



NANCY GRUSKIN INVENTED VESSELS

APRIL 19 – JUNE 3, 2022



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Invented Vessels presents ten still-life paintings by Nancy Gruskin that explore the relationship between recognizability and invention. Ceramic bowls and vases of various shapes and scales are arranged atop brilliant hues and patterned textiles. Adorned in surface decorations, the vessels carve out space within the picture planes, defining the compositions through color and form. Gruskin developed this body of work in conjunction with her foray into ceramics. She explains that “these vessels and the compositions in which they appear are improvised; yet much of the other subject matter depicted exists in the real world.”

The subjects Gruskin chooses to paint — whether real or imagined — are not out of the ordinary. In addition to ceramics, recurring motifs include tulips, lemons, table linens, and in one instance, a banana. These commonplace items are given dynamism and personality through their lyrical shapes and thoughtful placements. In about half the works, Gruskin introduces a figural element: the inclusion of her hands.

Her arms enter from edges and corners with the same directness as her portrayal of inanimate objects. Whether dividing or framing the composition, they function to balance the pictorial space. The presence of the artist incorporates an autobiographical element into the paintings, revealing the maker’s hand and underscoring the notion that these are arranged, choreographed spaces.

Gruskin’s innovative still-lives expand on an age-old genre. Certain titles allude to specific masters or styles, such as *Bonnard’s Table* and *Marimekko Curtain*. Recalling mid-century aesthetics, she simplifies her ceramics into pared down forms and omits extraneous details to capture the essence of her subjects. Shallow swathes of color give way to compressed perspectives and signal her interest in realizing form over depth. By flattening objects that are typically experienced — and created — in the round, Gruskin strips the inherent curvature of her vessels. The elevational viewpoints focus our attention not on their sculptural traits, but on their surface design. She creates a tantalizing play between structured and expressive patterns, moving between geometric grids and organic, curvilinear strokes. Artworks within artworks, Gruskin’s imagined vessels bring new light to domestic interiors.

— NANCY MARGOLIS GALLERY

TWO LEMONS

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

30 x 30 inches



BONNARD'S TABLE

2022

Acrylic gouache on panel

24 x 30 inches



BROWN VESSEL, RED TULIP

2021

Flashe & acrylic on canvas

39 x 28 inches



MAKE IT UP AS WE GO ALONG

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

16 x 20 inches



NIGHT KITCHEN

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

22 x 28 inches



FOUR WONKY POTS

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

16 x 20 inches



FLORA

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

29.75 x 40 inches



HEAD IN THE SKY

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

40 x 29.75 inches



MARIMEKKO CURTAIN

2022

Acrylic gouache on panel

24 x 30 inches



VIOLET

2021

Acrylic gouache on panel

22 x 29.75 inches





The works in *Invented Vessels* are part of an ongoing conversation between my painting practice and my recent foray into ceramics. Bowls and vases invented in the paintings have led to works in clay which, in turn, have become references for the paintings. These vessels and the compositions in which they appear are improvised; yet much of the other subject matter depicted exists in the real world. I am drawn to certain objects because of their color or their shape or the pattern they display. Very often the attraction has added personal meaning. The tulip flower is a recurring image in my work. Tulips appeal to me visually as forms, but they also signify a particularly joyful period in my life.

— NANCY GRUSKIN



EDUCATION

- 2004 J.D., New England School of Law, Boston, MA
1998 Ph.D., Art History, Boston University, Boston, MA
1990 B.A., Art History & Studio Art, Connecticut College, New London, CT

EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Invented Vessels*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, online
2021 *Annual Juried Exhibition*, Juror: Sangram Majumdar, Prince Street Gallery, New York, NY
Pollinator, Gold/scophilia*, Montclair, NJ
2020 *Life, Still*, LaiSun Keane, Boston, MA
What We Had on Hand - Jordan Kessler + Nancy Gruskin, LaiSun Keane, Boston, MA
2019 *Space Heater*, Able Baker Contemporary, Portland, ME
Smallish, Melanie Carr Gallery, Essex, CT
Goodbye Hello, Room 83 Spring, Watertown, MA
Art at Kings Oaks 2019, Newtown, PA
In the Figurative Sense, The Dolphin Gallery, Hingham, MA
Annual Juried Exhibition, Juror: Ro Lohin, Bowery Gallery, New York, NY
National Juried Exhibition, Juror: Nancy Margolis, First Street Gallery, New York, NY
2018 *NE Collective IX*, Juror: Marni Katz, Galatea Fine Art, Boston, MA
Annual Juried Exhibition, Juror: Karen Wilkin, Bowery Gallery, New York, NY
Paper Cut, Musa Collective, Boston, MA
2017 *Honoring the Legacy of David Park*, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA
Life from Life, Room 83 Spring, Watertown, MA
2016 *Annual Juried Exhibition*, Juror: Graham Nickson, Prince Street Gallery, New York, NY
2015 *NE Collective VI*, Juror: Mim Brooks Fawcett, Galatea Fine Art, Boston, MA

PRESS

- 2021 Artist Talk — Black Pond Studio
2018 Boston Voyager Magazine
2017 Jimon Magazine
Savvy Painter Podcast

