



**Tara Walters**  
*Hearbreaker, Dream Maker*  
March 20th - May 17th, 2025

**Nina Johnson**

# *Heartbreaker, Dream Maker*

The American imagination thrives on a relentless optimism—a refusal to yield, even in the face of profound loss. In *Heartbreaker, Dream Maker*, Tara Walters channels this spirit, creating a body of work that explores the fragile dance between joy and sorrow, light and dark, surrender and resistance. These works, completed before the California wildfires swept through Malibu and destroyed her home, stand as both a celebration of life's dualities and a meditation on resilience.

At the heart of this exhibition are 10 new paintings and two pastel drawings, born of Pacific Ocean water and layered with water-based and oil-based paints. The materials themselves reflect the tension between fluidity and permanence, an apt metaphor for the themes Walters explores: optimism versus pessimism, confrontation versus play. Her images of dancing jellyfish, flaming tigers in the trees, and doves crying over the canyons of Malibu evoke a verdant world teetering on the brink.

The poignancy of these works deepens when placed against the backdrop of California's recent wildfires. Walters painted these scenes before the skies darkened with ash, before bird-like planes began their sweeping arcs across the Pacific, scooping water to battle flames climbing the parched hillsides. The surreal beauty of her landscapes feels sharpened by this juxtaposition, capturing a fleeting, fragile moment of verdant life that seems both eternal and on the verge of slipping into dreamland.

Walters expands upon her storytelling in the paintings with poetry. Each painting is accompanied by a poem. Like Florine Stettheimer's *Crystal Flowers*, a companion during Walters' creative process, these texts embed themselves in the metronome of self-reflection and the complex interplay of beauty and danger.

The final piece of the show is a video piece conceived during her time in Lacoste, France. In this surreal projection, a mirrored ballerina dances on a moonscape to the haunting sound of Walters' own voice and guitar, adding another layer to her meditation on identity and duality.

The exhibition title itself draws from two songs with the same lyric—Audrey Hepburn's tender *Moon River* and Pat Benatar's defiant *Heartbreaker*. Both embody strength but from opposing angles, prompting the question: Is power found in soft surrender or fierce resistance?

This new body of work reflects a maturity and groundedness—a step away from the ethereal realms—peopled with unicorns—that Walters has been known to explore. In this body of work, Walters renews her interest in capturing the magical realism of the everyday. In this way, Walters draws inspiration from artists like Stettheimer, Marie Laurencin, Ree Morton and Laura Owens, engaging the world with a down-to-earth wonder.

Tara Walters: *Heartbreaker, Dream Maker* is on view in the Front Gallery through May 17th, 2025.





## Contents

<i>Heartbreaker, Dream Maker</i>	2
About Tara Walters	6
Works	8
CV	44
About Nina Johnson	47



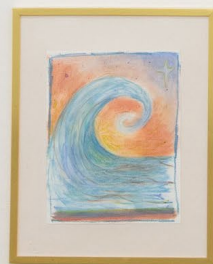




# About Tara Walters

Tara Walters (b. 1990, Washington D.C.) lives in Malibu and works in Los Angeles. She received her MFA from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, CA and her BFA in Painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, GA. Her work has been included in solo and group exhibitions in Los Angeles, New York, Venice, Italy, and Shanghai, China. She is currently working on an upcoming solo show with Nina Johnson Gallery opening March 20, 2025 in Miami, Florida.

Walters is an artist and painter whose work is inspired by psychic phenomena and the ethereality of the natural world. Her paintings are created using water from the Pacific Ocean, which adds a unique and personal element to her creative process. The grit of the Pacific's elements, mixed with paint and washes, creates an otherworldly effect, blurring the lines between the tangible and the mystical. Through her work, Walters seeks to capture the fleeting beauty of nature while exploring the unseen energies that shape our world.







***Malibu Music, 2024***  
Pacific ocean water,  
water-based paint, oil  
pastel and liquid gold  
leaf on muslin  
48 x 12 in.









***Tiger Tree, 2024***

Water-based paint on muslin  
42 x 54 in.









Masterpiece Pro

Tara Walters  
2024



# Little Jellyfish

I see you under the ocean  
and how you sway so gently upon the energy of the water.  
You sway in such a tune  
that not one thing could keep you off course,  
off key

There you sway as ashes fell  
on top the crest of the ocean's mirror.  
It never fazed you.  
You kept floating on,  
as Earth was mourning and crying --  
torched, scorned.

But you swim on, jellyfish.  
You give us hope.  
We are sorry about the plastic  
and, of course, our house particles in your  
"area".

Can we share  
a sweet little tune?  
For this afternoon, I have nothing left or else to do.  
Will you be kind to me and let me swim next to you?  
Will you let me wade by the ocean's core,  
just for a second, and not too long more?

Or will you sting me and tell me I'm a fool  
for ever wanting to be close to a beautiful singer  
like  
you?

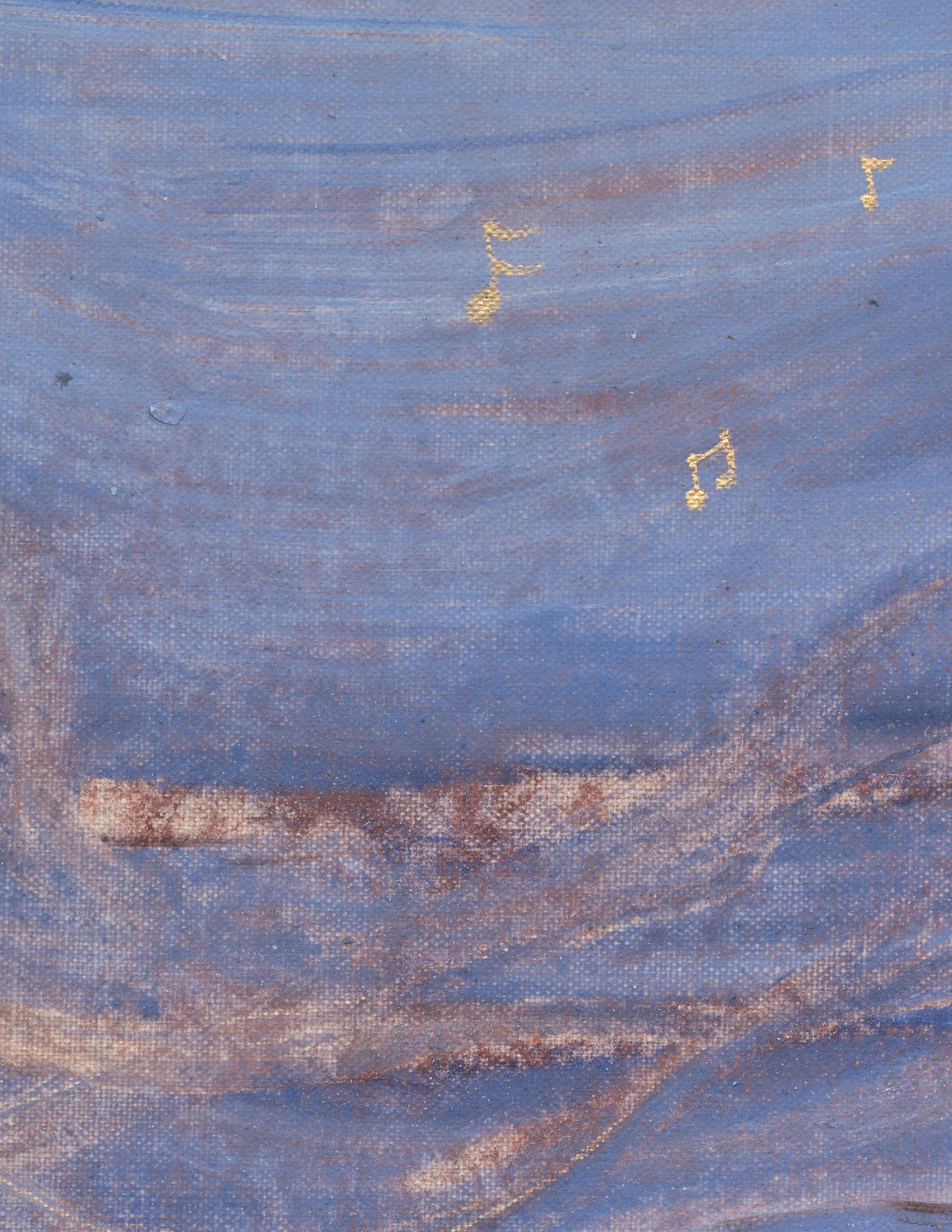




***Jelly fish, 2024***

Pacific ocean water, flashe, oil pastel and liquid gold leaf on muslin  
14 x 19 in.



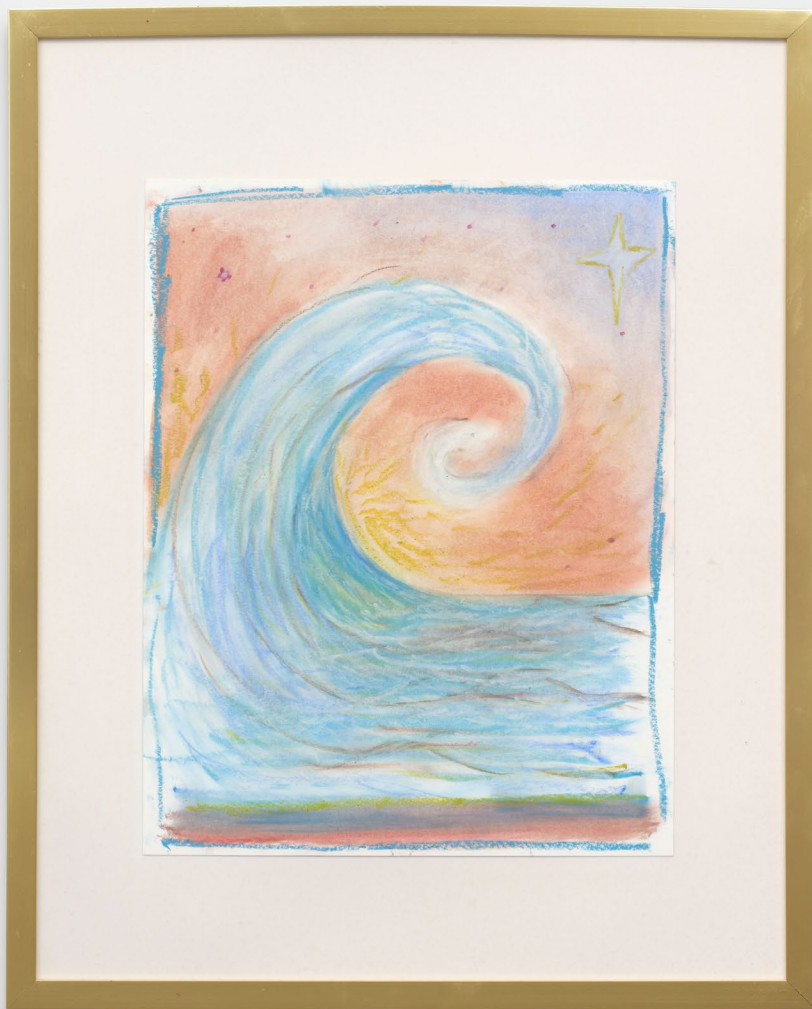




***Starry Wave, 2024***

Pastel on paper

14 x 11 in.















***Oh little tree, 2024***

Pacific ocean water, flashe and liquid gold leaf on muslin

14 x 19 in.

Sold







# Hill of Tara

Up, up, and away!  
says the little blue owl.  
Hoot, hoot --  
it is the witching hour now.

All the faeries seem to be finally hiding  
under the flowers,  
which peer up from the ground.

Do you hear the call, the sound of the night?  
It seems to be finally midnight.  
Here i go, my hoot begins to call,  
for I hope the faeries can hear me, singing to them all.  
I wonder what they are dreaming of --

Lilacs, sunflowers, or even hyacinths,  
but truly, I believe it is the foxglove  
that seems to be in sync  
with the sounds of the night.

Oh, starry, starry bright --  
Van Gogh, do i hear you know,  
the sound of the call when movement is in flow?  
It seems the little Carrington horse  
no longer wants to be a part,  
because it feels you have torn it apart!

Just believe, and it will be there.  
Just believe, and all will be fair  
on the Hill of Tara.





***Hill of Tara, 2024***  
Pacific ocean water,  
flashe, oil pastel and  
liquid gold leaf on  
muslin  
35 x 15 in.













***Odilon's flowers,***  
**2024**

Pacific ocean water,  
flashe, oil pastel and  
liquid gold leaf on  
muslin  
24 x 16 in.









***Love and Water Falls, 2024***

Pacific ocean water, flashe, oil pastel and liquid  
gold leaf on muslin  
25 x 38 in.







Masterpiece Pro

Tara Walters  
2024



***Wonder, 2021***

Pacific ocean water,  
flashe and oil pastel  
30 x 30 in.





WONDER





***Winter Belle, 2024***  
Pacific ocean water,  
flashe, oil pastel and  
liquid gold leaf on  
muslin  
38 x 20 in.







Masterpiece® Pro

Tara Walker  
2024







**Miss America, 2024**

Pastel on paper

14 x 11 in.









# Moon River

Moon River,  
wider than a mile,  
I am watching you in style someday.  
Oh, dream maker, you heart breaker,  
wherever you're going,  
i am going your way.

Two drifters off to see the PCH--  
it's such a long way from here.  
Oh, dream maker, you heartbreaker  
why did you go this way?

Spinning, spinning  
round and round --  
which way do i go?  
East or west?  
Is this a test  
Who is this that i see?  
Is this a monster,  
or is this me?

For today, i am learning that i must conquer my own demons.  
I must still my mind,  
and in time this rhyme will show me the way.  
The flower will fall and it will soon be day.

Oh, how exciting --  
I see in the distance a new beginning.  
From dawn to sunrise,  
i will continue to be surprised.

No more running,  
no more spinning.  
I dropped the flower into the wishing well,  
and i know that all  
will  
forever  
be  
swell.





***Moon River, 2025***

Pacific ocean water, flashe, oil pastel and liquid gold leaf on muslin  
40 x 90 in.













***Ballerinas on the Moon, 2015***  
Video







# Tara Walters

b. 1990, Washington D.C.

Lives in Malibu, CA and works in  
Los Angeles, CA

## EDUCATION

- 2020 Art Center College of Design, Grad Art, MFA -  
Pasadena, California
- 2016 Savannah College of Art and Design, Painting, BFA  
- Savannah, Georgia

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 Heartbreaker, Dream Maker, Nina Johnson, Miami,  
FL
- 2024 Ruritania, Antenna Space, Shanghai, China
- 2023 Frieze London, solo booth with Kristina Kite  
Gallery, London, England
- Sailing to the Garden Party, Barbati Gallery, Venice,  
Italy
- Cessna, Kristina Kite Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2021 Nada Miami, two person booth with Kristina Kite  
Gallery, Miami, FL
- Dropping In, Kristina Kite Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2020 whispers, LAXART, West Hollywood, CA
- 2017 I am Listening, Red Arrow Gallery, Nashville, TN
- 2016 Primordial Point, Red Arrow Gallery, Nashville, TN
- Capnomancie, OZ Arts Nashville, Nashville, TN
- 2015 Capnomancie, SCAD's Olivier Gallery, Lacoste,  
France

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 Felix Art Fair, Nina Johnson, Los Angeles, CA
- 2023 Horizons: Is there anybody out there? Antenna



- Space, group show curated by Simon Wang and Robin Peckham, Shanghai, China
- 2022 Space, Laurel Gitlen Gallery, Curated by Ryan McLaughlin and Laurel Gitlen, New York, NY
- 2021 The Going Away Present, Kristina Kite Gallery, Curated by Kristina Kite and Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer, Los Angeles, CA
- 2020 Fell For Everything, ArtCenter DTLA, Curated by Adam Stamp, Los Angeles, CA
- 2019 The Christmas Show, ArtCenter MFA Hallway, Curated by Gabriel Madan and Juliana Halpert, Pasadena, CA
- Smoke Show, Elephant Gallery, Nashville, TN
- 2018 BEVY, Julia Martin Gallery, Nashville, TN

### **AWARDS / SCHOLARSHIPS**

Independent Study with Laura Owens, ArtCenter, 2019-2020

SCAD fine art scholarship 2012-2016

### **WRITINGS**

Articulations -- ArtCenter MFAs, Edgar Ramirez, Tara Walters, and Carson Lynn, LACMA UNFRAMED, 2020

### **PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

X Museum, Beijing, China

Nashville Metro Public Arts

### **BIOGRAPHY**

- 2024 "Tara Walters: Tuning into your Intuition", The Creative Independent, Isabella Miller, Online, September 10, 2024
- "Nocturne", Acne Paper, Tali Silver, Print, Volume 19, 2024
- "The Big Topics: Evolution of Pastels", View Point Colour Magazine, Jane Boddy, Print, Volume 14, 2024
- 2023 "Seawater and Psychedelics", Cultured Magazine, Kat Herriman, print and web, summer 2023
- "Tara Walters at Kristina Kite Gallery", CARLA - Contemporary Art



- "Dropping In", at Kristina Kite Gallery, California Art Review, Web, January 2022
- 2021 "Top Ten: Jack Bankowsky's highlights of 2021", Artforum, Jack Bankowsky, Web and Print, December 2021
- "Five Exhibitions to See in Los Angeles", Frieze Magazine, Gracie Hadland, Web, June 2021
- 2020 "Meet Tara Walters: Local Stories", VoyageLA, Web, July 2020
- 2019 "Elephant Gallery's Smoke Show is Varied and Fiery", Nashville Scene, Alexandra Demarco, Web and Magazine, July 2019
- 2018 "Tara Walters: Smoke on the Canvas", NashvilleArts Magazine, Kathleen Boyle, Web and Magazine, July 2018
- 2017 "Fall Guide: ARTS" Nashville Scene, Joe Nolan, Web and Paper, Sep 21-27, 2017
- 2016 "East Side Art Stumble" Nashville Scene, Joe Nolan, Web and Paper, 19 November 2016
- "6 top cultural picks in Nashville this week" The Tennessean, Sara Estes, Web and Paper, 8 June 2016
- "OZ ARTS NASHVILLE SELECTS TARA WALTERS FOR NEW VISUAL ARTS INSTALLATION CAPNOMANCIE", Oz Arts Nashville, Amy Atkinson, February 2016
- 2015 "Homegrown Savannah" Savannah Now, Savannah Morning News, Adriana Iris Boatwright, Web and Paper, October 2015
- "Savannah's women rockers model vintage style in Starland District" DO Savannah, Adriana Iris Boatwright, Web and Paper, October 2015
- "Behold the Ass-Claping Robots of Collins Avenue" Thumb,Vice Magazine, Kat Bein, Web, February 2015
- "Lobo Marino, Faeryteeth, Swamp Trees", Connect Savannah, Anna Chandler, Web and Paper, January 2015
- "Hang out head and Cry Fest", Connect Savannah, Anna Chandler, Web and Paper, January 2015,
- 2014 "Samhain Full Moon Ceremony", Connect Savannah, Anna Chandler, Web and Paper, November 2014
- "Nick Leon - III. Palenque (Mind)", Sound Advice Music Blog, Web, February 2014
- "Stream: Nick Leon "1111. Palenque (Mind)", FADER, Fader Magazine, Emilie Friedlander, Web, February 2014
- 2013 "Twistyknobs & Flow-ers", Sound Injections Blog, Web, February 2013



# About Nina Johnson

Nina Johnson is a contemporary art gallery committed to elevating exceptional artists and their work. Founded by Nina Johnson in 2007, the gallery is both a pillar of Miami's contemporary art community and an internationally recognized voice known for its wide-ranging and intuitive program. In the spring of 2024 Johnson was welcomed as a member of the Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA).

Nina Johnson's mission is to champion extraordinary artists' work while forming long-term partnerships through deep, intentional connections. The gallery's approach is artist-driven, rooted in an appreciation for historical context and the physical practice of making and exhibiting artwork. Nina Johnson has produced renowned exhibitions by a broad range of artists from around the world, including Germane Barnes, Judy Chicago, Patrick Dean Hubbell, Francesca DiMattio, Rochelle Feinstein, Minjae Kim, Emmett Moore, Eamon O'Giron, Woody De Othello, and Katie Stout

Nina Johnson is located in a four-building compound in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood and features a traditional exhibition space and ancillary gallery spaces in a two-story converted residence in the backyard.



# Nina Johnson

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