

Mrs.

GAIL SPAIEN
Observed and Imagined
organized by Hilary Schaffner

January 18-March 8, 2025
Opening Reception: Saturday, January 18, 2025, 4-7pm

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60-19 56th Road

Maspeth, NY

January 18 - March 8, 2025

Opening reception: January 18, 4 - 7pm

Mrs. is pleased to announce *Observed and Imagined*, a solo exhibition of works by Gail Spaien, organized by Hilary Schaffner, opening January 18, 2024. Spaien is a distinguished American painter who keenly explores life in Maine through a lens of the domestic interior. Culling from a long tradition of regional painters, Maine's interior spaces and landscapes play center stage in her works.

Spaien's figureless tableaus reflect a world in which her lived experience and imagination coexist. Every element has its place. Strategically placed shoes, tableware and chairs allude to the aftermath of a domestic event that give each painting a sense of place and rootedness.

"It is rootedness, the foundations to place, to identity and to time, that Spaien seeks to convey in her observed and imagined compositions. Every element in her paintings has a place, a locked and secure location that is in harmony with every other element. It is not just the birds' relationship to the sky or a chair's relationship to its decorative cushions but the floorboards' kinship to the trees, the puzzle pieces' connection to the sea waves, and a curtain's fellowship to wispy clouds." (Michele Grabner's essay, *Gail Spaien: Puzzle Pieces and the Sea's Waves*, 2022)

For Spaien a painting is a site of connection. It is an opportunity for two worlds to intersect - the viewer's internal world and the artist's imagined world. Through the use of mesmerizing patterns akin to those of Morris Hirshfield and the flattened surfaces of early Folk Art painting, Spaien masterfully constructs her landscapes of objects creating subtle contradictions in space that keep curiosity afloat and a sense of place ever present.

-Hilary Schaffner

Gail Spaien (b. 1958) is an American artist and educator based in Maine. Spaien has been the recipient of numerous fellowships including the Ucross Foundation (2024), Varda Artist Residency Program, Djerassi Foundation Resident Artists Program, Millay Colony for the Arts and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She has received grant funding from the Lillian Orlowsky and William Freed Foundation, the Maine Arts Commission, and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation. Spaien's solo exhibitions include Taymour Grahne Projects, London, (2023); Ogunquit Museum of American Art, Ogunquit, ME; Nancy Margolis Gallery, NY; Ellen Miller Gallery, Boston, MA; Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME; Group exhibitions include Taymour Grahne Projects, London; Center for Maine

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Contemporary Art, Rockland, ME; studio e, Seattle, WA; Provincetown Art Association and Museum, Provincetown, MA; University of New Hampshire Museum, Durham, NH; Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, ME; Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME; and the DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, MA. Spaien received her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and BFA from University of Southern Maine. A recently retired professor at Maine College of Art and Design she is now full-time in her studio.

Hilary Schaffner is an independent curator and arts professional whose career in the arts spans over 20 years. In 2011 she co-founded Halsey McKay Gallery in Long Island, New York with the goal of bringing mid-career and emerging artists to the area. During her time at Halsey McKay Hilary had critical roles in artist development and representation, client advisory, collection management, exhibition curation, and art fair presentations. Prior to founding the gallery, she received her MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City while working as director of a small gallery on the Lower East Side. Hilary has worked in public relations for arts institutions including the Dia Art Foundation, Isamu Noguchi Foundation and the Cisneros Foundation. She has been a guest critic at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, NY; School of Visual Arts, NY, Parsons School of Design, NY and MECA, ME. Since moving to Maine in 2018 Hilary has curated several exhibitions including: *Broken Open* at Museum of New Art, Portsmouth, NH; *You Look Like a World* at Able Baker Gallery, Portland, ME; *Asters & Goldenrod* at Alice Gavin Gallery, Portland, ME; *Letha Wilson: Cut, Bend, Burn* at CMCA, Rockland, ME; *Lauren Luloff: Paint the Air*, CMCA, Rockland, ME. Her curatorial work has been featured in Artforum, ArtNews, Interview, The East Hampton Star, Modern Painters, Vogue, Portland Press Herald and Boston Art Review. Hilary lives in Portland, ME.

Gail Spaien, *Observed and Imagined* will be on view at Mrs., 60-19 56th Road., Maspeth, Queens, NY 11378 through March 8, 2025. For more information please contact hello@mrsgallery.com.

Mrs.



Gail Spaien
Untitled, 2024
Acrylic on Linen
48 x 48 inches
121.9 x 121.9 cm
(GSp_004)

Mrs.



Gail Spaien

Green Chairs with Lighthouse, 2024

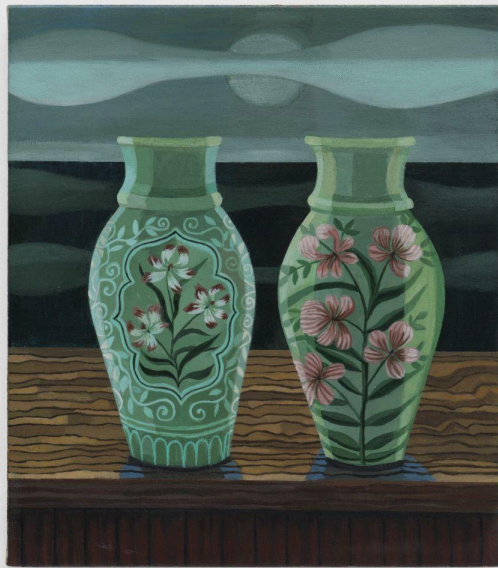
Acrylic on Linen

48 x 48 inches

121.9 x 121.9 cm

(GSp_004)

Mrs.



Gail Spaien
Vases, 2019
Acrylic on Linen
15 x 17 inches
38.1 x 43.2 cm
(GSp_003)

Mrs.



Gail Spaien
Night Curtain, 2024
Acrylic on Linen
48 x 48 inches
(GSp_002)

Mrs.



Gail Spaien

Mudlark Morning, 2024

Acrylic on Linen

48 x 48 inches

121.9 x 121.9 cm

(GSp_001)

Mrs.

GAIL SPAIEN

b. 1958, Hartford, CT
Lives and works in Maine

Education

MFA San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA
BFA University of Southern Maine, Gorham, ME

Solo and Two-Person Exhibitions

2025 *Observed and Imagined*, organized by Hilary Schaffner, Mrs., Maspeth, NY
Forthcoming, Taymour Grahne Projects, London, UK

2024 NADA Miami, Hilary Schaffner, Independent Curator, Portland, ME
Light In Every Room: Lynne Drexler and Gail Spaien, Moss Gallery, Portland, ME
Gail Spaien: New Paintings, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, Online Viewing Room

2023 *Gail Spaien and Heather Wilcoxon*, studio e gallery, Seattle, WA
A Painting is a Place, Taymour Grahne Projects, London, England

2022 *Before the taking of a toast and tea*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, Online Viewing Room

2021 *Still Life with Water*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, Online Viewing Room

2019 *Bonsai Cottage*, AD Gallery, University of North Carolina, Pembroke, NC
Renegade Mirage, Carol Calo Gallery, Stonehill College, Easton, MA

2017 *Serenade*, Ogunquit Museum of American Art, Ogunquit, ME

2016 *Still-Lives and Botanicals*, Coastal Maine Botanical Garden, Boothbay, ME

2014 *Dozier Bell and Gail Spaien*, Aucocisco Galleries, Portland, ME

2013 *New Paintings*, Ellen Miller Gallery, Boston, MA

2012 *The World Over*, curated by Daniel Fuller, Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, ME

2010 *Between: Gail Spaien and Ahmed Alsoudani*, Aucocisco Galleries, Portland, ME
In Winter, Garden, Archive Project 6, Miller Block, Boston, MA

2008 *Garden Archive, Project 4*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store Gallery, York, ME
Garden Archive, Project 5, William Scott Gallery, Provincetown, MA

2006 *New Work*, Miller Block Gallery, Boston, MA

2004 *Damon Lehrer and Gail Spaien*, William Scott Gallery, Boston MA

2003 *Charm*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store, York, ME

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- 2002 *Samplers and Mourning Paintings*, Aucocisco Galleries, Portland, ME
- 2001 *Domestic Time*, Vanier Gallery, Tucson, AZ
- 2000 *Counting*, Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME
Art Houston: Introductions, Jack Meier Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1998 *At the Edge of Wind*, Robert Clements Fine Arts, Portland, ME
- 1992 *New Work*, Gump's Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1991 *Introductions, 91*, Gump's Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1989 *Visiting Artist Exhibition*, Center Gallery, University of Maine, Gorham, ME
- 1985 *Gail Spaien and Heather Wilcoxon*, Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2024 Artsy Foundations, Art Fair, Taymour Grahne Projects, online
Interior World/Domes1c Space, Taymour Grahne Projects, online, London, UK
Contemporary Domesticities, Taymour Grahne Projects, Cromwell Place, London, UK
- 2023 *Art and Ekphrastic Poetry*, Page Gallery, Camden, ME
Interiors, Page Gallery, Camden, ME
- 2022 *The More the Merrier*, Grant Walquist Gallery, Portland, ME
Interior, Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockland, ME
Activated Spaces, Nancy Margolis Gallery Pop-Up Show, Alice Gauvin Gallery, Portland, ME
- 2021 *In Here*, studio e gallery, Seattle, WA
Mixing it Up, Maine Jewish Museum, Portland, ME
Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan School Artists, Maine Jewish Museum, Portland, ME
- 2020 *20*, Zero Station, Portland, ME
Pam Brown, Gail Spaien, Julia Zanes, Michael Stasiuck, George Marshall Store Gallery, York, ME
- 2019 *Flowering Inside/Outside*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, NY
Perfection, curated by Hilary Irons, Able Baker Contemporary, Portland, ME
SPF 32, curated by Madeline Mermall, Ulmer Brewery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2017 *American Genre: Contemporary Painting*, curated by Michelle Grabner, Institute of Contemporary Art, ME

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- The 2016 Grant Recipients*, Provincetown Art Assoc. and Museum, Provincetown, MA
- Impact*, Art Museum, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
- Take Flight*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store Gallery,
York, ME
- 2016 *Bounty*, curated by Sage Lewis, Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, ME
- 2015 *20 Year Anniversary Show*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store Gallery, York,
ME
- 2014 *New Acquisitions*, University of New England, Portland, ME
- 2011 *Momentum*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store Gallery, York, ME
- 2010 *Collected Nature*, Miller Block, Boston, MA
- 2009 *Winter Salon*, Denise Bibro Fine Art, New York, NY
- 2008 *Out There: Mediated Landscape*, curated by Lauren Fensterstock, Institute of
Contemporary Art, Portland, ME
- New Natural History*, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME
- 2007 *Biennial*, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME
- Nature/Nurture*, Miller Block Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2006 *Peaceable Kingdom*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store
Gallery, York, ME
- 2005 *Inside/Outside*, Miller Block Gallery, Boston, MA
- Pretty Sweet: The Sentimental Image in Contemporary Art*, curated by Nick Capasso
DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, MA
- Transcribing Time: Grace DeGennaro, Gail Spaien, Alice Spencer*,
Maine Center for Contemporary Art, Rockland, ME
- 2001 *Domestic Culture*, curated by Mark Bessire, Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, ME
- 1999 *Accord III*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store Gallery York, ME
- 1998 *Biennial*, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME
- 1997 *Faculty Exhibition*, Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME
- Picking up the Pieces*, Museums of Old York, George Marshall Store Gallery, York, ME
- 1996 *Skowhegan at 50: A Maine Legacy*, Baxter Gallery at Portland School of Art, Portland,
ME
- 1995 *Contemporary Collage*, Frick Gallery, Belfast, ME
- 1994 *Visual Artists Showcase*, Boston Center for the Arts, Boston, MA
- 1993 *Solstice Tree Project*, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME

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- 1992 O'Farrell Gallery, Brunswick, ME
Claudia Chaplin Gallery, Stinson Beach, CA
- 1991 *Seascapes*, Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockport, ME
- 1990 *Crocker-Kingsley Annual*, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA
Individual Artist Grant Finalist Exhibit, Marin Arts Council, Mill Valley, CA
- 1989 *Bay Arts 89*, San Mateo Arts Council, San Mateo, CA
Natsoulas Novelozo Gallery, Davis, CA
- 1988 *Exhibition 88*, Sun Gallery, Hayward, CA
- 1987 *Exchange*, San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose, CA
- 1985 Headlands Center for the Arts, Group Exhibition, Sausalito, CA

Awards, Grants, and Residencies

- 2024 Ucross Foundation, Residency Award, Claremont, WY
Seligmann House at the Tides Institute, mini-residency, curated by Tessa Green
O'Brien, Addison, ME
- 2021 The Hopper Prize, Finalist
- 2020 Varda Artist Residency, Residency Award, Ferryboat Vallejo, Sausalito, CA
- 2016 Lillian Orlowsky and William Freed Foundation, Grant Award
Maine Arts Commission, Project Grant Award
- 2010 New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, Artist Advancement Grant
Maine Arts Commission, Visibility Grant Award
- 2006 Maine Arts Commission, GIG Grant Award
- 2004 Maine Arts Commission, GIG Grant Award
- 1996 Djerassi Foundation Resident Artists Program, Residency Award, Woodside, CA
- 1990 Crocker Art Museum, Merit Award, Sacramento, CA
- 1988 Millay Colony for the Arts, Residency Award, Austerlitz, NY
- 1986 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Scholarship, SFAI
- 1985 Headlands Center for the Arts, Seminar-in-residence, Sausalito, CA

Selected Press

- 2024 Penta, Collect July, 25 2024, Artsy CEO Jeffrey Yin Is a 'Patron' Who Gravitates to Emerging Artists, Abby Shultz
The Ekphrastic Review, June 5, 2024, <https://www.ekphrastic.net/the-ekphrastic-review/instead-of-war-by-amy-ralston-seife>

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- 2022 Harpers Magazine, December 2022, <https://harpers.org/archive/2022/12/new-books-december-2022/>
Maine Sunday Telegram, November 13, 2022, Review: *Each of four fall shows worth a visit...*, Jorge S. Arango
Portland Press Herald, August 28, 2022, Review: *Painters go to different depths in Portland*, Rockland shows, Jorge S. Arango
- 2021 Crosscut, *The Seattle Deconstructed Art Fair returns for a second year*, Margo Vansyngel, August 2, 2021
Art New England, May/June 2021, Review: *Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture*, Skowhegan School Artists, Carl Little
Portland Press Herald, May 23, 2021, Art Review: *Skowhegan School's Influence, Adventurousness on Display*, Jorge S. Arango
Portland Phoenix, May 19, 2021, Review: *Art Seen: Skowhegan School at the Maine Jewish Museum*, Edgar Allen Beem
Maine Arts Journal: The UMVA Quarterly, Spring 2021 *Gail Spaien: Anchoring and Suspension and Gravity and Light*, Carl Little
Portland Press Herald, February 2021, Review: *Maine Jewish Museum reopens with exemplars of art and craft*, Jorge S. Arango
- 2020 Fosters Daily Democrat, Sept. 17, 2020, *A Trio of exhibits at George Marshall Store Gallery*
Radar Poetry, editions 26 +27, radarpoetry.com
- 2019 Maine Arts Journal: The UMVA Quarterly, Summer 2019 *Maine in the Abstract*, Edgar Allen Beem
Flaunt Magazine, June 14, 2019, *Apply Liberally*, Tyler Mazaheri <https://archive.flaut.com/content/spf-32>
Portland Press Herald, Feb. 18, 2019, Art Review: *Skillfully curated, Able Baker exhibition explores 'Perfection'*, Dan Kany
- 2018 American Genre: Contemporary Painting, catalog for the exhibition, curated by Michelle Grabner, ICA, Portland, ME
Maine Arts Journal: The UMVA Quarterly, *The Wave of Creativity*, Dietlind Vander Schaaf, Features and Essays, Summer 2018
- 2017 MaineToday.com, Aug 28, 2017, *With Two Weeks Until it Closes, American GenreFans of Contemporary Painting*, Bob Keyes
- 2016 Portland Press Herald, Sept 18, 2016, *At the Institute of Contemporary Art, and exploration of 'Bounty' in all it's forms*, Dan Kany
- 2015 Maine Arts Journal: The UMVA Quarterly, *In Defense of Painting*, Spring 2015
New American Painting, *Northeast issue 116*, Juror, Michelle Grabner

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- 2014 Two Coats of Paint, *Snap: A Visit to Maine College of Art*, November
- 2013 Boston Globe, March 20, 2013, *Gail Spaien, New Paintings*, Cate McQuaid
Boston Globe, March 13, 2013, *Critics Pick*
- 2012 Portland Phoenix, Nov. 7, 2012, *Serious Thoughts in a Frivolous Season*, Nicholas Schroeder
- 2010 Art New England, Nov/Dec 2010, *Reviews, Gail Spaien and Ahmed Alsoudani at Aucocisco Galleries*, Carl Little
Portsmouth Press Herald, Oct. 2, 2010, *Artist Wins \$25,000 Grant to Build Studio*, Jeanne McCartin
Boston Globe, February 17, 2010, *Winter's Weight and What Lies Below*, Cate McQuaid
- 2008 Yankee Magazine.com/blogs, Nov. 2008, *Out There*, Edgar Allen Beam
Accent Magazine, March/April 2008, *Modern Art Meets Natural History*, Jamie Thompson
Wicked Local, Aug. 12, 2008, *Flora and facades make up art exhibit*, <https://www.wickedlocal.com/story/archive/2008/08/12/flora-facades-make-up-art/39632001007/>
- 2005 Art New England, June/July 2005, *Sentimental Journey: Time and Memory in Pink and Gray*, Susan Boulanger
Arts Editor, March 4, 2005, *Plastic Refuge reviewing the exhibit Pretty Sweet*, <https://artseditor.com/site/plastic-refuge/>
Big Red and Shiny, February 14, 2005, *Guilty Pleasures*, Charles Giuliano, <https://bigredandshiny.org/7215/guilty-pleasures/>
- 2003 Art New England, October - November 2003, *Review, Maine Charm: Paintings by Gail Spaien*, Mary Behrens
Portsmouth Herald, July 1, 2003, *Profile: Charm, Waterworks*, Jeanne McCartin
- 1999 New American Painting, Volume 20, February
- 1998 Maine Times, Nov. 19, 1998, *Metaphysics Made Manifest, A Surprising Turn in Portland's Ambitious Biennial*, Edgar Allen Beem
Sun Journal, November 20, 1998, *The Art Biennial*, Pat Davidson Reef
Maine Sunday Telegram, January 25, 1998, *At Maine College of Art, Faculty Boldly Shows its Stuff*, Philip Isaacson
- 1995 Maine Sunday Telegram, August 13, 1995, *Frick Exhibit's an Elegant Mix of Collages, Assemblages*, Philip Isaacson
- 1993 Maine Sunday Telegram, June 13, 1993, *Maine Coast's 15th Annual Juried Show Strongest in Years*, Philip Isaacson
- 1990 The Sacramento Bee, April 22, 1990, *Works of Content*, Victoria Dalkey
- 1987 San Jose Mercury News, Sept. 4, 1987, *San Francisco Art Institute/San Jose University*

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Exchange: Part two, Dorothy Burkhart

1985 The Pacific Sun, May 3-9 1985, *The Arts Review*, Jack Van der Meulen

Interviews, Videos, and Virtual Artist Talks

- 2024 I Like Your Work, Studio Visit, Artist Talk, October
I Like Your Work Studio Visit, Interview, July
Yale University Radio, Museum of Non-visible Art, July, Brainard Carey
- 2023 Full Circle: Gail Spaien and Heather Wilcoxon at studio e, <https://studioegallery.net/Gail-Spaen-Heather-Wilcoxon>
- 2022 Nancy Margolis Gallery, December 3, <https://www.nancymargolisgallery.com/news/spaien-zoom-talk-2022>
- 2021 Nancy Margolis Gallery, June 21, <https://www.nancymargolisgallery.com/news/zoom-talk-meet-the-artists>
Nancy Margolis Gallery, February 16, <https://www.nancymargolisgallery.com/news/zoom-artist-talk-gail-spaien>
Hopper Prize: Interview <https://hopperprize.org/gail-spaien-interview/>
- 2004 The Wire, May 2004, *Profile*, Rebecca Cox
- 1998 Channel 13 TV, One of 5 featured artists, Nov. 15, 1998, Portland Museum of Art Biennial Exhibition, WGME-TV video
- 1982 Internet Archive, SF, https://archive.org/details/csfpal_000239, Artery, Nov. 2, 1982, Antenna Theater; minute 1:05

Selected Public and Private Collections

Elie Khouri Collection, Dubai, UAE
Fidelity Investments, MA
Intuit Corporation, CA
Kellie and Jeff Hepper Collection, Houston, TX
Memorial Sloane Kettering Cancer Center, NY
Michael Baumann Collection, ME/MA
OZ Art NWA, Bentonville, AK
Portland Museum of Art, ME
University of New England, ME
University of Southern Maine, ME