

Brackett Creek Exhibitions

Mia Ardito, Richard Brautigan, Sarah Esme Harrison, and Wally Whitehurst

All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace

January 14 - March 2, 2024

25 Jay St. Brooklyn, NY 11201

Brackett Creek Exhibitions is pleased to present *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*, an exhibition featuring sculptures by Mia Ardito, poetry by Richard Brautigan, diptychs by Sarah Esme Harrison, and paintings by Wally Whitehurst. The exhibition title comes from a 1967 Brautigan poem of the same name.

I like to think (and
the sooner the better!)
of a cybernetic meadow
where mammals and computers
live together in mutually
programming harmony
like pure water
touching clear sky.

I like to think
(right now, please!)
of a cybernetic forest
filled with pines and electronics
where deer stroll peacefully
past computers
as if they were flowers
with spinning blossoms.

I like to think
(it has to be!)
of a cybernetic ecology
where we are free of our labors
and joined back to nature,
returned to our mammal
brothers and sisters,
and all watched over
by machines of loving grace.

Mia Ardito's mixed-media sculptures serve as both art objects with their own sculptural logic and sets for Ardito's fictional reality TV show, titled Peninsula Island Presents House of Love. As TV sets, the works are considerations of scale and functional setting. And as art objects, Ardito deals with formal sculptural concerns, both aesthetically and materially.

The four Richard Brautigan poetry broadsides in the exhibition are from Brautigan's time involved in the Diggers, a counter-cultural movement from the 1960's in San Francisco. A poetry broadside is loosely

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defined as a single-sheet poem, usually accompanied by a graphic, that is printed in limited, but sometimes large editions for effective distribution. Brautigan and the Diggers used broadsides as a way of disseminating intentionally free information and ideas, sometimes even type-written during their own events, and printed en masse on a stolen printer (note, “gesternated by” on The Beautiful Poem).

Sarah Esme Harrison’s paintings typically start as plein air landscapes and are finished in the studio to be free of the concerns of representational accuracy. The diptychs began as a plein air study in Montana and were translated into silkscreens. Beginning with an individual silkscreen, she did a combination printing and painting—formal explorations of color and layering, using a consistent, black foreground silhouette, and modifying the surrounding colors within the individual works. The light changes within the same natural context, and the screen-printing addresses the painterly studio concerns.

Wally Whitehurst’s paintings use various forms of the grid to abandon the idea that a painting should be about something. When starting a work, Whitehurst sets up formal rules and leaves the rest up to intuition and meditation. He chooses one color, and lets the choice dictate what comes next—either a complementary pair or a subtle hue shift. What results is a balancing act, a visual weighing of color and presence.

Mia Ardito received an MFA in interdisciplinary sculpture from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2010 and has exhibited and performed in venues such as Hauser & Wirth, NY, Goethe Institute, Chicago, Anthology Film Archives, NY; Frieze Art Fair, NY; INVERSE Performance Festival, AK; American Medium Gallery, NY; Mana Contemporary, NJ.

Richard Brautigan (January 30, 1935 – c. September 16, 1984) was an American novelist, poet, and short story writer. A prolific writer, he wrote throughout his life and published ten novels, two collections of short stories, and four books of poetry. Brautigan’s work has been published both in the United States and internationally throughout Europe, Japan, and China. He is best known for his novels Trout Fishing in America (1967), In Watermelon Sugar (1968), and The Abortion: An Historical Romance 1966 (1971). Brautigan would go on to publish numerous prose and poetry collections until 1982. He died by suicide in 1984.

Sarah Esme Harrison (b. 1990, New York, NY) lives and works in Brooklyn and Long Island, New York. She graduated from The Yale School of Art with an MFA in Painting in 2017. She has exhibited in solo and group presentations at Marinaro Gallery, New York, NY (2023), Nicelle Beauchene, New York, NY (2021), The Valley, Taos, NM (2021); Gildar Gallery, Denver, CO (2018); 1969 Gallery, New York, NY (2017), among others.

Wally Whitehurst (b. 1986, Brooklyn, NY) received a BFA in painting from Maryland Institute College of Art. His intuitively created drawings explore process as a means of meditation. Inspired by weaving and other textile traditions, he uses the grid as a starting point for the improvised movements that follow.