



Artfare is relaunching our "Curator Picks" series to feature curators from the broader Artfare community.

Phong H. Bui is an artist, writer, independent curator, and Co-Founder and Artistic Director of The Brooklyn Rail. He is a key member on Artfare's Advisory Board.

Painting As A Way of Life

In spite of their stylistic differences, this selection of works shares similar pictorial concerns in how representational and abstract deployment is interchangeably explored by the following artists. Depictions of illusionistic space or dream sequences of past historical themes are seen in the case of Ronald Hall's "Expulsion" (2008), in which the interpretation of his own narrative as an African American can coexist in a space where the real and the unreal are perceived as equal testaments of personal freedom, or as the precious moment of reverie that we tend to take for granted in our daily lives, which is supplely rendered in Tim Wilson's "Thermostat" (2018), a picture of familiar quietude indeed.

The interplay between repetition and symmetry is maximized with visual gestalts through the collision of two- and three-dimensional space as seen in Deborah Druick's "Portal" (2019), Naomi Okubo's "Checked" (2013), and Ann Toebe's "Holidays" (2020). Whatever lies between these various ethos of abstraction, be it lyrical through a network of lines that generates a diffused light and color in the case of Theresa Daddezio's "The Exchange" (2018), the robust painterly exploration of geometric structure that thrives in a perpetual state of

unity and friction as demonstrated in Calvin Burton's "Oceano" (2017), or the anarchy of gestures that mediate between organized structure and improvisation akin to free-jazz exemplified in Vince Contarino's "Black Trumpet" (2018), all are expressed through subjective pause and rhythm.

The deliberation of form and content through highly personal deployments of composition, color, material, and imagery in each of the eight selected works provides us a visual feast while amplifying the great warmth of human hands.

Phong H. Bui
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Available on Artfare
Phong's picks



Ronald Hall, "Expulsion", 2018



Tim Wilson, "Thermostat", 2018



Ann Toebbe, "Holidays", 2020



Vince Contarino, "Black Trumpet", 2018



Deborah Druick, "Portal", 2019



Naomi Okubo, "Checked", 2013