

# eric firestone gallery

**For Immediate Release:**

## Art | Basel Miami Beach

**Eric Firestone Gallery — Booth B1**

Miami Beach Convention Center

VIP Preview: December 4–5, 2024

Public Days: December 6–8, 2024

Elise Asher • Cato • Martha Edelheit • Lauren dela Roche  
Susan Fortgang • Huê Thi Hoffmaster • Marie Johnson-Calloway • Seffa Klein  
Roy Lichtenstein • David MacDonald • Christabel MacGreevy • Joe Overstreet  
Pat Passlof • Miriam Schapiro • Paul Waters

Eric Firestone Gallery is pleased to announce its participation in the 2024 edition of Art Basel Miami Beach. The presentation layers contemporary and historic artists, foregrounding the gallery's commitment to developing scholarship on significant American artists, and highlighting aesthetic connections across decades.

The gallery's Art Basel presentation highlights the work of women artists and post-World War II abstraction. Over the past several years, women artists have broken sales records and achieved scholarly and institutional recognition for their role in Abstract Expressionism. Early paintings by **Pat Passlof (1928–2011)** were recently acquired by the Whitney Museum of American Art and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. Her 12-foot wide 1961-62 painting *Atheneum* will be on view. *Atheneum* is an example of what the writer David Jacobsen Loncle termed Passlof's "garden of paint," with yellows, greens, and purples creating dynamic rhythms across the surface. Passlof's process, which involved a meditative relationship to the paint and a simultaneous release of agency, is foregrounded in the painting's title. **Elise Asher (1912–2004)** was a painter and poet whose integration of poetry into her works represents a significant contribution to New York School painting. Asher's work of the early 1950s utilizes expressive, energetic linear brushwork; by 1961, Asher introduced text from her own poetry into these masses—creating atmospheric clouds of color which blur the line between brushwork and



Marie Johnson-Calloway | *School Crossing Guard* | 1985  
acrylic on found cotton feedsack with acrylic varnish  
76 1/2h x 50w in

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Pat Passlof | *Untitled* | 1959  
oil on canvas paper  
31h x 38w in

writing. **Susan Fortgang (b. 1944)** creates paintings with a physical presence, using thick layers of paint to form textured surfaces. In the 1970s, Fortgang began using acrylic paint, creating work that looks like weavings. Drawing from her earliest experiences of making with knitting, crochet, and Bargello, Fortgang created hard-edge lines in the structure of a grid that refer both to painting's history and that of textiles.

**Miriam Schapiro (1923–2015)** is renowned as a leading figure within the women's art movement, known for her innovative 'femmage' work, combining women's crafts into her paintings of the 1970s, a monumental example of which

is currently on view at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC. Recently, more attention has been given to the pioneering computer work that Schapiro made between 1969 and 1971. As an art professor at the University of California, San Diego, Schapiro had begun making hard-edge geometric paintings. She collaborated with a computer scientist and physicist on software that generated different perspectival possibilities and rotations of her compositions. All the while, Schapiro maintained a feminist voice. This fall, four separate museum exhibitions highlight Schapiro's work of the period, all focusing on art and technology: *Particles and Waves: Southern California Abstraction and Science, 1945–1990* at the Palm Springs Art Museum; *Radical Software: Women, Art & Computing 1960–1991* at Mudam Luxembourg (traveling to Kunsthalle Wien); *Electric Op* at Buffalo AKG Art Museum; and *The Living End: Painting and Other Technologies, 1970–Present*, at the MCA Chicago.

The contemporary artists on view include Lauren dela Roche, Huê Thi Hoffmaster (b. 1982), Christabel MacGreevy (b. 1991), Seffa Klein, and Cato. **Lauren dela Roche (b. 1983)**, who is currently an artist-in-residence at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans, makes richly layered figurative paintings on found and repurposed cotton feedsacks, referencing image sources including zines, European modernisms, and autobiography. A nude woman, multiplied and echoed throughout, appears in dream-like environments of ancient Greek archways, Matissean-patterned wall tapestries, and amongst larger-than-life butterflies, snakes, and swans. Dela Roche, who considers eco-theory and ideas about re-wilding, sees her as a symbol of Mother Nature. Similarly, the flower forms in **Huê Thi Hoffmaster's** calligraphic thickets of paint are stand-ins for figuration and states of mind. His work oscillates between Eastern and Western painting traditions. Recent paintings utilize a black ground; the artist considers bits of light streaming through a forest canopy as a metaphor for glimmers of human attention and nurturing. **Christabel MacGreevy's** painted ceramic works subversively explore the

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Huè Thi Hoffmaster | *I Want to be Adored (It Only Takes a Moment)* | 2024  
oil on canvas  
82h x 144w in.

performance of gender identity, personal and pagan mythology. MacGreevy envisions the figures on her vessels living out their lives with an expression of freedom, fluidity, and nonconformity. **Seffa Klein (b. 1996)** is a French-American artist whose work is grounded in the intersection of science, aesthetics, and meditation. She paints in acrylic on heat-resistant woven glass canvas and applies a plaster bas-relief, forming a skeletal structure, before gilding the surface with molten bismuth metal. **Cato (b. 1999)** is a multi-media British artist who works with painted and collaged canvas forms to express the energy of the city, Black culture, and relationships between people: musicians, couples, and friends. He mines a multitude of visual sources for his paintings: historical archives, art history, and his own polaroids, creating a deliberate disjuncture between the photorealist style of the faces, and the loose geometric style of the rest of the paintings.

The work of Black abstractionists is another significant aspect of the presentation, as well as the gallery's program at large. **Joe Overstreet (1933–2019)** will be represented with an installation of 1964 black ground works on paper, never previously exhibited. Overstreet was an artist and activist who pushed the boundaries of painting through decades of experiments in abstraction. In January 2025, he will be the subject of a major museum survey exhibition at The Menil Collection, Houston, TX. The 1964 compositions are defined by velvety applications of black paint and oil pastel, with subtle linear applications of color, drawn over, or revealed under the black areas. They respond to the legacy of Abstract Expressionism, using the color black as a symbol of identity and beauty. **David MacDonald (b. 1945)**, whose work is concurrently on view in a three-person exhibition at the New York gallery,

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is a ceramic artist. His work over the last four decades has explored African ancestry through its rich patterning and graphic elements. On his large-scale vessels, MacDonald creates three-dimensional embellishments using a variety of techniques to reference scarification and architecture of the Igbo, Ndebele, and Maasai people. The patterns are additionally inspired by West African mudcloth and his wife's quilt pattern books. **Paul Waters (b. 1936)**, whose work is featured in the current Whitney Museum of American Art exhibition *Edges of Ailey*, developed a unique technique of cut canvas collage beginning in the 1960s. Painted silhouettes suggesting primordial forms and imaginary animals are arranged and collaged onto canvas supports in rhythmic patterns. Waters exclusively uses his hands and fingers to apply paint, and the paintings reflect his interest in African art, indigenous traditions, children's books, and a playful, intuitive form of communication.



Lauren dela Roche | *Lady Bug* | 2024  
acrylic on found cotton feedsack with acrylic varnish  
78h x 106w in

Humanist and activist concerns characterize the figurative painting of Marie Johnson-Calloway (1920–2018) and Martha Edelheit (b. 1931). The work of **Martha Edelheit** from the past sixty years is transgressive, whimsical, and sensuous all at once. It reflects her abiding love of art history and her reimagining of the discipline that was largely created by men, for men. **Marie Johnson-Calloway** was a trailblazing artist of the Bay Area who is known for her mixed-media cutouts and assemblage works that honor joy and Black family life in her community. On view will be the artist's iconic and striking painted construction, *School Crossing Guard*, 1985, last seen in the museum surveys *Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960–1980*, at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, 2012; and *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, at the de Young Museum, San Francisco, 2020.

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