun Cloud* integrates silver gray and yellow to create an immersive canvas that evokes the hazy light and marine atmosphere encountered in the Bay Area.

The exploration of light is also at the center of Rosana Castrillo Díaz’s artistic practice. Concerned with perception, she investigates invisibility, solidity, and immateriality through everyday materials. Through common objects such as books, stacks of cards, and rubber bands, she explores relationships between line and volume, order and chaos, light and dark, and the vast range of values in between. In her series of white-on-white paintings on paper, each square consists of a nearly

microscopic pattern of white acrylic, requiring close observation for both the artist and the viewer.

The incredible artwork and touching personal remembrances included in this exhibition and publication demonstrate the myriad ways Hung Liu has left an enormous impact. She was an extraordinary teacher, not only in the classroom and studio, but also in demonstrating how to navigate the professional art world. While an unhesitating supporter of all her students, it was important to her that this exhibition specifically celebrate the women artists that she had mentored. *Look Up to the Sky* is a testament to hard work, deep friendships, and strong women.

— Stephanie Hanor





Hung Liu in front of *Tai Cang—Great Granary*  
at Mills College Art Museum, 2013



# The Art(ist) Teacher

**ARTISTS OFTEN CLAIM THEY WOULD** rather be working in the studio than teaching in the classroom. Hung Liu said the same thing for her 24 years as a professor of art at Mills College. It was true in the sense that she'd come from China to be an artist in America, but like any immigrant, you work your way up. She'd been a professor in China, after all—it was nearly impossible to be an artist there in a modern, western sense. She could be a socialist realist in which painting serves the ideology of the state. Or she could retreat, as she did, into ancient calligraphy, stamp making, classical literature, or little furtive acts of painting post-impressionist landscapes as she roamed the rural outskirts of Beijing—these, her “My Secret Freedom” paintings, now in the collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Hung wanted to avoid the academic classicism and heroic caricature of Soviet-style propaganda art adopted by China in the 1950s. She was curious about artists like Joan Miro or Gustave Klimt, or nearly any western modernist whose pictures she could find in smuggled books or errant magazines. Still, the fact remained that every successful artist in China was an academician. You worked for the state.

Hung's mother and aunt were teachers, and her grandfather was a scholar. She'd attended the most elite girls' boarding school in Beijing. High Party officials' daughters went there, including Mao's, Zhou Enlai's, and Deng Xiaoping's. Hung and her best friend, Chen Bing, were admitted because

of their grades. Education was in her blood, and school was a kind of home. She valued learning perhaps more than anything: the ancient scholar-painters and poets, history and political theory, mathematics, English, and any western books or pictures of art she could find and hide under the bed.

After four years (1968–72) as a peasant laborer during the Cultural Revolution, Hung was admitted to the Beijing Teacher's College, where she studied to be an art teacher. This is when she found her “Secret Freedom” as a wandering landscape painter. She also taught weekly art lessons on CCTV, China's only television network, receiving numerous proposals for marriage. (Think of Hung Liu as the Walter T. Foster or Bob Ross of Maoist China.) In 1979, Hung was accepted into the nation's (still) most prestigious art school, the Central Academy of Fine Art (CAFA) in Beijing. There she earned her graduate degree in mural painting and increasingly identified with the singular romance of being an artist. In the West today, aesthetic romance is sappy and treacly; in Maoist China, it was liberation.

Art, not academic technique or state-sanctioned subject matter, was freedom. Bing, having come in 1981 to the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) to pursue a doctorate in psychology, offered to show slides of Hung's work to the art department, which she did. She recalls leaving the slides with some serious (perhaps crusty) older man (Manny Farber?), not exactly a formal application process. At the next admissions review, Hung was immediately

accepted, and was continually accepted for the next four years while the Chinese government continually declined to give her a passport. Finally, in something of a desperate gambit, she went to Hong Kong—then a British protectorate—from which it was theoretically possible to leave the continent. The Chinese took note and, in time, relented. It took four years to get a passport from her homeland and fifteen minutes to get a visa from the U.S. Within two weeks, she was flying to San Francisco—her first plane ride.

Hung arrived at UCSD on October 26, 1984. Roughly two weeks later, I knocked on her studio door. (That's another story.) At UCSD, Moira Roth, art historian and feminist of eminence, had been my graduate advisor. Chair of the Visual Arts Department, she welcomed Hung with characteristic grace and helped orient her (no pun intended) both to the department and to feminist orthodoxy. Then Moira decamped for Mills College, where she had been offered a chair in art history. In the spring of 1985, Hung and I began traveling together, and in 1986, when I got a job at the University of Texas at Arlington, she moved there with me. We were married in August of that year.

What courage the woman had to live in Texas! She taught kids in artist-in-residence programs in east Texas and Boulder City, Nevada, and in 1989 got a tenure-track job as a professor at the University of North Texas, in Denton, where she became colleagues and friends with Vernon Fisher. I loved my job as the founding director of the Center for

Research in Contemporary Art (CRCA), and in the years between 1986 and 1990, Hung was introduced, through the artists and critics I brought to CRCA, to a string of such notables as Louis Hock, Patricia Patterson, Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Emily Hicks, Laney Yarber, Chris Brown, Allan Kaprow, David Antin, Jim Pomeroy, Lucy Lippard, George Segal, Claes Oldenburg, Suzanne Lacy, and Maria Porges, among others. Between UCSD (1984–86) and CRCA (1986–90), Hung was exposed constantly to experimental and socially engaged art of every stripe while also digging into her own practice as a Chinese artist in America.

One night in Texas, the phone rang. Answering, I heard the breathy voice of Moira, who, after various English formalities, asked me a question I will always remember: “Oh Jeff,” she said, “Do you think Hung might *possibly* be interested in applying for a tenure-track painting position at Mills College?” Jay DeFeo, she explained, had recently died, and the department was looking to hire a painter. “Are you kidding?” I exclaimed. *Of course*, she was interested. Phones had cords then, so I had to stretch it as far as possible while calling Hung to come talk with Moira, because our lives were about to change.

Our family—Hung, Ling Chen (our son), Hung’s mother from Beijing, Maomi (our short-tail Burmese cat from Texas), and I—pulled up to the gate of Mills College around 2 a.m. in the early-August darkness of 1990. Security guards showed us to our house in Faculty Village. I was expecting a cramped apartment—instead, we got a spacious Spanish “villa” perched on a hill overlooking the Millsmont section of Oakland as well as the graves of Susan Tolman Mills and Cyrus Mills, who bought the Young Ladies Seminary in 1865 and moved it to Oakland, where it was incorporated in 1871 as Mills Seminary and then renamed Mills College in 1885.

I was driving a 20-foot U-Haul with all of our stuff, towing my ’77 Nova behind. Hung drove our by-now-aging Chrysler mini-van, a family must-have at

the time, and as we descended into the San Joaquin Valley, the temperature at 108 degrees, the mini-van overheated. Mama, Ling Chen, and Maomi sat in the cab of the truck, the AC running, while Hung and I waited for help. In a moment, the California Highway Patrol arrived, and we were soon towed to the little town of Kettleman City, where an auto repair shop took my keys and told us to wait. The waiting room was full of bereft families whose cars had overheated. A young, tough-guy mechanic pulled the plugs on my distributor cap (do they still have these today?) to show me the car wouldn’t start, but I knew better and put them back in the right order. I confronted him, but his boss kept us apart. I took back my car. We got a hotel for the afternoon, and, when the sun set, we drove through the night to Oakland with our own little *Grapes of Wrath* story trailing behind in the still-warm air.

Mills College was the promised land, its gates open and welcoming. After four years in North Texas, we were finally where we wanted to be. Hung had entered America through the Golden Gate in 1984. Her breakthrough exhibition at the Capp Street Project in 1988 was about the history of Chinese immigration to San Francisco. Hung was not famous in 1990 but was “of note” both here and in New York. There were other significant Asian American artists in the Bay Area, including Carlos Villa (Filipino American), Ruth Asawa (Japanese American), and Bernice Bing (a Chinese American painter whose recognition has only just caught up with her). Hung, though, was arguably the first—and probably the only—Asian immigrant who achieved local and national prominence as an artist, much less a professor. Moreover, she had women colleagues at Mills: conceptual photographer and quasi-scientist Catherine Wagner, public artist and place-maker Anna Murch, and art historians Moira, Mary-Ann Milford, and Joanne Bernstein. And there was Ron Nagle, whose porcelain “teacups” were like tempests of style, keeping contemporary ceramics vibrating between high art and pop culture. At Mills, academic

distinctions (of paint, video, ceramics, and sculpture) were not rigid divisions; graduate students were encouraged to work in the interstices. Great artists, historians, and critics visited the college and spoke to the wider community. Hung brought, among others, Allan Kaprow, Dave Hickey, and Peter Schjeldahl. The music department was experimental, dance renowned. In the bright, spacious painting building, Hung strode among her students like an exotic mother hen.

Though few would have seen the connection at the time, Mills was the kind of mother institution with which Hung was already familiar. After all, she’d attended an “experimental” high school for girls in Beijing, and her mother and aunt had both been teachers and deans in schools founded by American missionaries. In May of 1990, Mills College was shut down by students protesting the admission of men by the Board of Trustees (the students won). Hung saw this on television from Texas. A year prior, on June 4, 1989, Chinese authorities violently repressed democracy protests in Tiananmen Square. Revolution was familiar to her. In 1966, Hung’s elite boarding school for girls in Beijing became the first in which radicalized students attacked their teacher, killing the principal. She witnessed this at 18. These examples cannot be equated, of course, but they do suggest Hung’s familiarity with revolution as she joined the Mills faculty the following year.

Mills was her oasis. She taught there for 24 years. She worked hard and had fun. When she was chair of the art department, she distributed among the faculty a T-shirt that proclaimed, “Long Live Chairman Liu!” She jokingly toyed with the idea of shaving one inch off the front legs of her colleagues’ chairs in faculty meetings so that, Qing Dynasty style, they would lean slightly forward in supplication to the Dowager. She never did it, but the idea was borderline conceptual art. Maybe unperformed comedy. Thus was Hung beloved, and slightly feared.

The day she first entered her office, she saw taped to the wall a printed copy

of Jay DeFeo's drawing of a woman's eyes. Around it was an old wooden frame, the wrong size, hanging on nails. Who knows why it was there? Did Jay leave it? Was it a memorial to her left by students? No matter—Hung kept it in place, and it never left her office until she retired in 2014, whereupon she took it to her studio. It still hangs there, silent testimony to the matrilineal DNA of the Mills College painting position and to the women in Hung's life.

People say Hung was a prolific artist. That's what people say when an artist works all the time. In 1999, we bought a studio on Bancroft Avenue, about a mile away from Mills. After retirement, Hung went there, like a factory worker, seven days a week. She works there still.

I know a lot about my wife. Her life in China, her journey to America, her art and career, her unspoken daydreams, her unrequited heartaches, the hard and soft sides of her, her irreverent humor, her *amazing* fashion sense, her startling beauty, the surprising boundlessness of her joy and the revolutionary depth of her anger, her kick-ass determination, tomboy physicality, and the genius touch of her painter's hand. Yes, I know these things pretty well.

But being her student is known best by the women who *were* her students. And the men. I hope their stories are told in private and public for years. I hope they never fade, because being at Mills was such a big part of her identity. Hung gave part of her life to her students, not only as an academic but as a mentor, a leader, and even as a hero. Sure, this sounds romantic, but she lived a heroic life, and she made heroic art. Her last words in life were, "I live to work."

Hung's work ethic was her freedom. And while you can't impart freedom to your students, you can expect responsibility in service of their own liberation as artists: liberation from cliché, from pretense, from aesthetic style, and from intellectual fashion. Hung demanded what she offered: authenticity. She set an example by becoming herself.

Becoming herself at Mills was the gift Hung gave her students. Yet she

never expected from them a *kind* of art, a stylistic or ideological school. She insisted instead on the artist's authenticity and personal experience. That is why, even now, none of her students' works look like hers.

— Jeff Kelley

FACING PAGE  
Rosana Castrillo Díaz  
10/26/23, 2023  
Graphite on paper  
17 in. x 15 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and  
Anthony Meier Gallery

# Rosana Castrillo Díaz

MFA 2003

**“DON’T FORGET TO PLAY,” WERE** Hung’s parting words as I left the sheltered confines of Mills College and entered the business side of the art world. She had picked up on my seriousness and determination and wanted to make sure I relaxed a bit. Almost 20 years later, her wise words still remind me to take pleasure in the process of art-making and of life-making.

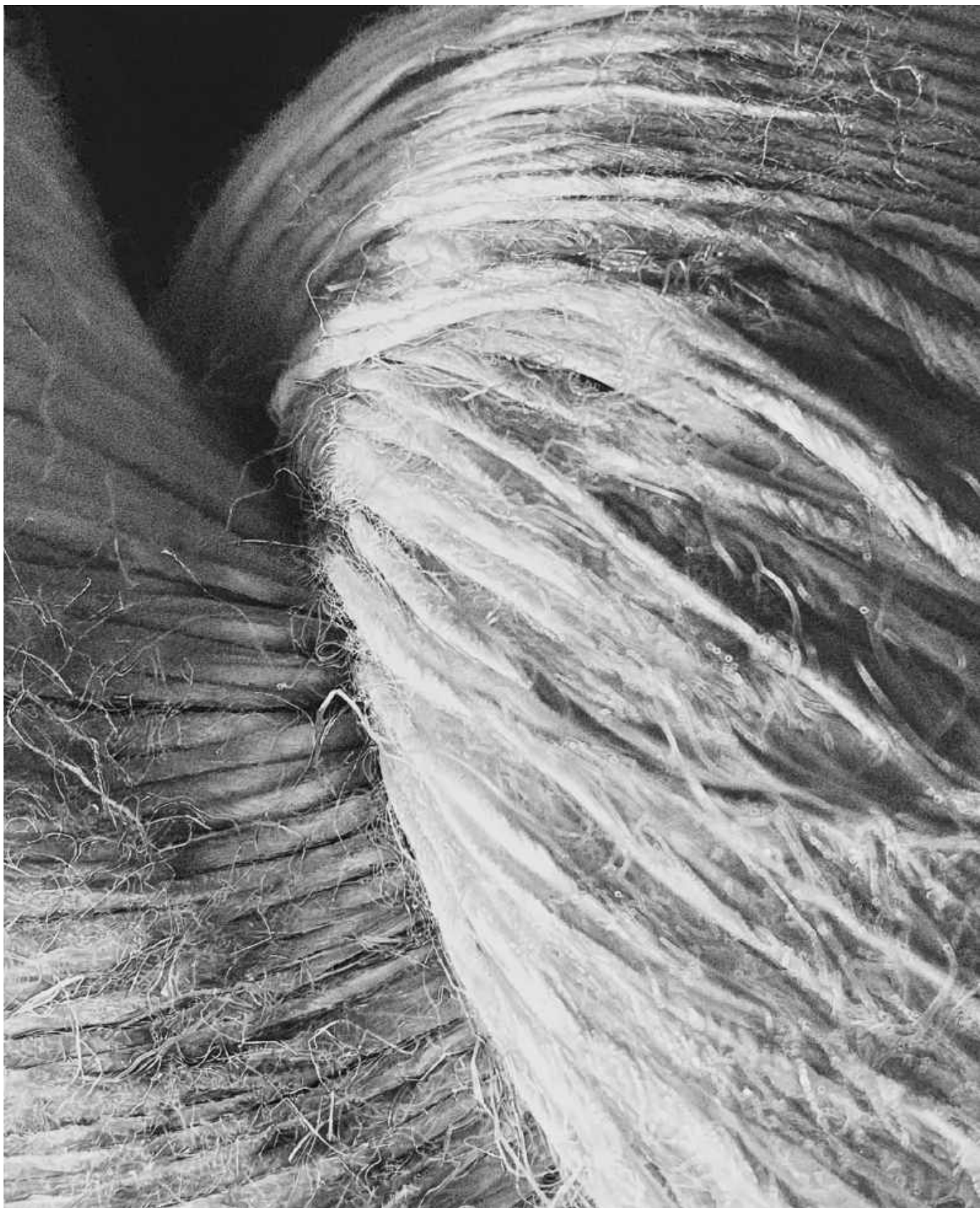
Hung took an interest in her students for life. She cared about our art progress, our mental health, our families, our eating and sleeping habits, our problems, and our dreams. I could count on Hung to send me a funky, visually stunning social media post at any time of the year, a “Happy Chinese New Year” greeting, and the sweetest of all, a “Happy Mother’s Day” greeting; the last two would arrive in my inbox without fail *every single year*.

While pregnant with my firstborn, I exchanged work with Hung and brought home the print of a father with a toddler on his shoulders. I didn’t know I was going to have a boy, but, in her studio, something told me I would. Years later, my teenager concluded that he had never met an adult “cooler” than Hung. To this day, he remembers her with great fondness. In the few hours that they spent together, she related to him as an equal, brought huge doses of her characteristic humor into the conversation, and made a friend for life.

The day Hung died, I was at a wedding in Spain. I received a text notification, and the wind was knocked out of me—there are people you just count on to be around for life. As I tried to make sense of the news, a guest pointed up to the sky, where a cloud in the shape of a heart had just appeared. This was certainly a good omen for the wedding party. But, to me, it was Hung saying, “Goodbye. I love you. Isn’t life beautiful? Please, don’t forget to play.”

To Hung, my mentor, friend, and surrogate parent: I still bow to you daily on my little altar; Quan Yin sits next to you.









FACING PAGE

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled (11/20/05)*, 2005

Watercolor on paper

10 in. x 10 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Gift of LAB Partners LP, Salt Lake City, UT  
in honor of Tony Meier

RIGHT

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled*, 2006

Graphite on paper

13 ¾ in. x 13 ¾ in.

Collection of Maryellen and  
Frank Herringer, Piedmont

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled*, 2007

Graphite on paper

13 ¾ in. x 13 ¾ in.

Collection of Maryellen and  
Frank Herringer, Piedmont



FACING PAGE

**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**

*21.09.25.01 Pyrrol Red Cadmium*

*Yellow Deep Hue Cobalt Blue, 2021*

Watercolor on paper

18 in. x 18 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco

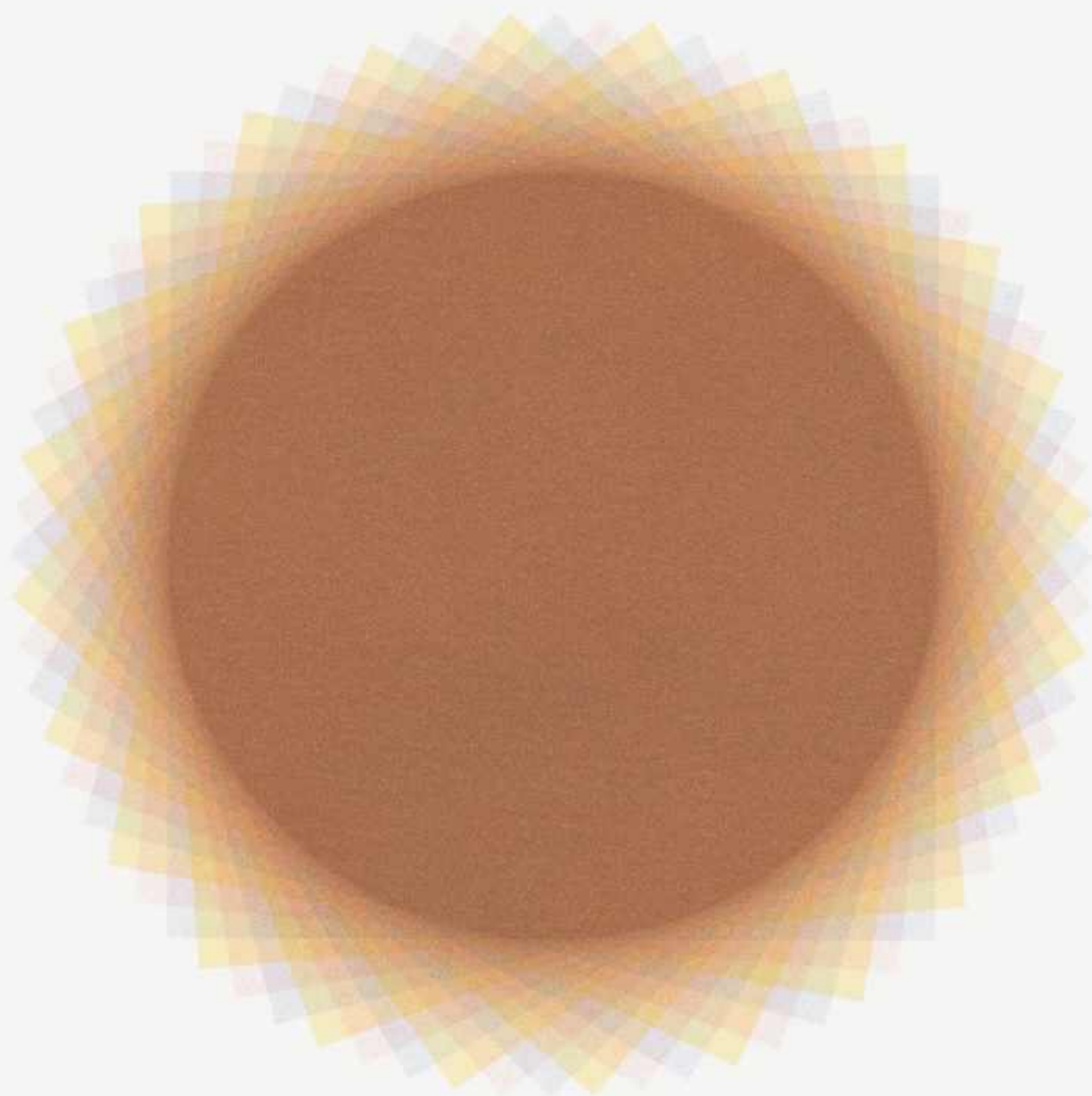
# Nicole Phungrasamee Fein

MFA 2002

**HUNG LIU TOOK CARE OF MANY PEOPLE,** including me. I spent my final week at Mills College on a ladder in the museum. It was the spring of 2002, and I had been pinning lines of ribbon to a wall for my MFA show, climbing up and down for several days. My legs were shaking with fatigue when the phone rang. Hung told me to take a break and come to her house for dinner. I spent the evening enjoying a delicious home-cooked meal and laughing with Hung, her husband, Jeff Kelley, and their friends, the two very funny artists, Komar and Melamid. She took care of me that night, and in the years that followed, her care only grew. She would say, “Work hard!” And the harder I worked, the more she cared. But I can only dream of working as hard as she did.

Hung Liu introduced me to her world. She invited me back to Mills to share my work with her students. She introduced me to artists who have become dear friends. There were more dinner parties. She introduced me to museum curators. She introduced me to Don and Era Farnsworth at Magnolia Editions. She introduced me to Nancy Hoffman. If I needed business advice, I called Hung. With her blessing, Jeff wrote an essay about my art. Through the people Hung brought into my life, she had a direct and profound impact on my work. Her world became my world.

Hung took care of people in many ways. Her generosity and capacity to nurture, combined with her virtuosity and prolific art practice, were a marvel to me. While she was a steward of people’s spirits by telling their stories through her work, her own spirit deeply imbues each piece. Every time my husband, Mark, my son, Felix, and I traveled overseas, we stopped at Hung’s painting in the international terminal at SFO. We would take a selfie with the painting and send it to her with a note, telling her where we were headed. After our travels, we would return to Hung’s print in our living room. Hung sends us off like dandelion seeds and welcomes us home. How can I now take care of her? I will work.





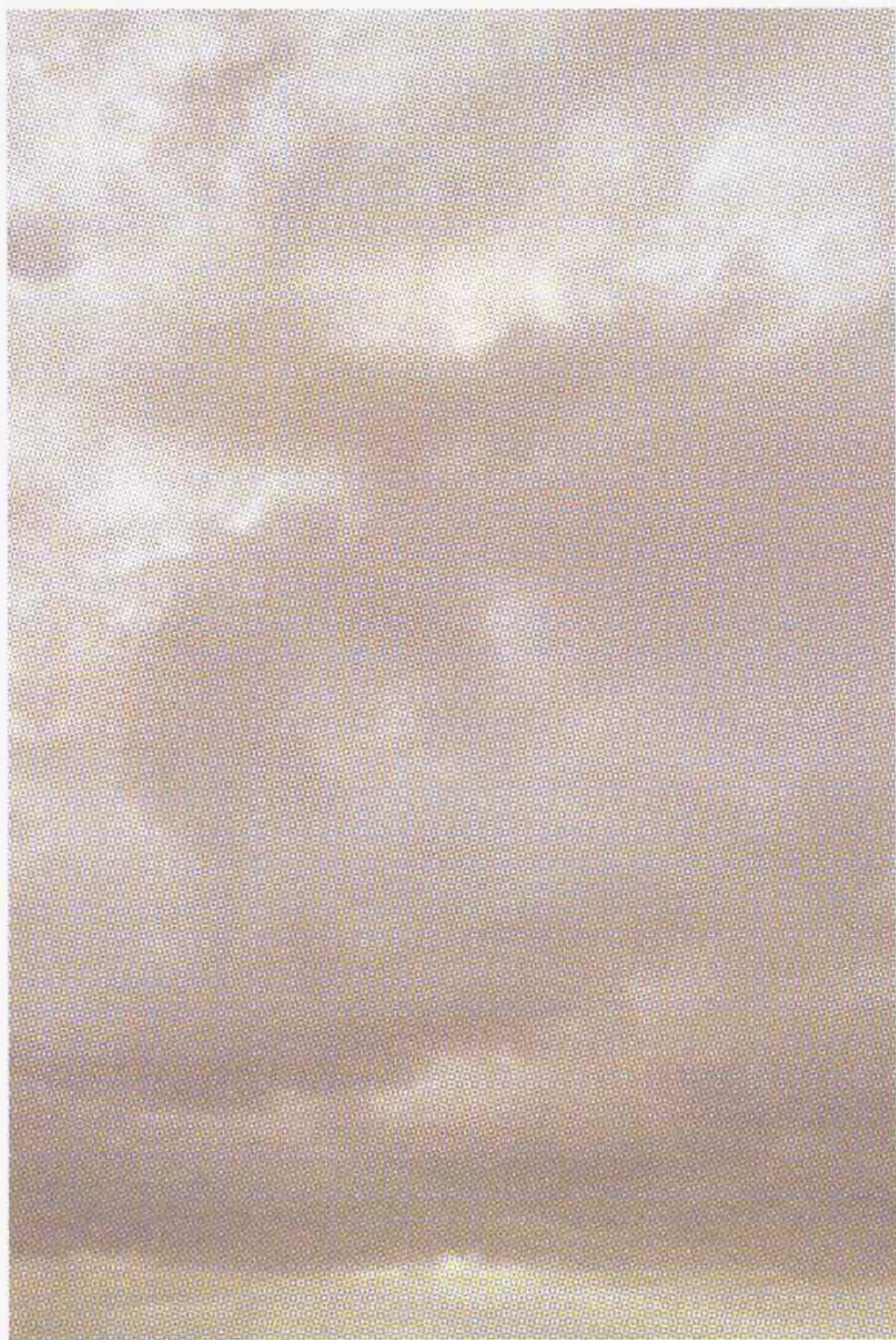
LEFT  
**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**  
*21.09.22.01 Pyrrol Red Cadmium  
 Yellow Deep Hue Colbalt Blue, 2021*  
 Watercolor on paper  
 18 in. x 18 in.  
 Courtesy of the Artist and  
 Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco

**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**  
*21.09.28.01 Colbalt Blue Cadmium  
 Yellow Deep Hue Pyrrol Red, 2021*  
 Watercolor on paper  
 18 in. x 18 in.  
 Courtesy of the Artist and  
 Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco

FACING PAGE  
**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**  
*Sky, 2023*  
 Pigmented felt tip pen and  
 archival ink jet on rag paper  
 49 ½ in. X 36 in.  
 Courtesy of the Artist and  
 Nancy Hoffman Gallery, New York







# Danielle Lawrence

MFA 2011

**HUNG WAS MY MENTOR, PROFESSOR,** colleague, friend, champion, fellow artist, and most importantly, a role model. I looked up to her not simply because of her painterly ability but because of her humanity, courage, and fortitude—characteristics that her life’s journey required of her.

Hung’s life and work transmuted many hardships and barriers created by class, race, and gender. Her alchemical vessels were painting, teaching, beauty, and humor. There was a fierceness, passionate determination, and work ethic that I saw in her and that she recognized in me, which built the foundation of mutual respect for our friendship and working relationship. Hung celebrated telling my story honestly and authentically, even if that meant creating work on a monumental scale. She gave me permission to be raw, vulnerable, and bold—to make paintings honestly and to challenge the aesthetics of the status quo.

Hung gave me my first college teaching job, which opened many doors for further academic teaching. She was extraordinarily generous with her students and would even send me “good luck” post-it notes, cards, emails, and gifts. The impact she had on my art, teaching, and life is too large to sum up in words. Hung’s support and work were nothing short of revolutionary, as she moved and created in the world from what bell hooks defines as a love ethic. So much gratitude and adoration remain.

FACING PAGE

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Uh Huh Her*, 2020

Repurposed denim, leather, canvas,  
and watercolor on wood

31 ½ in. x 25 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Museum purchase and gift of the Artist  
and Traywick Contemporary





LEFT TO RIGHT

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Find Where the Wind Goes and  
Goodbye Horses Centerfold*, 2019

Acrylic on canvas panels handstitched  
to constructed canvas

81 1/8 in. x 91 1/4 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Uh Huh Her*, 2020

Repurposed denim, leather, canvas,  
and watercolor on wood

31 1/2 in. x 25 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Museum purchase and gift of the  
Artist and Traywick Contemporary

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Sky Cathedral, Sally Ride,  
Metis and Déjà vu*, 2019

Acrylic on canvas panels  
handstitched to constructed canvas

86 1/2 in. x 96 1/4 in.

Courtesy of the Artist







# Monica Lundy

MFA 2010

**I RECENTLY INSTALLED A 10 X 11-FOOT** window in my painting studio in Northern Italy, situated above the wall where I paint. When I feel stressed, or when I just need to pause, I sit in my armchair and look up to the window. Through it, all you see is sky. I dedicated this window to Hung.

Hung was a butterfly. In a room full of people, she effortlessly captivated everyone's attention as she seemingly fluttered about, enchanting all those she came into contact with. People simply loved her. For those of us who were fortunate enough to have Hung as a professor, we got to know her in a more profound way: Hung Liu, the mentor, practitioner, and friend.

As an educator, she was nurturing and fierce. When I first observed Hung, the educator, I came to visit her during her undergraduate painting class. She arrived to class with a box of Chinese pastries. As the young students passed the pastries around the table, Hung gently, but firmly, began to tell them that they were too lazy with their assignments—that being an artist was a difficult path that requires dedication and hard work.

To her graduate students, she emphasized the importance of being both serious and playful. She taught me to work rigorously, but also to not be afraid to walk away from something that wasn't working. Sometimes these were presented as lessons in art, but they were also metaphors for life—as she often said, they are one and the same.

I recall one particular studio visit after I had just installed a constellation of a dozen custom-built canvases to begin a new painting installation. I must have been having anxiety about it, because when Hung arrived, she took one look at me and then at the wall of newly installed, untouched canvases and said, "Don't be afraid to walk away from an idea if it doesn't work out. It's not the first painting you've made, and it won't be the last." After our studio visit, I took down all of the canvases and never touched them again.

Upon graduating from Mills in 2010, my relationship with Hung continued to deepen. She was a dear friend and continued to guide me in my career. In fact, she continues to guide me to this day, as the knowledge she imparted upon me during her life is knowledge that is still unfolding in time. Her wisdom was seemingly infinite.

Some years later, I found myself at a difficult crossroads in life, one that unfortunately took me far away from Hung and my familiar "home." In her grace and infinite wisdom, Hung said to me, "When the world feels too heavy, just look up to the sky; it is so much bigger than us."

Monica Lundy  
*Aurora*, 2017  
From the series *Deviance: Women  
in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*  
Mixed media with coffee, burned  
paper, and charcoal on Khadi paper  
55 in. x 38 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and  
Nancy Toomey Fine Art, San Francisco



LEFT TO RIGHT

**Monica Lundy**

*Camille*, 2021

Charcoal and gouache on paper

94 in. x 59 in.

Gift of the Artist, Tonya Turner Carroll

and Michael Carroll, Courtesy of

Turner Carroll Gallery, Santa Fe

**Monica Lundy**

*Aurora*, 2017

From the series *Deviance: Women*

*in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*

Mixed media with coffee, burned paper,  
and charcoal on Khadi paper

55 in. x 38 in. x 2 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Nancy Toomey Fine Art, San Francisco

**Monica Lundy**

*Idle*, 2018

From the series *Deviance: Women*

*in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*

Mixed media with coffee, burned paper,  
and charcoal on Khadi paper

53 in. x 37 in. x 2 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Turner Carroll Gallery, Santa Fe

**Monica Lundy**

*Eusebia*, 2018

From the series *Deviance: Women*

*in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*

Mixed media with coffee, charcoal, gouache,  
and burned paper on Khadi paper

30 in. x 22 in. x 2 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Nancy Toomey Fine Art, San Francisco









# Nancy Mintz

MFA 1993

**I FIRST MET HUNG LIU WHEN I WAS** a graduate student at Mills College. Her life story, including being sent to do hard labor in the fields, was a bit intimidating. But despite her own struggles, she was genuinely interested in the very real struggles of her students. She took the time to listen, to ask questions. Her supportive nature and enthusiasm made you believe that you also had something to give the world. That was one of her many gifts as a teacher.

Another was Hung's devotion to her craft and her belief in the value of doing the work. "Work, work, work!" she would say. "Keep working, and you will find your way." She seemed so sure of her own mission and her process. She was a process-oriented artist, a storyteller who valued skill and hard work over the pursuit of trendy concepts. Much of her work honors the sometimes heroic stories of regular people, forgotten people. She helped me see the dignity and beauty of the simple things, the mundane. These ideas still inform my work.

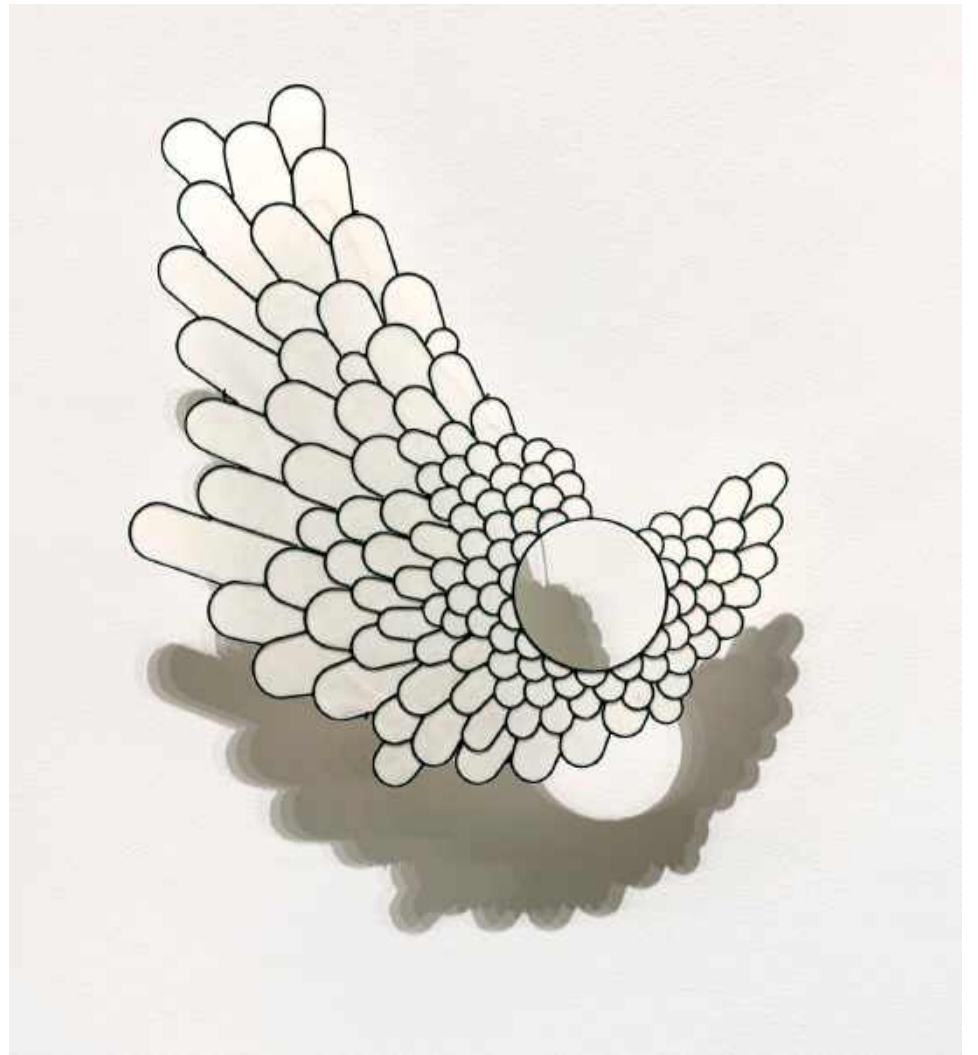
Hung also brought an irrepressible sense of joy and fun to the making of art. She was a passionate example of what it meant to live and breathe creative practice across the arc of one's life, despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles. She was brave as hell.

Finally, Hung really believed in supporting women artists in their practice. After I graduated, she continued to attend my shows and encourage my creative development. Sometimes, I think of Hung Liu as my "art mother." She set an example of what an artist could and should be, and I will treasure her memory for the rest of my life.

PAGES 33–37  
**Nancy Mintz**  
*Time, Being*, 2024  
Brass, paper  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the Artist

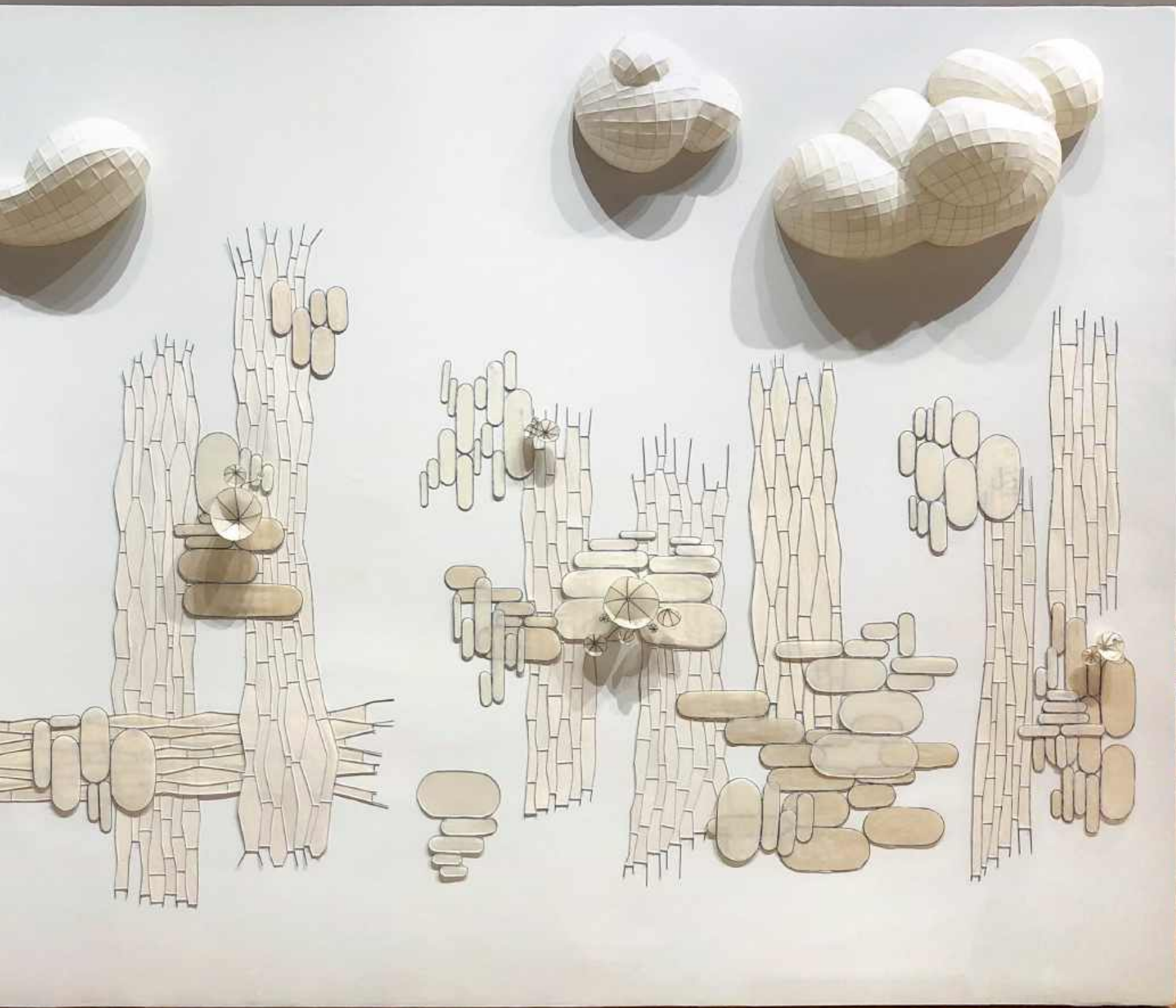












# Sandra Ono

MFA 2008

**I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT ART AND** life from Hung Liu. Hung's work is a true embodiment of her vulnerability, fearlessness, and warmth. Witnessing her serious dedication as an artist and strength as an Asian American woman made a huge impact on my life. We spoke a lot about the Asian American experience in the art world, academia, and beyond. I never had to explain situations involving racism or sexism in great detail because she was already keenly aware of those dynamics from her own life experiences.

Hung had the gift of seeing and understanding people. This was evident in her relationship with her students as well as in her paintings. I will always remember her incredible generosity, wry sense of humor, and the kindness she showed me and so many others. Her belief in my work and professional capabilities meant, and still means, so much. I treasure the memories I hold with her and the time I was lucky enough to have her in my life as both a mentor and friend.

FACING PAGE

**Sandra Ono**

*Untitled (Greensboro III), 2019*

Sand, ceramics, and cast resin

48 in. x 37 in. x 1 ½ in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Bibeu Krueger Gallery, New York





Sandra Ono  
*Untitled (2302 MH)*, 2022  
Towels, seashells, and acrylic  
9 ½ in. x 7 in. x 2 in.  
Collection of Victoria Belco and  
William Goodman, Berkeley



Sandra Ono  
*Untitled (2303)*, 2023  
Sand, resin, pearl, sterling silver  
and stone earrings  
6 ½ in. x 6 ½ in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and  
Bibeau Krueger Gallery, New York





# Mel Prest

MFA 1999

## I LEARNED SO MUCH FROM HUNG.

She was unafraid of trying things and showed me how I could grow by working hard, pushing myself, and always saying YES. Hung was an amazing teacher; she looked deeply at what students were making and responded directly, helping them move forward without imposing her style or technique. From her, I learned how to be a tough yet sensitive teacher and facilitator.

When I graduated from Mills, Hung gave me a suitcase, and I misunderstood the gift, thinking she was ready to be rid of me. She explained, “Your art is going to take you places,” I think referring to her story of meeting Robert Rauschenberg, and he, giving her an autograph, said “Here’s your ticket to the art world.” She and Jeff always came to my shows and collected my work. Among the many gifts she gave me was an introduction to my husband 25 years ago.

As Hung’s studio assistant, my first task was to organize and label two grocery bags filled with her slides. Although few of these slides were labeled, I got a rich introduction to decades of her life and work. I was able to help Hung with several installations, which included sewing over 100 silk shorts/sails for *Where is Mao?*, now owned by the Denver Art Museum.

We stayed in touch with silly emails and texts. I feel her support and will love her always, no matter how long it’s been since we have seen each other.

BELOW

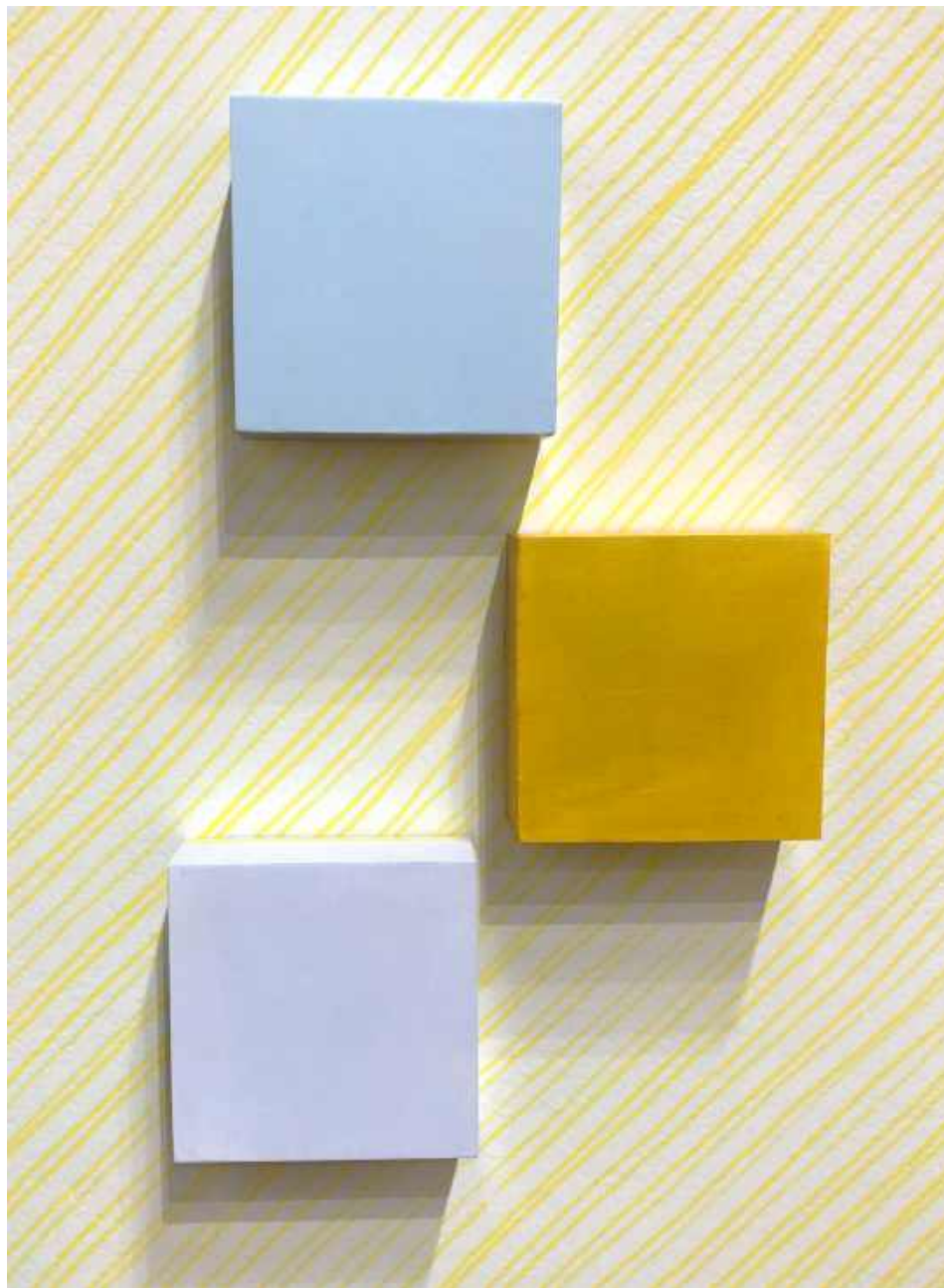
**Mel Prest**

*Untitled*, 2023 (Detail), Acrylic on wall with acrylic, metallic, and phosphorescent acrylic on panels  
21 panels 5 in. x 5 in. x 2 in. each  
Courtesy of the Artist and K. Imperial Fine Art

FACING PAGE

**Mel Prest**

*Untitled*, 2023, Acrylic on wall with acrylic, metallic, and phosphorescent acrylic on panels  
21 panels 5 in. x 5 in. x 2 in. each  
Courtesy of the Artist and K. Imperial Fine Art







BELOW

**Mel Prest**

*A Clearing*, 2023

Acrylic and mica on panel, 60 in. x 60 in. x 2 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and K. Imperial Fine Art

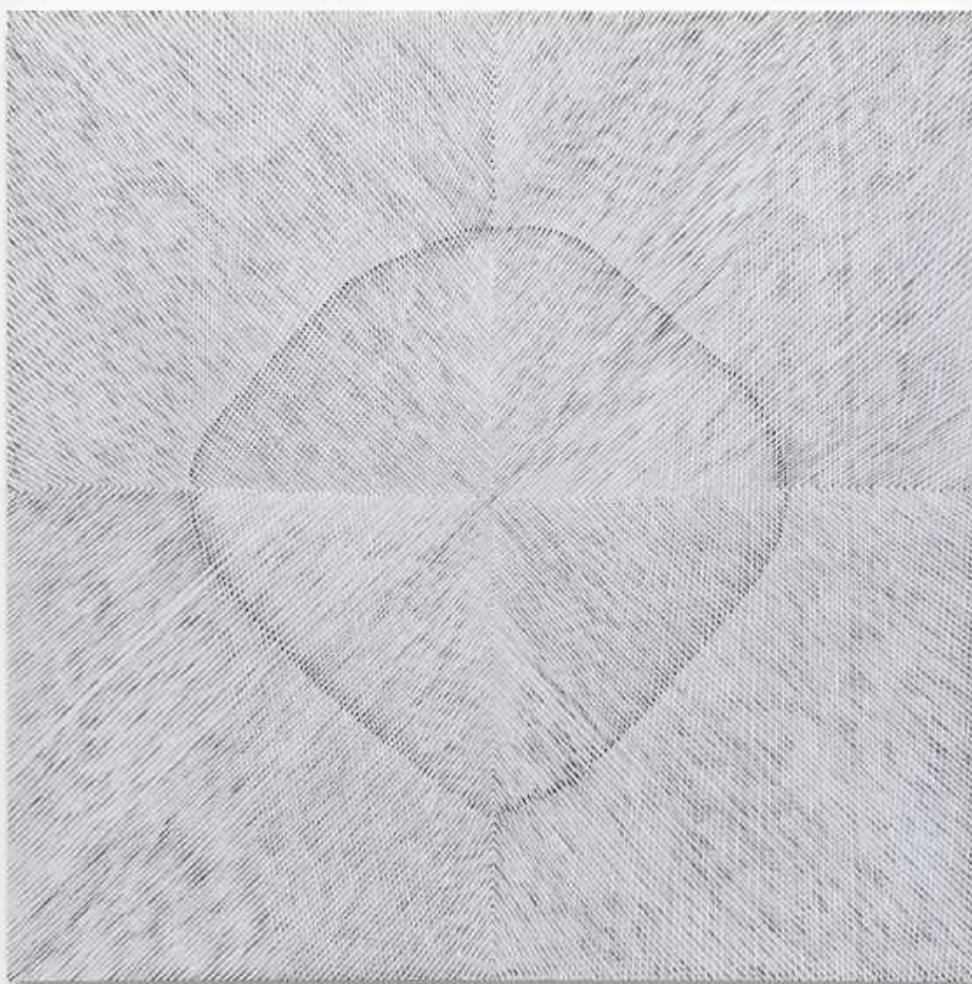
FACING PAGE

**Mel Prest**

*Sun Cloud*, 2018

Acrylic on panel, 60 in. x 60 in. x 2 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum, Gift of  
the Artist and Chandra Cerrito Contemporary







## Susan Preston

MFA 1996

**IN MY APPLICATION TO MILLS COLLEGE,** I wrote about how being raised in the ghost town of Calaveritas had been transformative to my becoming an artist. And with that lucky essay, Hung chose to become one of my mentor teachers.

Although already a celebrated artist, in the early 1990s Hung was still finding her way as a teacher. MFA students can be a neurotic lot, myself included. But where I saw us as tricky business, Hung seemed to view us with a certain wonderment: “What will these exotic creatures do next?”

A studio visit from Hung always included much laughter and inspiration. As we became more comfortable with each other, I began to tell her some of my ideas—even the strange and unformed. Hung always listened quietly and thoughtfully. By taking my ideas seriously and without judgment, she helped me find myself in my art.

After a while, my large, stretched canvases seemed like unwanted guests, and when I gave them away along with my beloved oil paints, my studio began to breathe so much better. Soon I was working only with paper, such a big leap—but one that Hung accepted as natural—as if this new, more intimate way of seeing was a necessary evolution toward my becoming an artist.

Although I was mightily impressed with Hung’s strong work ethic, I also loved her enjoyment of each moment—how comfortable she was in the world, not only in the Bay Area but in the entire universe, and how she was a natural fashion icon. Who but Hung could wear a pin of a large rat on her frock coat?

I love to tell the story of when Hung visited us on our farm in Dry Creek Valley. In the evening, I put her in a spare bedroom with a musical alarm clock. Unexpectedly, the alarm went off to Sufi music at dawn. Hung, in her pink-striped pajamas, opened the gate and crossed the road to the vineyard. She came back soon after and said, “I haven’t walked barefoot in dirt since I worked for Chairman Mao.”

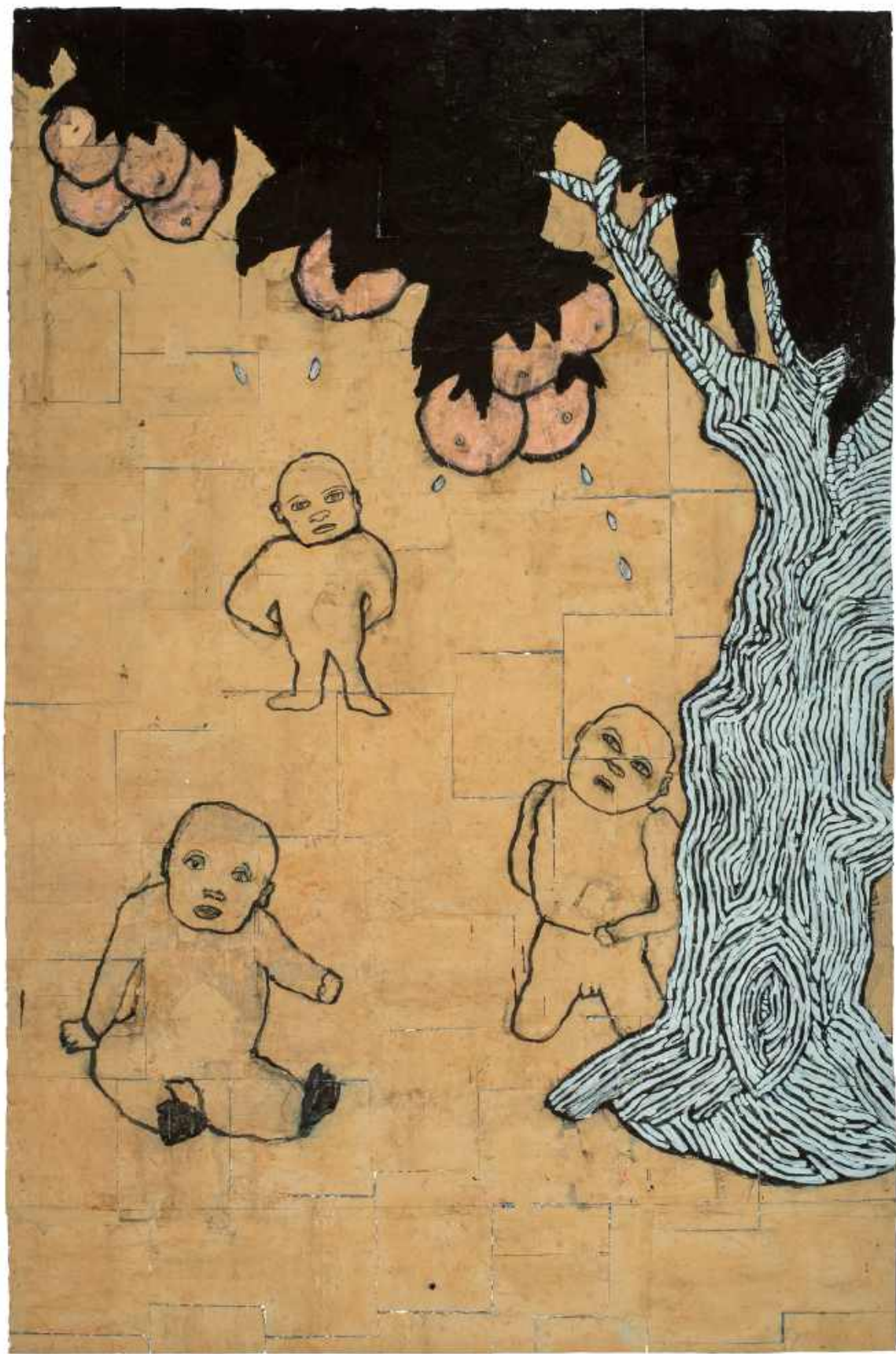
It may have been that evening, when we were preparing dinner, that Hung asked me to tell her what some of the foods were in our refrigerator. She selected chard from our garden, cream, prosciutto, and Parmesan cheese. Quickly, she thinly sliced the chard, then sautéed it lightly in olive oil, adding the chopped prosciutto. Finally, in a flash, she added a dollop of cream, minced garlic, and a grating of cheese. I hope some time you will try this recipe and think of Hung.











FACING PAGE

**Susan Preston**

*Heaven of the Milk Babies*, 2010

Brown paper bag, charcoal, acrylic,  
foil, inks, pastel, archival glue

46 in. x 32 ½ in.

Courtesy of the Artist

RIGHT

**Susan Preston**

*We'll Never Do That Again*, 2012

Brown paper bag, inks, foil, lemon  
juice, green tea, archival glue

46 in. x 32 ½ in.

Collection of Jil Hales





## Rachelle Reichert

MFA 2015

**THE FIRST TIME I MET HUNG, IT WAS** at her studio. I was in my mid-twenties and desperately trying to find my way as an artist. I was working a handful of jobs, including interviewing artists for a now-defunct art publication. I asked Hung if she would be open to an interview, and she graciously accepted. When I arrived at her studio, she toured me around her space, showing me nearly completed works for her next exhibition. Then she sat me down at her table, and we spoke for over two hours. This meeting was transformative for me as an artist. I had sat with other artists for interviews, but never had I known the rigor, humor, intelligence, generosity, and pure talent that Hung possessed. So inspired by our meeting together, I decided to add Mills College's MFA program to the list of graduate schools I was applying to at the time. I went on to study with Hung for her last year of teaching and remained close with her after, interviewing her twice more for gallery publications.

It was wonderful to continue to learn from her. Hung taught me what it meant to be an artist by example. It was not about simply making artwork. Being an artist meant to be in dialogue with the world. For Hung, that meant mentoring and educating others, building community, and being in community. To be an artist was to be generous. And it helped to have a sense of humor. I think of Hung every time I start a new and uncertain artwork. She reassured me that the fear and doubt when creating something new are always there; one must learn how to recognize them and move forward anyway. Her words continue to propel me forward and encourage me to take on new challenges. Questioning is part of the process, and community is essential.









FACING PAGE

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Ponds, 2021*

Archival pigment print,  
aluminum, acrylic, and panel

26 in. x 37 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

RIGHT

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Jean Dry Lake, December 9, 2022, 2023*

Graphite on paper

20 in. x 32 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Mojave, 2019*

Graphite on paper

16 ¼ in. x 13 ¼ in.

Courtesy of the Artist





**Rachelle Reichert**  
*Helios*, 2020  
Graphite on paper  
20 in. x 40 in.  
Courtesy of a Private Collection

FACING PAGE  
**Rachelle Reichert**  
*Valley Tilt*, 2021  
Archival pigment prints  
on aluminum, walnut  
56 in. x 51 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist





# Yoshiko Shimano

MFA 1991

**HUNG ARRIVED AT MILLS COLLEGE AS** a painting professor during my second year of graduate study. She expressed herself by painting her experiences in both China and the United States, and she always inspired me to be my authentic self when making my own artwork.

Hung often painted mistreated human beings, including children, women, seniors, and minority groups, in many different aspects. Hung's paintings were almost like prayers for these people, who were often living in difficult circumstances. I find my works have a similar concept of affection and appealing for peace. Russia's attack on Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Plant and beautiful

historic cities in February 2022 inspired me to create a series of extended prints with images of sunflowers, Ukraine's national flower that is also known as a radiation remediator. **HEALING LAND & HEALING SOULS – KIEV** is my prayer for the victims of the war between Ukraine and Russia. I also thought about sunflowers when the Fukushima Nuclear Plant in Japan had a nuclear meltdown caused by the catastrophic tsunami and earthquake of 2011. **HEALING LAND & HEALING SOULS – FUKUSHIMA** was made when I learned that sunflowers were being planted on Fukushima's affected landscape to absorb radiation, much like how they were used on the

soil at the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster site. I wish for the sunflowers to help the victims of the disasters regain hope, peace, and the courage to move forward with their lives.

I have been offering community outreach projects through printmaking with my students at the University of New Mexico. These have been local, regional, and international projects, and I especially extend offers of printmaking projects to people suffering from poverty, natural disasters, and physical and mental challenges. I hope that these projects align with Hung's prayer as well.



FACING PAGE

**Yoshiko Shimano**

*HEALING LAND & HEALING SOULS – KIEV (B)*, 2023

Silkscreen, wood monoprint, and linoleum cut

45 in. x 96 in., Courtesy of the Artist

BELOW

**Yoshiko Shimano**

*HEALING LAND & HEALING SOULS – FUKUSHIMA (B)*, 2022

Silkscreen, wood monoprint, linoleum cut, and stencil

45 in. x 96 in., Courtesy of the Artist





# Lien Truong

MFA 2001

**AS AN UNDERGRADUATE PAINTING** student, my professors Teresa Stanley and Leslie Price showed me Hung's work. I saw how a painting could create layered context through portraits centered on a person's life while simultaneously referring to greater political histories. When I saw her paintings in person, I was taken by how they resonated with keen, empathetic representation, as well as the intimate bond between painter and material. Her bold, thick manipulation of paint and "collaboration with gravity" to amass drips cutting through her paint and image was a meaningful example of how love of material could manifest, through studio experiments, the creation of a striking visual language.

This was the 1990s, and Hung's incredible practice as an Asian woman painter in a field long dominated by white, male painters made such an impact on me. When Hung called me personally to let me know that I'd been admitted into the MFA program at Mills College, I had a fangirl implosion. As her student, and also beyond her teaching, she led by example, modeling the life of a thriving, professional artist. A beacon of grace and generosity in the Bay Area, she continued to support students after they graduated, finding various ways to form community through practice. She embodied fierceness, sharp wit, and humility. I continue to show my students her work, joyfully spreading the work and legacy of a brilliant artist I had the fortune to work with.





FACING PAGE

**Lien Truong**

*Patsy Takemoto Mink ain't afraid of the Dark*, 2019

Oil, silk, acrylic, gold pigment, vintage silk  
mourning obi cloth on canvas, 72 in. x 60 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and Patricia Sweetow  
Gallery, Los Angeles

LEFT

**Lien Truong**

*Cornucopia*, 2019

Oil, silk, acrylic, bronze pigment, 19th-century  
American cotton on canvas, 72 in. x 60 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and Patricia Sweetow  
Gallery, Los Angeles



Gina Tuzzi  
*The Toad & the Junebug*, 2023  
Acrylic on panel  
60 in. x 96 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

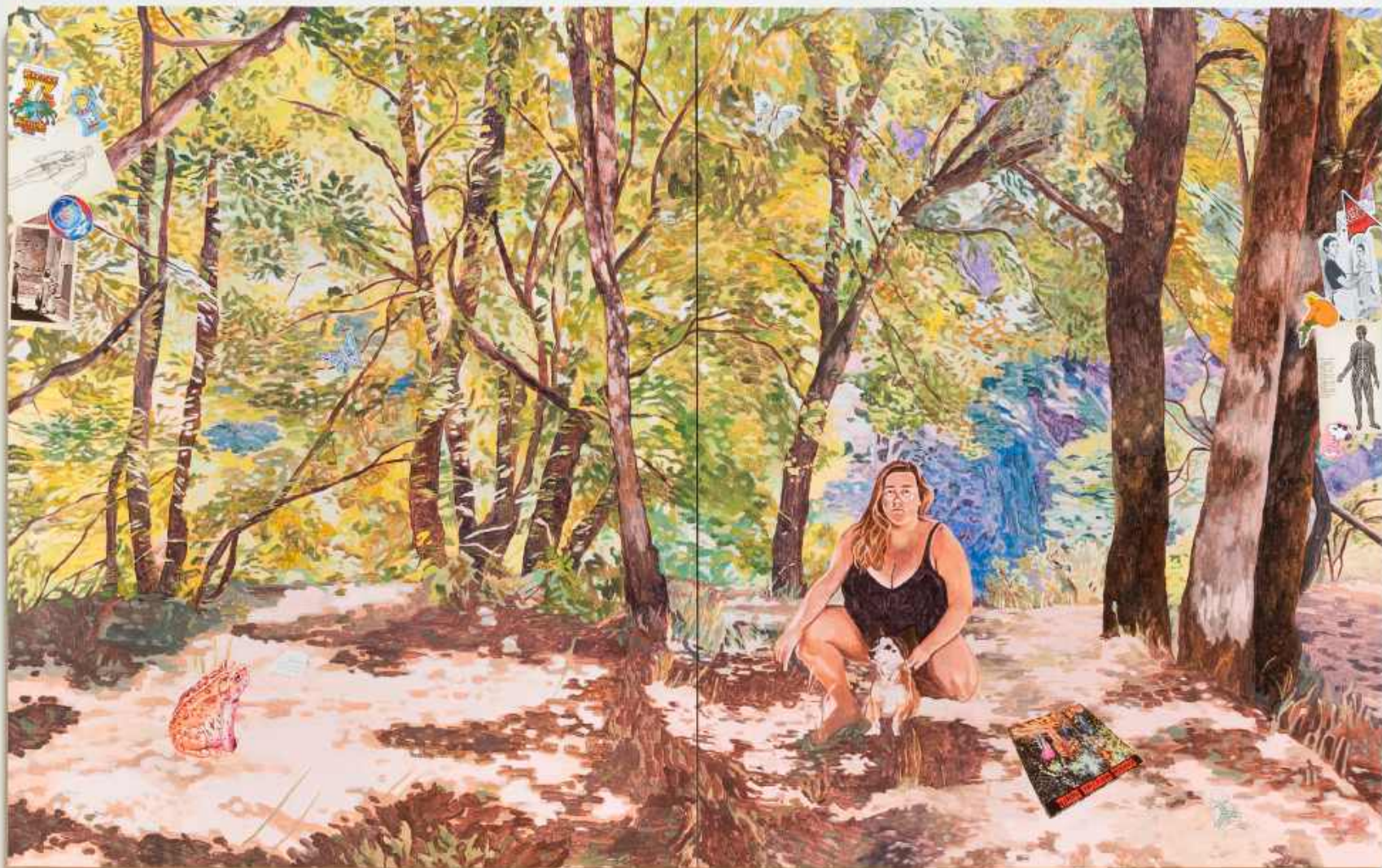
# Gina Tuzzi

MFA 2009

**HUNG LIU IS ONE OF MY MOST TREASURED** people. In this mysterious way, she feels energetically still very present in my life as if the significance of our bond is a beam of light, radiating from a powerful sun, warmly illuminating what I do daily as both a painter and an educator. There are of course, the very practical things Hung taught me that richly inform my painting practice: a disciplined studio routine, prioritizing the work above all else, and, quite importantly, how to properly hold a paintbrush. It is the more sublime lessons learned via some sort of cosmic osmosis that have a continual blossoming of profound resonance for me.

Hung showed me by exquisite example how to experience joy with my students. Teaching is of course an inherently serious business but there is so much room for connection, for playful freedom, for expansive experimentation, and for laughter. Hung gifted me generous blueprints for being a mentor and I borrow from her constantly as I watch my students grow into artists and begin their creative careers. She was always my advocate, always a champion for me and to be in that orbit of support instilled in me a powerful confidence to do what I do and to love doing it.









FACING PAGE

**Gina Tuzzi**

*Year of the Dog, 2022*

Acrylic and oil on panel

36 in. x 54 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

RIGHT

**Gina Tuzzi**

*Under the Mantle of  
the Treasure Hunter, 2022*

Acrylic on paper

24 in. x 24 in.

Courtesy of the Artist



# Bambi Waterman

MFA 2001

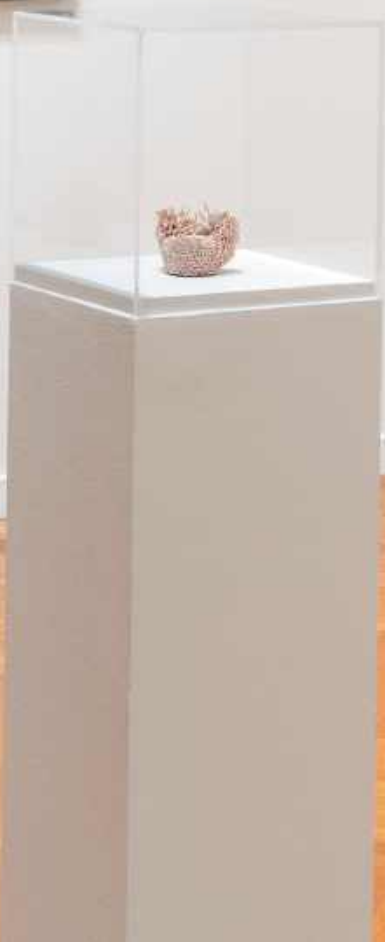
**I AM STILL HEARTBROKEN. SUCH A** great loss. Hung was an amazing, talented, and wonderful being, always so full of life, love, and giving to others. Such a beautiful spirit, I am so grateful to have had her as a mentor. I graduated from the Mills College MFA Program in 2001. I was so fortunate to have had her as one of my graduate advisors. She was always very encouraging and positive in discussions regarding my work. I still treasure a letter she wrote to me while away for an exhibition of her work overseas. Her letter was filled with words of encouragement.

After my graduation from Mills, we continued our correspondence by email. I enjoyed her messages filled with humor, her latest work, and upcoming exhibitions. I was so very honored when she nominated me for the prestigious SECA and TOSA Awards. She invited me to her studio. We shared tea and discussed the latest series she was working on. We discovered to my delight that we share the same birth date, February 17, and that she was a Rat, and I an Ox in the Chinese zodiac. I have a picture of us that day—a beautiful memory. She was a prolific artist, putting such great energy into her work. I am so thankful to have had her support. She is greatly missed. I want to thank Hung for sharing her beautiful gifts with us all.

Bambi Waterman  
Installation view









Bambi Waterman  
*The Garden Below*, 2022  
Oil on panel  
36 in. x 48 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist





CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series, 2021*

Porcelain

4 in. x 4 in. x 3 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Polyp Series, Red, 2020*

Porcelain

5 in. x 5 in. x 5 in.

Collection of Jane Murphy

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series, 2021*

Porcelain

5 in. x 3 in. x 2 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series, 2023*

Oil on panel

8 in. x 8 in.

Courtesy of the Artist





# Works in the Exhibition

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled*, 2004

Graphite on paper

9 ½ in. x 13 ¾ in.

Collection of Maryellen and  
Frank Herrerger, Piedmont

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled (11/10/05)*, 2005

Watercolor on paper

10 in. x 10 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Gift of LAB Partners LP, Salt Lake City, UT  
in honor of Tony Meier

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled (11/20/05)*, 2005

Watercolor on paper

10 in. x 10 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Gift of LAB Partners LP, Salt Lake City, UT  
in honor of Tony Meier

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled (5/4/06)*, 2006

Watercolor on paper

10 in. x 10 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Gift of LAB Partners LP, Salt Lake City, UT  
in honor of Tony Meier

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled*, 2006

Graphite on paper

13 ¾ in. x 13 ¾ in.

Collection of Maryellen and  
Frank Herrerger, Piedmont

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*Untitled*, 2007

Graphite on paper

13 ¾ in. x 13 ¾ in.

Collection of Maryellen and  
Frank Herrerger, Piedmont

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*12/28/22*, 2022

Graphite on paper

16 ½ in. x 15 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Anthony Meier Gallery

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*10/26/23*, 2023

Graphite on paper

17 in. x 15 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Anthony Meier Gallery

**Rosana Castrillo Díaz**

*9/22/22*, 2022

Graphite on paper

16 in. x 14 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Anthony Meier Gallery

**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**

*21.09.22.01 Pyrrol Red Cadmium*

*Yellow Deep Hue Colbalt Blue*, 2021

Watercolor on paper

18 in. x 18 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco

**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**

*21.09.25.01 Pyrrol Red Cadmium*

*Yellow Deep Hue Colbalt Blue*, 2021

Watercolor on paper

18 in. x 18 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco

**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**

*21.09.28.01 Colbalt Blue Cadmium*

*Yellow Deep Hue Pyrrol Red*, 2021

Watercolor on paper

18 in. x 18 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco

**Nicole Phungrasamee Fein**

*Sky*, 2023

Pigmented felt tip pen and  
archival ink jet on rag paper

49 ½ in. x 36 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and  
Nancy Hoffman Gallery, New York

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Sky Cathedral, Sally Ride,*

*Metis and Déjà vu*, 2019

Acrylic on canvas panels

handstitched to constructed canvas

86 ½ in. x 96 ¼ in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Find Where the Wind Goes and*

*Goodbye Horses Centerfold*, 2019

Acrylic on canvas panels handstitched  
to constructed canvas

81 ⅞ in. x 91 ¼ in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Danielle Lawrence**

*Uh Huh Her*, 2020

Repurposed denim, leather, canvas,  
and watercolor on wood

31 ½ in. x 25 in.

Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Museum purchase and gift of the Artist  
and Traywick Contemporary

**Hung Liu**

*Double Happiness*, 2005

Oil on canvas

36 in. x 24 in.

Collection of Kathleen Burke  
and Ralph Davis, Tiburon

**Hung Liu**

*Fu (Happiness)*, 2005

Jacquard tapestry

79 in. x 81 in.

Collection of Kathleen Burke  
and Ralph Davis, Tiburon

**Hung Liu**

*White Rice Bowl*, 2014  
Mixed media  
80 in. x 80 in.  
Collection Mills College Art Museum,  
Gift of the Artist and Trillium Graphics

**Monica Lundy**

*Aurora*, 2017  
From the series *Deviance: Women in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*  
Mixed media with coffee, burned paper, and charcoal on Khadi paper  
55 in. x 38 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and Nancy Toomey Fine Art, San Francisco

**Monica Lundy**

*Eusebia*, 2018  
From the series *Deviance: Women in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*  
Mixed media with coffee, charcoal, gouache, and burned paper on Khadi paper  
30 in. x 22 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and Nancy Toomey Fine Art, San Francisco

**Monica Lundy**

*Idle*, 2018  
From the series *Deviance: Women in the Asylum During the Fascist Regime*  
Mixed media with coffee, burned paper, and charcoal on Khadi paper  
53 in. x 37 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and Turner Carroll Gallery, Santa Fe

**Monica Lundy**

*Camille*, 2021  
Charcoal and gouache on paper  
94 in. x 59 in.  
Gift of the Artist, Tonya Turner Carroll and Michael Carroll, Courtesy of Turner Carroll Gallery, Santa Fe

**Nancy Mintz**

*Time, Being*, 2024  
Brass, paper  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Sandra Ono**

*Untitled (Greensboro III)*, 2019  
Sand, ceramics, and cast resin  
48 in. x 37 in. x 1 ½ in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and  
Bibeau Krueger Gallery, New York

**Sandra Ono**

*Untitled (2302 MH)*, 2022  
Towels, seashells, and acrylic  
9 ½ in. x 7 in. x 2 in.  
Collection of Victoria Belco and William Goodman, Berkeley

**Sandra Ono**

*Untitled (2303)*, 2023  
Sand, resin, pearl, sterling silver and stone earrings  
6 ½ in. x 6 ½ in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and  
Bibeau Krueger Gallery, New York

**Mel Prest**

*Sun Cloud*, 2018  
Acrylic on panel  
60 in. x 60 in. x 2 in.  
Collection Mills College Art Museum, Gift of the Artist and  
Chandra Cerrito Contemporary

**Mel Prest**

*A Clearing*, 2023  
Acrylic and mica on panel  
60 in. x 60 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist and K. Imperial Fine Art

**Mel Prest**

*Untitled*, 2023  
Acrylic on wall with acrylic, metallic, and phosphorescent acrylic on panels  
21 panels 5 in. x 5 in. x 2 in. each  
Courtesy of the Artist and K. Imperial Fine Art

**Susan Preston**

*Heaven of the Milk Babies*, 2010  
Brown paper bag, charcoal, acrylic, foil, inks, pastel, archival glue  
46 in. x 32 ½ in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Susan Preston**

*We'll Never Do That Again*, 2012  
Brown paper bag, inks, foil, lemon juice, green tea, archival glue  
46 in. x 32 ½ in.  
Collection of Jil Hales

**Susan Preston**

*Goodbye Pina Bausch/Full Stop*, 2014  
Brown paper bag, pencil, charcoal, carbon paper, inks, foil, oil pastel, archival glue  
52 in. x 40 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Susan Preston**

*The Weight of Wear/Woman as Verb*, 2022  
Brown paper bag, rabbit skin glue, sand, ink, grease pencil, gouache, olive oil, lemon juice, foil  
57 in. x 30 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Susan Preston**

*Countdown*, 2023  
Brown paper bag, charcoal, acrylic, ink, sand, foil, olive oil, archival glue  
42 in. x 36 ½ in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Earth Sweat (Salar 2)*, 2019  
Graphite on paper  
11 in. x 15 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Mojave*, 2019  
Graphite on paper  
16 ¼ in. x 13 ¼ in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*The whole world was empty and full (Salar 1)*, 2019  
Graphite on paper  
10 in. x 8 ½ in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Waterless Ocean (Salar 3)*, 2019  
Graphite on paper  
10 in. x 13 ½ in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Helios*, 2020  
Graphite on paper  
20 in. x 40 in.  
Courtesy of a Private Collection

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Valley Tilt*, 2021  
Archival pigment prints on aluminum, walnut  
56 in. x 51 in. x 2 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Ponds*, 2021  
Archival pigment print, aluminum, acrylic, and panel  
26 in. x 37 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Jean Dry Lake, December 9, 2022, 2023*  
Graphite on paper  
20 in. x 32 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Rachelle Reichert**

*Spectral*, 2023  
Archival pigment prints on aluminum, chain, walnut, ceramic  
10 ft. x 42 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Yoshiko Shimano**

*HEALING LAND & HEALING SOULS – FUKUSHIMA (B)*, 2022  
Silkscreen, wood monoprint, linoleum cut, and stencil  
45 in. x 96 in.  
Courtesy of the Artist

**Yoshiko Shimano**

*HEALING LAND & HEALING*

*SOULS – KIEV (B)*, 2023

Silkscreen, wood monoprint,

and linoleum cut

45 in. x 96 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Lien Truong**

*Patsy Takemoto Mink ain't*

*afraid of the Dark*, 2019

Oil, silk, acrylic, gold pigment, vintage

silk mourning obi cloth on canvas

72 in. x 60 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Patricia Sweetow Gallery, Los Angeles

**Lien Truong**

*Cornucopia*, 2019

Oil, silk, acrylic, bronze pigment,

19th-century American cotton on canvas

72 in. x 60 in.

Courtesy of the Artist and

Patricia Sweetow Gallery, Los Angeles

**Gina Tuzzi**

*Year of the Dog*, 2022

Acrylic and oil on panel

36 in. x 54 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Gina Tuzzi**

*Under the Mantle of*

*the Treasure Hunter*, 2022

Acrylic on paper

24 in. x 24 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Gina Tuzzi**

*The Toad & the Junebug*, 2023

Acrylic on panel

60 in. x 96 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Polyp Series, Red*, 2020

Porcelain

5 in. x 5 in. x 5 in.

Collection of Jane Murphy

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series*, 2021

Oil on Panel

8 in. x 8 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series*, 2021

Oil on Panel

8 in. x 8 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series*, 2021

Porcelain

4 in. x 4 in. x 3 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Glass Animal Series*, 2021

Porcelain

5 in. x 3 in. x 2 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*Surf Garden*, 2022

Oil on panel

36 in. x 48 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*The Garden Below*, 2022

Oil on panel

36 in. x 48 in.

Courtesy of the Artist

**Bambi Waterman**

*The Garden Beneath the Surface*, 2023

Oil on panel

36 in. x 36 in.

Courtesy of the Artist



# Acknowledgements

**HUNG LIU IS KNOWN FOR HER** extraordinary generosity, both personally and professionally. When she approached me about co-curating an exhibition featuring women artists that she had mentored, it was an opportunity to showcase her remarkable legacy as a teacher. Hung's specific request to highlight women artists is in keeping with her long-held interest in supporting women. I am grateful for the time I spent working with Hung and enjoying her friendship. She made a deep impact on those around her, and it is a pleasure to realize this exhibition in her honor.

Jeff Kelley, a curator and scholar of contemporary Chinese art and Hung Liu's husband, has supported this project from the beginning. His text offers a beautiful meditation on Hung's inspiration and influence.

The exhibition showcases the works of a noteworthy group of Hung's students: Rosana Castrillo Díaz, Nicole Phungrasamee Fein, Danielle Lawrence, Monica Lundy, Nancy Mintz, Sandra Ono, Mel Prest, Susan Preston, Rachelle Reichert, Yoshiko Shimano, Lien Truong, Gina Tuzzi, and Bambi Waterman. I am grateful for each artist's participation and support of *Look Up to the Sky*. Their stories of working with Hung and the reminiscences they share in this publication are a tribute to her legacy as a teacher, mentor, and friend.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the help of many people. In addition to each exhibiting artist, I would like to thank the following individuals and galleries who graciously agreed to lend works for the exhibition:

Victoria Belco and William Goodman, Kathleen Burke and Ralph Davis, Jil Hales, Jane Murphy, Bibeau Krueger Gallery, Nancy Hoffman Gallery, Hosfelt Gallery, K. Imperial Fine Art, Anthony Meier Gallery, Patricia Sweetow Gallery, Nancy Toomey Fine Art, and Turner Carrol Gallery.

A very special thank you goes to Maryellen and Frank Herring for their long and continued support of Hung Liu and the many graduate students who were part of the MFA program at Mills College.

The museum's staff deserve special acknowledgment for their invaluable work: Christa Cesario for managing public programs, publicity, and copy editing this publication; and Sean Howe for overseeing the shipping and installation of the exhibition. Their input, creativity, and ability to manage the multitude of tasks and details required to successfully realize this exhibition and publication are invaluable and deeply appreciated. Our talented team of art preparators, Owen Goodwin, Nahkoura Mahnassi, and Ivan Navarro, ensured a smooth installation and beautiful exhibition for our visitors.

Many thanks also go to John Borruso for his thoughtful and elegant book design. As well as to Dorothy Moss, Director of the Hung Liu Estate, for her support of the project and participation in the exhibition's public programming.

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legacy, and Leah Levy and The Jay DeFeo Foundation, which supported this publication. Hung's legacy mirrors that of the remarkable artist Jay DeFeo, who dedicated the last decade of her life to teaching painting at Mills College. The generous funding from these sources helped make this project possible.

— Stephanie Hanor

"Don't Forget to Play"  
- Hung Liu

Asian food is an absolute necessity  
when gathering a community.

When there is no time to play,  
Play with those you work with.  
Except @ remote hotel w/ghost twins

Hung and I:  
We exchanged  
Ghosts

Manifest humor so infectious  
it disarms  
your sharp directness.

Hung Liu's legacy lives on  
through all of the lives she  
touched.

Hung Liu's Jiu Jin Shan (Old  
Gold Mountain) included over  
200,000 fortune cookies.

Make a circle with your arms  
and give someone a hug.

# Look Up to the Sky Hung Liu's Legacy of Mentoring Women Artists

Rosana Castrillo Díaz  
Nicole Phungrasamee Fein  
Danielle Lawrence  
Monica Lundy  
Nancy Mintz  
Sandra Ono  
Mel Prest  
Susan Preston  
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