

# YOSSI MILO



**For Immediate Release:**

***SURFACE TROUBLE:***  
**Yale MFA Painting & Printmaking Class of 2024**  
**Act One: June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 | Act Two: July 25<sup>th</sup> – August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Yossi Milo is pleased to present *SURFACE TROUBLE*, a two-part group exhibition of artists from the Yale Painting and Printmaking MFA class of 2024. *SURFACE TROUBLE* will take place in two phases. The first phase opens with a reception on Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 PM, and will be on view through Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The second phase of the exhibition will open with a reception on Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 PM, and will be on view through Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Featuring artists from the MFA program's graduating class, *SURFACE TROUBLE* showcases a diverse set of approaches to the problem of painting as a contemporary medium, with a range of treatments and "troubles," each as singular as the individual artists themselves.

The exhibition takes Cyborg Feminist Donna Haraway's use of the term "trouble" in *Staying with the Trouble* as a jumping off point. In the text, Haraway states, "our task is to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle troubled waters and rebuild quiet places." Amid times of trouble, the artists of *SURFACE TROUBLE* trouble their own forms. What is the role of image and surface at this time? What functions as the release of a societal pressure valve, and is it trouble itself?

*SURFACE TROUBLE* presents works emanating from multiple vantage points, a sectional survey of artists who are approaching the politics of everyday life and art historical precedent via research, abstraction, spirituality, technological critique, process, and figuration.

Many of the artists in *SURFACE TROUBLE* explore the technical aspects of what is called "painting" in the contemporary moment, while grappling with the state of the digital. Nadir Sourigi's complex tiled works utilize meticulous methods of screening and masking to achieve disorienting yet pleasurable discrete units of aesthetic sensibility which reference the ever-shifting landscape of the internet, painting, and life. In her work, Haleigh Collins uses material contradiction and mimicry to challenge the legibility of process and painterly gesture. Each operation – spilling, embedding objects, silkscreening – speaks to a different sense of control and temporality.

The contemporary meaning(s) of process and painting – in tandem – are further extrapolated upon by several artists who engage with both the historic and aesthetic legacies of geometric abstraction, troubling

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the normative requirements of the category. Through a cross-disciplinary practice, Michael Cuadrado Gonzalez uses perceptual manipulation to rethink the formalism and propositions of universality endemic to the Modernist forces of the 20th century. Cuadrado navigates a “circuit of fraught desires,” examining his disidentifications with painting and the institutions which surround it through the lens of academics such as José Esteban Muñoz. Lauren Klotzman engages a geometric sensibility in the context of technological “process painting” within a media landscape saturated by electronics. In navigating both the synthetic and the organic, the painterly and the mechanical, Klotzman generates static paintings which are contrasting yet complementary “spin-offs” from a rigorous abstract and lens-less moving image process.

Laura Camila Medina works between painting and a complex video practice. In thinking about the translation of scale endemic to our culture of personal devices, Medina draws from Andean miniatures and technological nostalgia to create bio-mythographic portable worlds that utilize excavated imagery from her personal familial archive. Her interest in the “small” scale is not only limited to our contemporary moment, as she also draws from the trends of miniaturization in the 90’s-00’s: Tamagotchi, Polly Pocket, and the Video Now player, among others.

In contrast to Medina’s focus on the handheld, Mike Picos engages with a technological nostalgia via meticulous stenciled landscapes that emanate from screen desktop environments of the 80s and 90s. In *Window (Lights Out)*, Picos creates a fictitious mapped landscape, where both painted forms and encaustic casts render virtual space (graphic icons and 3D objects) uncanny by situating and confronting these virtual elements within large-scale painting. Both of these artists work through a nostalgia mediated by early childhood experiences on the internet in order to negotiate the ubiquitous presence of technology in our culture and how it feeds back into the work of painting.

Approaches to abstraction, feeling and landscape can also be seen in the work of Earthen Clay, whose delicately balanced, yet harshly adhered sculptural arrangements of objects and materials – still bound to their previous states of being – are brought into a new ensemble toward a liberatory alternative purpose or function. Justin Emmanuel Dumas utilizes the material conditions of a post-industrial landscape in order to gather and collage fragments, creating works which exist between painting and sculpture. In doing so, Dumas contextualizes the body and architecture in terms of boundary and container, enacting a metabolic studio process which engages across scalar differences, as architecture and the body become slippery containers, boundaries, and occupied spaces alike.

The very notion of objectivity becomes “troubled,” interrogating the boundaries of what we perceive or accept as “truth.” V Yeh’s works interrogate the (un)disciplined boundaries of the viewer, the art-science object, and art-science subject—where body, paint, and text intra-act to disrupt their tenured service to scientific empiricism. Eloise Hess’ multi-layered mediation of photography, painting, and printmaking troubles the act of seeing. The surface trembles in and out of resolution and dissolution of figure and ground, dislodging the stability of subject and object.

*SURFACE TROUBLE* presents a productively troubled perspective by approaching painting in non-linear ways: the artists not only “stay with the trouble,” they further trouble it. These artists approach the politics of everyday life and art historical precedent via research, abstraction, spirituality, technological critique, process, and figuration. Ultimately, the exhibition puts forth a set of challenging approaches to painting in the here and now. In presenting the work of Yale’s class of 2024, this small survey is a microcosm of the state of painting’s trajectory forward, however troubled it may be, given our troubling times.

For more information, please contact Jack Cassou at 212.414.0370 or [jack@yossimilo.com](mailto:jack@yossimilo.com) or visit the gallery’s website at [www.yossimilo.com](http://www.yossimilo.com).

*Pictured, left to right:* Ricardo Galvan, *As I lay dying (after Pope L)*, Monotype on Amate, 47 1/4" x 36" (120 x 91.5 cm)  
Michael Gabriel Cuadrado Gonzalez, *Unbecoming Vertical, Again*, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 36" x 30" (91.5 x 76 cm)  
Haleigh Collins, *Think Big*, 2024, Oil and Silkscreen on Canvas 60" x 35" (152.5 x 89 cm)