

SARAH SHEPARD

GALLERY & ART ADVISORY

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Rachel Kaye

Drawings From The Pacific

September 16 - October 26, 2021

Sarah Shepard Gallery is pleased to announce its first solo exhibition with Bay Area abstract artist Rachel Kaye featuring 13 new drawings made this year while living with her family on the Hawaiian island of Molokai, a remote island 7 miles off the coast of Maui. Kaye would sit daily at her kitchen table and draw, taking moments to stare out of the big corner window.

When speaking of her experience in Hawaii, Kaye says the following:

“The color green in all its hues and glory, swaying foliage from the Pacific trade winds, rich red dirt, plumeria, ginger, cardinals, Ne-ne birds.....and so much more. The landscape saturated in tropical shades, so rich and bold. I drew, letting the island under my influence. Before I left, I asked myself How does one carry forth a body of work out of one’s studio? Like a residency, the ideas don’t go away. However, you can’t ignore what is right in front of you. I think these drawings are a conversation with a place I am a foreigner to. A place I want to understand better. And a place I will take with me when I return home to my studio. I don’t know if I captured the place, but I captured myself in it.

I often think of painting and drawing in a pretty basic way. I present myself with a set of problems to solve. It is a series of questions and responses that create a body of work. Over the last 10 years, my relationship with nature has deepened. I think at first it was just being physically more in it (I didn’t grow up hiking or running wild outside). Then it evolved into wanting to raise my kids with a deep understanding and love for the outdoors. At the start of the pandemic, I narrowed my focus, pulling and playing with shapes/forms directly from plants (mostly in my yard). Living in Molokai, I was so aware of my footprint. Eating in large part off the land: hunting, fishing, foraging and from the gardens on the ranch. Entertainment was swimming and hiking. I fed the pigs our compost. I felt so close to the land and simultaneously coming to terms with how little I know. The daily rain brought a smile to my face because I’m all too aware of how little California gets and the deep climate crisis we are in. In the spring I read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers. I don’t go most days without thinking about it. It profoundly changed me. So I think these drawings gave me more time to pay attention to plants and the natural world. To watch their movement, see their colors, capture their form. Starting with a basic question before I draw: Can I capture the movement and curve of Banana leaves. Can I hint at the distant horizon? What does the temperature feel like today? My work is abstract, but I like these prompts as ways to start and they gave way to inviting the landscape in.”

Rachel Kaye was born in 1981 and resides in San Francisco. She graduated with her BFA from California College of the Arts in San Francisco, CA. Kaye has exhibited nationally and internationally in Paris, Tokyo, San Francisco, Oakland, New York, Los Angeles & Palm Beach. Kaye has collaborated with her husband, artist Jay Nelson on exhibitions as well, blurring the line of artistic ownership and site specific sculpture. She has completed large scale murals in the Bay Area and her work has been featured in the Huffington Post, Refinery 29, Artsy, SF Gate & East Bay Express.

For more information contact sarah@sarahshepardgallery.com or 917-375-2720.

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