

# eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release:

## OPENING DAY LINEUP

Kelsey Brookes • Uday Dhar • Elise Ferguson • Susan Fortgang • Allison Gildersleeve  
Huê Thi Hoffmaster • Dan Levenson • Keiko Narahashi • Pat Passlof  
Toni Ross • Richard Tinkler • Rob Wynne

Eric Firestone Gallery  
4 Newtown Lane | East Hampton, NY 11937  
May 25 – June 23, 2024

Eric Firestone Gallery is thrilled to announce *Opening Day Lineup*, an exhibition celebrating the gallery's fifteenth season in East Hampton. *Opening Day Lineup* utilizes an exuberant array of shapes, color, and pattern to create a dynamic conversation between contemporary and historic works. The exhibition showcases a variety of media including poured glass, glazed stoneware, pigmented plaster, fiber and shaped textiles, along with oil, gouache, and ink painting. A host of distinct perspectives and backgrounds are represented by the artists on view.

Eric Firestone Gallery is also pleased to announce that The Garage will re-open by appointment beginning Memorial Day Weekend. The Garage is the gallery's sweeping 7,000 square-foot warehouse space at 62 Newtown Lane. The curation will rotate through the summer, with a "salon" installation combining historic material represented by the gallery, and younger generations of contemporary artists. Continuing to introduce new voices and establish connections with historically significant artists remains central to the gallery's mission and its long-standing presence on Newtown Lane in East Hampton.

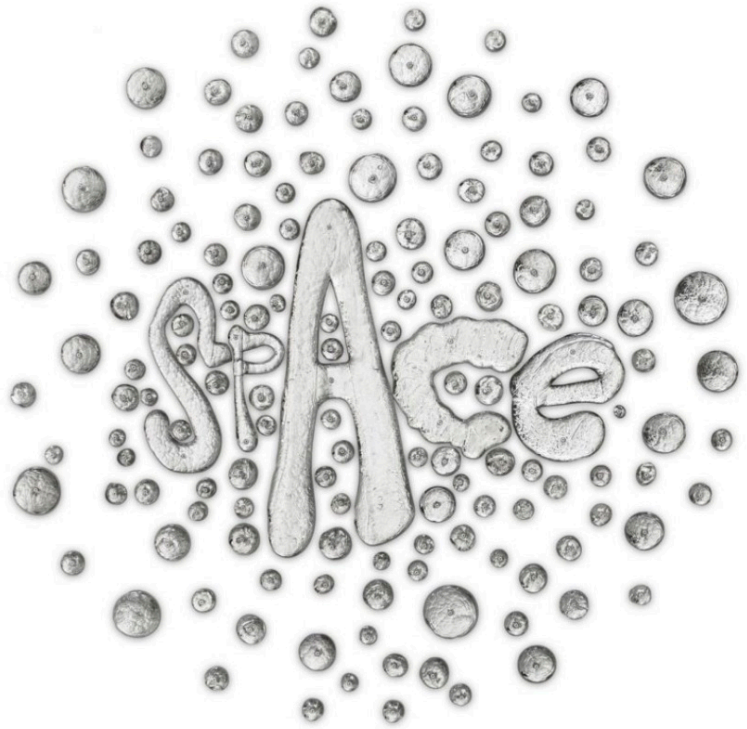
The work of three artists on view in *Opening Day Lineup*: Kelsey Brookes (b. Denver, CO, 1978), Richard Tinkler (b. Westminster, MD, 1975), and Elise Ferguson (b. Richmond, VA, 1964) utilize pattern and repetition to explore paths of energy, vibration, and



Kelsey Brookes | *Muscimol* | 2020  
cut and sewn Indian tapestries mounted on  
shaped strainer bars  
82h x 55w in

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metaphysical states. Brookes is a former scientist whose work is informed by research into mathematical and scientific concepts, along with his studies of natural and synthetic hallucinogens. Brookes reimagines molecular processes as tactile large-scale abstractions that reference Eastern contemplative traditions. Tinkler layers intricately repeated marks to create kaleidoscopic abstractions. His paintings and drawings reflect an approach that is instinctual and labor intensive, structured and hallucinatory. These patterned visions resemble psychedelic tapestries or mystical environments. Ferguson is a painter who creates works based on mathematical puzzles and geometric variation. Ferguson's process involves scraping layers of pigmented Venetian plaster onto panels and drawing repeating linear forms using graphite pencil, sometimes reinforcing these borders by silk screening plaster onto the surface. The play of positive and negative spaces resulting from the repetitive silk screening process creates the optical illusion of constant movement. The undulating patterns encourage states of meditation and hypnosis.



Rob Wynne | *Space* | 2024  
poured and mirrored glass  
36h x 36w in

Paintings from the 1960s by Susan Fortgang (b. New York, NY, 1944) and recent paintings by Uday Dhar (b. London, England, 1957) form a compelling pairing: both employing combinations of curving and linear forms across their surfaces to explore fragmentation and juxtaposition. Their work is abstract, but Dhar refers to his paintings as portraits, and Fortgang titles hers “interiors.” Dhar was born in England and raised in India before immigrating to the United States. The artist's hybrid identity, as American, South Asian, and queer, has influenced Dhar's interest in the tension between self-expression and cultural heritage. Dhar's ongoing series *American Portraits of the Zeitgeist* emerged from the chaos of the pandemic and evolved into a dialogue around immigration policies. The idea of parts coming together is a metaphor for the discrete pieces of the artist fitted together, overlapping or adjacent, but functioning as a whole.

Susan Fortgang approaches each canvas as an experiment, working out a specific problem

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Allison Gildersleeve | *Tangle* | 2024  
oil on canvas  
50h x 42w in

or trying something new with every painting. She creates paintings with a physical presence, often using thick layers of paint to create textured surfaces or iridescent medium so that her works create optical effects as the viewer moves in space.

Hanging weavings by **Toni Ross** (b. New York, NY, 1957) will be on view. International maritime signal flags recur throughout her oeuvre and represent a form of communication at once functional and beautiful. These flags cross language barriers and are universally recognized. For Ross they are symbolic of healing and a recognition that collaboration is necessary. **Dan Levenson's** (b. New York, NY, 1972) work is also concerned with how geometric forms can speak through time and space. A conceptual painter, his work takes the form of artifacts rescued from the ruins of an imaginary art school: the State Art Academy, Zürich. The resulting

paintings follow a strict formalist pedagogy of this imaginary school, where each work is divided metrically to create abstract geometries, softened by their aged tactility.

Paintings by **Huê Thi Hoffmaster** (b. Lancaster, PA, 1982) and **Allison Gildersleeve** (b. New London, CT, 1970) shift between abstraction and representation, using still life and landscape as an occasion for dense, active thickets of linear brushwork. The son of Vietnamese and American parents, Hoffmaster cultivates tension in his paintings between Eastern and Western aesthetic traditions, intuition and intention, stillness, and action. The floral bouquets of his compositions combine delicate blossoms with heavy bursts of color. Hoffmaster sees the flowers as stand-ins for human personalities and presences. Gildersleeve reinterprets the genre of landscape painting through warped perspective, high key color, and closely cropped scenes of nature. Gildersleeve's images of the natural world are far from inert and tranquil but rather vibrate with dense brush marks. Her seemingly familiar environments jettison the natural order of things in favor of a space that uses memory as a guide. These will be shown alongside abstract paintings from the 1960s by **Pat Passlof** (b. Brunswick, GA, 1928; d. New York, NY, 2011) who believed, above all, in the intuitive intelligence of the interaction between the painter and the canvas.

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Her work resisted narrative but nevertheless evokes memories of place, sensation, and experience.

**Rob Wynne** (b. New York, 1948) and **Keiko Narahashi** (b. Tokyo, Japan, 1959) create drawings in space: Wynne with poured glass wall works, and Narahashi with tabletop glazed stoneware sculptures. Wynne eschews the traditional technique of glassblowing, instead hand-pouring glass into shapes that together form short phrases of text, as well as resembling shimmering raindrops or dew on a spiderweb. The glass text pieces are deliberately reflective so that the viewer sees themselves while reading these open-ended phrases. Narahashi is an artist interested in the translation of one material form into

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For further information, contact: [press@ericfirestonegallery.com](mailto:press@ericfirestonegallery.com)