

## **Transgressing Lands: Eleven Contemporary Artists Reimagine A Horizon**

Featuring work by Jeannine Bardo, Nancy Cohen, Cristina de Gennaro, Deborah Jack, Natalie Moore, Itty Neuhaus, Nazanin Noroozi, Lina Puerta, Corinne Teed, Elizabeth Velazquez, and Letha Wilson

Curated by A.E. Chapman

### **ELM Foundation | The Boiler**

191 North 14th st. Brooklyn, NY

**February 29th – March 28th, 2024**

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday: 1 – 6pm

**Opening reception: Thursday, February 29th 6:30-9pm**



Image: Nazanin Noroozi  
*The Book of Passages I*, 2023.  
Four-color screen print and toned  
cyanotype prints laid in a drop-spine  
case lined with blue cloth.  
15.5 x 12.5 x 2.5"

The Boiler | ELM Foundation is proud to present ***Transgressing Lands: Eleven Contemporary Artists Reimagine a Horizon*** featuring work by Jeannine Bardo, Nancy Cohen, Cristina de Gennaro, Deborah Jack, Natalie Moore, Itty Neuhaus, Nazanin Noroozi, Lina Puerta, Corinne Teed, Elizabeth Velazquez, and Letha Wilson. Reclaiming the horizon and re-establishing it as a mode of orientation and possibility, these artists explore the potential that landscape offers to locate ourselves within specificities of finite time and place as well as reveal entry points into infinitude. Each artist presents their own stakes including the role of memory and collectivity in containing vanished landscapes; the new terrifying sublime of disaster brought about by escalating climate change, displacement, and warfare; explorations of mindfulness, presence, and care manifested through close and attentive looking; revisions of colonial narratives; and aspects of entropy and renewal inherent within all existence.

In her site-specific intervention *Shift*, **Jeannine Bardo** unpacks varied definitions of the work's title—slide, slip, be displaced, movement, transposition, change, adaptation, recasting, sea change, work stint spell—as they relate to geological, environmental, anthropological, cultural, and historical applications of change within the landscape of The Boiler and its surrounding communities. By transferring rubbings she pulled from aged surfaces within the historical gallery space to free-hanging sheets of rice paper that float in front of each section rubbed, Bardo brings attention to the industrial context of The Boiler in its initial factory operation in the early twentieth century while highlighting quotidian movement in the gallery as each section of the work shifts with breezes from passing bodies, opening doors, and day to day activity in the space.

**Nancy Cohen's** handmade paper works demonstrate the potential and shared delicate, ephemeral quality of paper as a medium to that of the vulnerability and complexity of both the human corporeal body and broader ecological systems. Her visual language employs flowing, organic lines and fractal shapes that blur distinctions between veins, tendrils, and waterways, emphasizing their interconnected fluidity, fragility, and strength while simultaneously challenging and merging presumed separateness between human frailties and those of the planet. Cohen's sculpture presents a self-similarity that echoes this formal presence while reiterating a sense of ephemeral precarity.

Drawing from her experience of aging as a period of both beauty and loss, **Cristina de Gennaro** expands on these thematics through her observations of cyclical transitions of growth, decay,



dissolution, and regeneration manifested in the visual fields of nature. Her charcoal drawings depicting eroding and regenerating flora in New Mexico shift the viewer's gaze downward while the tangle of dense and overlapping vegetation in her *Turf Drawings* from the New York Catskills arrests the gaze, slowing it down, and fosters attentive looking as the eye travels through her meticulous documentation of line, shadow, and form which channels a cerebral, bodily, and spiritual experience of land as a vignette of temporal sublime.

Based in St. Maarten and Jersey City, **Deborah Jack** explores the fragmented, fluctuating, and transient nature of the mediation between sea and land as well as humanity's transgression across these spaces. Through her multidisciplinary practice, Jack examines aspects of natural disaster and seasonal rebirth juxtaposed to the sense of a sea deeply haunted by the terrors of the transatlantic slave trade. Her work in this exhibition features traces of salt and gold as residual remnants of this past; these materials gesture toward a reckoning for these atrocities and the consequences of contemporary ecological sins that play out on an ever-changing shoreline—a shoreline that challenges notions of borders imposed by humans and ideas of land, water, and place as fixed, stable, or acquiescent.

Composed of an interconnected grid of warp and weft, **Natalie Moore's** woven wire sculptures react to and, often, resist their structure. In her newest work *Flood*, Moore responds to the idiosyncrasies within the industrial interior of The Boiler, the work spilling out of a small rectangular nook in the historic brick wall. Intersections within the crossing wires suggest moments of disturbance, destabilization, and deconstruction at some points and sites of mending in others. Moore's navigation of form and transparency evokes the constant movement and shifts of an ultra-sensitive ecological system searching for balance, tumultuously responsive to humanity's turbulence.

In *Kaaterskill Falls in Love Again*, **Itty Neuhaus** scratches directly into the photographic ground of a 20' scroll of back-lit film depicting Kaaterskill Falls in the Catskill Mountains of upstate New York. In the nineteenth century, Hudson River School of Landscape Painting founder Thomas Cole's depictions of Kaaterskill Falls brought notoriety to the site and thus prompted tourism to the Catskills region. Neuhaus layers this iconography as the scroll cascades down the front of the gallery's boiler from 1937, bridging these temporalities within the contemporary life of the exhibition and building. The combination of this juxtaposition and Neuhaus's vigorous incisions reiterates the awe of the falls as well as an ominous sense of their precarity, power, and force, suggesting the violent undercurrent embedded within early American landscape painting in regards to settler colonial displacement of indigenous people from their lands.

Set against the perilous contemporary global background of upheaval and disaster, **Nazanin Noroozi's** *Book of Passages* and *This Bitter Earth* explore displacement and instability across land and water. Engaging with the fraught history of the sublime, the personal, public, and historical archival images that she works from often capture mortality against a backdrop of futility as well as celebration in the face of catastrophe. Noroozi presents, simultaneously, a personal and collective memory that conveys a shared sense of loss and longing. Her painterly assemblage of these scenes elicits a feeling of uncanny familiarity and empathy in the viewer, collapsing temporal, social, and geographical divides.

Informed by her experience as a Colombian-American born in New Jersey and raised in Colombia, **Lina Puerta** engages with the bodily relationship between plants, animals, humans, ancestral knowledge, and discarded materials, specifically their potential for material agency, intimacy, and shared knowledge. Puerta's *Botánico Series* installation interacts with the industrial landscape of The Boiler, providing a new context for the artificial, manufactured plants she uses to mimic



communities of wild plants that persevere within oppressive, human-controlled environments. In her newest work *Rombo (Rhombus)*, Puerta incorporates the diamond, a symbol of femininity as used by indigenous cultures of Colombia including the Embera Chami women in Puerta's hometown of Chinchiná where she purchased the necklaces included in the work on the sidewalk directly from these women. Here, the diamond creates the sensation of a portal within the horizon.

Based in a queer ecological framework, **Corinne Teed's** *The Song of the Bestiary* centers species who participate in the collective pleasure of group sex, with pages and prints of garter snakes in a mating ball and horseshoe crabs huddled on the shoreline. These animals are framed by a background border of flourishing ecosystems, punctuated by waste and symbols of dystopian extraction. In *Feral Utopias*, a multichannel animation with sound, Teed employs scans of 19th century wood engravings made by colonial naturalists to build a speculative world populated by recordings of queer project participants. The soundscape weaves together interviews with the queer participants discussing intersections of queerness in relationship to affinities and alliances with other animals. The work celebrates kinship with the more-than-human, challenging humanity's dominant entitlement to ownership, use, and extractive monetization of Earth.

**Elizabeth Velazquez's** *Invasive Ideologies, Transgressive Systems* incorporates mugwort, bittersweet roots, and wineberry—all plant varieties considered non-native to New York City and invasive—into a large, collapsing grid structure rounded off into a 12' circle. Engaging with the specificity of our physical and temporal orientation to the ground as a site of terrestrial, celestial, and spiritual negotiation, Velazquez considers the grid, a distinctively human expression of structure and order, and the territories of native peoples violated by the invasive footprint of colonization as well as contemporary concerns regarding territory and migration. Through her exploration of roundness, Velazquez softens these rigid barriers in an effort to soften hard edges of brittle ideologies.

Integrating steel, concrete, and photo imagery rooted in nature, **Letha Wilson** expands the visual field of both landscape and photography. In her new works *Yellowstone Steel Cut (Hole)* and *Yellowstone Steel Cut (Slash)*, a hole and a slash cut through two Kodak Cibachrome prints of a mountain range in the distance, creating voids in the center of the composition while her *Salt Flats Cement Dip (3)* from 2013 demonstrates an early period of her exploration into cement. Across her oeuvre, Wilson transposes natural and urban environments and presents the potential for coexistence; yet, the voids represented in the recent Kodak Cibachrome prints depicting undeniable violence, erasure, and extraction bring to the fore the imminent threat of diminishing resources and extinction.

*Transgressing Lands* brings together artists working with coded concepts of sight and site packaged into everyday notions of pictorial landscape and reorienting them into portraits of alternate realities. Their works in this exhibition form a community of dialogues calling for rethinking and reimagining of potential found when we consider, with care, our relationship to our surrounding environment and each other.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

**March 9, 1-3pm** Steam Works free youth workshop with exhibiting artists

**March 9 and 16, 4pm** Artist Discussion Panels

**March 23, 7pm** *Repairing Place: Queer Visions of Land and Water* A sunset outdoor screening of films selected by exhibiting artist Corinne Teed following exhibition closing celebration

**Exhibition made possible in part by funding from the Jacques & Natasha Gelman Foundation**



## ARTIST BIOS

**Jeannine Bardo** is a multi-disciplinary artist, art educator, curator, and the Founder and Artistic Director of Stand4 Gallery and Community Arts Center, which opened in 2017. Her artistic practice includes drawing, sculpture, storytelling, and installations that explore the nuances of our relationship to the natural world and to one another.

Bardo received her BFA in illustration from the School of Visual Arts and completed both a Masters in Art Education and a Masters in Fine Arts from Brooklyn College. In 2019, she collaborated on a DCLA NYC Public Artwork titled Ark for the Arts that focused on climate change and resiliency in the community of Red Hook, Brooklyn. She has over ten years of experience as a curator in both the public and private realms. In 2019 Bardo Co-founded BioBAT Art Space and co-curated the inaugural exhibition. In the Spring of 2023, she directed the public art exhibition Bay Ridge Through an Ecological Lens, curated by Jennifer McGregor for Stand4 Gallery and was a recipient of a 2023 Brooklyn Arts Council, BAF grant for this project. This interactive, public, community art exhibition featured over twenty artists from the New York area and consisted of nature walks, poetry events, artist talks, and community interventions in the gallery, and in various locations throughout the Bay Ridge community and ended with a film screening at the local movie theater featuring works by local documentary filmmakers.

She is a lifelong resident of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and a believer in community and collaboration.

**Nancy Cohen** is a visual artist whose experimental works of paper and sculpture installations often include hand-made glass, cement, reformed found objects, metal, and rubber. Through her work, she examines resiliency in relation to the environment and the human body. Cohen's work is in the permanent collections of the New Jersey State Museum, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Museum, Montclair Art Museum, and Yale University Art Museum, among others. Her work has been reviewed in the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Village Voice*, *ArtFuse*, *ArtNews*, *Interior Design Magazine*, and *Sculpture Magazine*. Awards include fellowships from the NJ State Council on the Arts, the Brodsky Center, the Pollock Krasner Foundation, a Denbo Fellowship from Pyramid Atlantic Art Center, and the Murray Reich Distinguished Artist Award from New York Foundation for the Arts. She has been awarded residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Millay Colony, Dieu Donne, Pilchuck Glass School, WheatonArts, Bullseye Glass, Women's Studio Workshop, The Tides Institute, and a recipient of the Murray Reich Distinguished Artist Award. Cohen received her MFA from Columbia University and her BFA from Rochester Institute of Technology, and she attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She teaches at Queens College and Pratt Institute.

**Cristina de Gennaro** has exhibited in museums and galleries nationally including the Portland Art Museum, the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, the Glyndor Gallery at Wave Hill, Nexus Contemporary Art Center, the Dallas Museum of Art, Portland Center for the Visual Arts, San Antonio Museum of Art, the Center on Contemporary Art, and The Women's Building, among others. She has been the recipient of fellowships from the Wurlitzer Foundation, the Millay Colony, the Fundacion Valparaiso, Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts, the Jentel Foundation, and was visiting artist at the American Academy in Rome and the GlogauAIR Artist Residency Program. Her work has been reviewed in the *New York Times*, *High Performance*, *Artweek*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *Dallas Times Herald*,



and *The Oregonian*, among others. She has received artist grants from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Oregon Arts Commission, and the Portland Arts Commission. De Gennaro received her MFA in Studio Art from Stanford University and is currently adjunct professor of Art at William Paterson University and New Jersey City University.

**Deborah Jack** is a St. Maarten/ Jersey City based multi-disciplinary artist whose work is based in video/sound installation, photography, painting, and text. Her work engages a variety of strategies for mining the intersections of colonial histories, cultural memory, ecology, and climate change, while negotiating a global present. In Fall 2021, *Deborah Jack: 20 Years* was presented at Pen + Brush in New York City. She has exhibited her work at PAMM, SITE Santa Fe Biennial, Brooklyn Museum of Art, TENT Rotterdam, the Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art & Storytelling, and the Jersey City Museum. Her work has been reviewed in *ArtNews*, *Hyperallergic*, *Artsy*, *Whitehot*, *Frieze* and *BOMB Magazine*. She is a 2023 Changing Climate Resident at the Santa Fe Art Institute and a recent AIR at The Surfpoint Foundation Residency. Jack was awarded the 2023 Soros Art Fellowship & was selected for the Prospect 6 Triennial this Fall.

**Natalie Moore** is an artist and educator working in Brooklyn, NY. Her practice includes sculpture, works on paper, and installation. Moore has exhibited her work nationally and internationally since 1987 at diverse venues such as the Shirley Fiterman Art Center, NYC, the Spartanburg Art Museum, SC, artMoving Projects, NYC, the Textile Art Center, NYC, Gallería Arté Mexicano, Mexico City, Mexico, White Columns, NYC, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, NYC.

She is a recipient of grants and awards from the Pollock/Krasner Foundation, Pratt Institute, Textile Arts Center, and Artists Space. Moore's work has been featured in *Sculpture Magazine*, and *CNN International* and reviewed in several publications including the *New York Times*, *New York Newsday*, and *USA Today*. Moore received an MA in Studio Art, NYU in 1992 and BA in Fine Art, from University of California, Santa Cruz in 1987.

**Itty Neuhaus** is a multi-disciplinary artist addressing change in nature. She is an associate professor at State University of New York at New Paltz and the recipient of two Fulbright Fellowships including the Fulbright Arctic Initiative where she spent three weeks observing changes to icebergs on the Labrador Sea. She has attended residencies including MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and most recently Tau Hau Tan in Anhui Province, China. Solo shows include Stadthaus Ulm, Germany, University of Oulu, Finland, and the Sculpture Center, Black and White Gallery, and Kentler International Drawing Space in New York.

**Nazanin Noroozi** is a multi-disciplinary artist incorporating moving images, printmaking and alternative photography processes to reflect on notions of collective memory and displacement. Noroozi's work has been widely exhibited at galleries and museums across the world including SPACES, Cleveland, OH; Athopos, Athens, Greece; Golestani Gallery, Dusseldorf, Germany; Immigrant Artist Biennial, NARS, Brooklyn; Noyes Museum of Art, New Jersey; as well as NY Live Arts, School of Visual Arts, and Postcrypt Art Gallery at Columbia University. She is the recipient of awards and fellowships from New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship (film and video), Marabeth Cohen-Tyler Print/Paper Fellowship at Dieu Donne, Artistic Freedom Initiative, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, and Mass MoCA residency. She is an editor at large of *Kaarnamaa*; A Journal of Art History and



Criticism. Noroozi completed her MFA in painting and drawing from Pratt Institute. Her works have been featured in various publications and media including, *Die Zeit Magazine*, *Evergreen Review*, *BBC*, *Elephant Magazine*, *Financial Times*, and *Brooklyn Rail*.

**Lina Puerta** examines the relationship between nature and the human-made, and engages in themes of food justice, xenophobia, hyper-consumerism, and ancestral knowledge, drawing from her experience as a Columbian-American. Puerta was born in New Jersey, raised in Colombia and lives and works in New York City. She holds an MS in Art Education from CUNY and has been honored with numerous awards including the 2023 NAWA Artist Residency; 2020 KODA Lab Artist-in-Residency, 2019/2020 Artist-in-Residence at the Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art and Storytelling, 2017-NYFA Fellowship in Crafts/Sculpture, 2017 Artist-in-Residency at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans, the 2016 Dieu Donné Workspace Residency, Artprize-8 Sustainability Award, 2015 Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Grant, 2015 Kohler Arts Industry Residency, 2013-14 Smack Mellon Art Studio Program. Exhibition venues include solo exhibits at the New York Botanical Garden, Hunter East Harlem Gallery, and Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art and Storytelling; group exhibits at Ford Foundation Gallery, Museum of Biblical Art, El Museo del Barrio, Socrates Sculpture Park, Wave Hill, in New York City; 21C Museum Hotels in Louisville, KY; and El Museo de la Tertulia in Cali, Colombia. Puerta's work has been written about in *Hyperallergic*, *the New York Times*, *Brooklyn Rail*, and *Sculpture Magazine*, among others.

**Corinne Teed** is a research-based artist working in printmaking, book arts, time-based media, and social practice. Their work lives at the intersections of queer theory, ecology, and critical animal studies in the context of settler colonialism. Much of their creative practice centers on relationships, whether through collaboration, participation, interview-based research, or encounters with the more-than-human. They have attended residencies at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Women's Studio Workshop, ACRE Projects, and more. Support for their work has come from a McKnight Book Arts Fellowship with the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, a Northern Spark Project Grant, and research grants from academic institutions where they have taught. Additionally, their work is supported by ongoing relationships with communities working toward social justice and ecosystem health. Their art and pedagogy are rooted in a decade spent as a community organizer and grassroots educator.

**Elizabeth Velazquez** uses her practice to facilitate human interaction and spiritual connectivity. Through ritual, intention and immersive, mixed-media installations, Velazquez turns historic or industrial sites into places for spiritual contemplation and intrapersonal mediation. Her interest in the divine has led her to explore the many dimensions of the color black and its relationship to sacredness, the unconscious and primordial energies. Her process centers on destruction and reconstruction, and connecting with a desire to transform physical, psychological, and social injustices. Velazquez is a founding member of SEQAA (Southeast Queens Artist Alliance). In 2018, she participated in the SEQ Biennial through which she received a commission for new work from No Longer Empty Curatorial Lab. Velazquez earned a mini-grant from the 2018 Reimagine End of Life festival for the completion of a ritual at Washington Square Park, NY. Velazquez also held a residency at Cigar Factory located in LIC, Queens, and is a recipient of the 2019 Apexart International Fellowship. In 2023, she was commissioned by The Lehman College Art Gallery for the New York Latin American Art Triennial.



**Letha Wilson** was born in Honolulu, HI and was raised in Greeley, CO. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY and Hudson, NY. She earned her BFA from Syracuse University, NY in 1998, and an MFA from Hunter College, NY in 2003. Residencies include The MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, NH, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Madison, ME, The Yaddo Foundation, NY, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, NE, and Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito, CA. Wilson's work has been featured in recent solo exhibitions at The Richard and Dolly Maass Gallery, SUNY Purchase, NY; GRIMM, London, Amsterdam and New York, NY; Higher Pictures Generation, Brooklyn, NY; Anderson Ranch, Aspen, CO; the Center for Contemporary Art and Culture, Portland, OR; the DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA, and Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris. Wilson has recently participated in group exhibitions at Frosch & Co., New York, NY; the New York Public Library, New York, NY; The Henie Onstad Triennial for Photography and New Media, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden; MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA; MACRO Museo d' Arte Contemporanea, Rome; Essl Museum, Klosterneuburg; Bemis Center for Contemporary Art in Omaha, NE; Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, NY; Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, NY; and the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT.

#### **ABOUT THE BOILER**

The Boiler is an arts gallery space within ELM Foundation that provides equitable access to exhibition space, creative resources, and mentorship. Through ELM Foundation, we offer youth the chance to work with exhibiting artists in our Steam Works series. Designed as a free workshop, students engage in projects with the current exhibiting artist directly related to their practice and work on display in The Boiler. In addition to this educational series, we host Community Works events for the general public such as artist panels, performances, and screenings. Funding from all activities within The Boiler supports ELM kids programming.

#### **ABOUT ELM FOUNDATION**

ELM Foundation is a community-based nonprofit that promotes the healing and transformative power of the arts. Our methods include advocating the benefits of arts therapy, providing multidisciplinary arts education, and facilitating a nurturing environment for self-expression, all working together to form a regenerative creative collective.

