



FEATURED ARTISTS

Women's Leadership Initiative 10th Anniversary Reception, 11/15/2022, 5:30-7p.m.

NOW Art is honored to curate the Art Fair for the ULI-LA Women's Leadership Initiative 10th Anniversary Reception. Four LA-based women artists will showcase their work: Leah Smithson, Jacqui C. Smith, Stephanie Mercado, and Kelly Lamb. These artists are defining diverse storylines through their works and leading the LA art scene across digital, murals, print-making, and sculptors. Individually and collectively, their works are a part of the built environment and they are shining a light on LA as a Creative Capital.

Leah Smithson

Digital Artist | www.leahsmithson.com | IG @leahsmithsonart



Leah Smithson is a Los Angeles based artist with a surrealistic nature to her work, using both traditional and new media (i.e. virtual and augmented reality) to create immersive art experiences. Having moved around as a kid, her style comes from a patchwork of influences from classical painting to cyberpunk. She uses nature & portraiture to express the complexities of being human. In her public art installations, her goal is to create little rabbit holes of experiences in the cityscape, providing moments of inspiration to remind us that our lives are about more than just surviving.

She's collaborated with major brands, such as Apple, in public art projects. She's worked and exhibited throughout the US and abroad, including Scope Miami during Art Basel week. She's also been interviewed and has had her art featured in a variety of TV, print and digital magazines such as ABC7, Voyage LA, Atlanta Magazine, CBS's Good Day Sacramento, and The Hedonist Magazine. She's also been invited to co-host a podcast with a highly esteemed medical professional about art and your brain called Vessel: Art as a Doorway, where they discuss the tangible benefits of living with art individually & in communities. She continues using her mixed media and new media work to create immersive art experiences at CLSS studio in the Arts District.

Jacqui C. Smith

Illustrator | www.jacquicsmith.com | IG @jacquicsmith



Illustrator Jacqui C. Smith creates unique portraits depicting women and girls of color that paint an intriguing image of female diversity. Her illustrations uplift and empower women and girls through art and self-identity. For the last eight years, she's worked as a professional freelance illustrator creating children's books for self-publishers and publishing companies, and murals. She has worked on projects for Walmart, Duck Studios Animation, and Disney while also selling her artwork at boutiques and art galleries across the country.

Stephanie Mercado

Painting | Printmaking | Graphic Design | www.stephaniemercado.com | IG @iluvpaper



Stephanie Mercado is an interdisciplinary artist and art administrator, born and raised in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles. Her artwork and artistic practice are centered on the workforce, manual labor, and empowerment. Her imagery is eclectic, inspired by lived experiences, cultural references, and the fusion of traditional printmaking with experimental practices. Mercado's print-based collages are comprised of relief carvings printed on handmade colored papers. The labor-intensive work pays homage to the working hand, historical traditions of craft, and professions rooted in labor and labors of love.

Her portraits pay homage to workers and their contributions to society. Some of her images weave pop culture references or historical paintings to create new narratives that explore how images influence our cultural experiences and values in the current day. She incorporates organic elements to reference the natural world and the larger role we play as interconnected human beings. The floral bouquets are used as a metaphor for growth, flourishing, and flowering into being.

In 2021, she was commissioned to create the third installment for the Skirball Cultural Center's Sustain: From Loss to Renewal installation paying tribute to essential workers and was awarded her first public art project, a community-focused mural titled East Los Luv. Mercado received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting from California State University Long Beach. She has received artist residencies and awards from the Tamarind Institute in Albuquerque, NM and the International Print Center New York (IPCNY).

Kelly Lamb

Sculptor, Multidisciplinary Artist | www.kellylamb.net | IG @kellylambstudios



Kelly Lamb is an Artist whose work spans diverse disciplines. Her work has been exhibited internationally in museums, galleries and art fairs including: Gavlak Gallery, Los Angeles; LAXART, Los Angeles; the MOCA store, Los Angeles; The New Museum, NYC; The Andrea Rosen Gallery, NYC; R & Company, NYC; The Future Perfect, Los Angeles; Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, France; Agnes B., Paris, France; Art Basel, Switzerland/Miami; the Armory Show, NYC; and ALAC, Los Angeles. Lamb has had two solo exhibitions in New York City at Spencer Brownstone and the Newman Popiashvili Gallery.

Kelly's work has been showcased and received reviews in Architectural Digest, Artforum, Art Net, Art News, C Magazine, Cultured Magazine, Dwell, Flash Art, the Huffington Post, ICON Magazine, ID Magazine, Los Angeles Magazine, The Los Angeles Times, The New Yorker, The New York Times, Sunset, Surface Magazine, Time Out, and W Magazine. Public works installed at Palmetto Station, Miami, The Proper Hotel, Santa Monica, Human Condition (the Hospital Show) Los Angeles. Public design projects include Malo Restaurant and El Prado, both in Los Angeles. Originally from Marblehead, Massachusetts, Lamb received her BFA from Bennington College.

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