

## INTERNATIONAL WATERS

### Brandi Twilley & Rebecca Twilley

*Life And All Its Hands*

1.31.2026 - 4.12.2026

“Little by little it comes into view like a condensing cloud; from the virtual state it passes into the actual; and as its outlines become more distinct and its surface takes on color, it tends to imitate perception. But it remains attached to the past by its deepest roots, and if, when once realized, it did not retain something of its original virtuality, being a present state, it were not also something which stands out distinct from the present, we should never know it for a memory.”<sup>1</sup>

Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 1896

In any present moment in time, physical reality is encountered through accumulated layers of memory and speculation. For the exhibition *Life And All Its Hands* at International Waters, sisters Brandi and Rebecca Twilley render their shared surroundings through layered psychic influences. Working from the same Oklahoma landscape, their approaches reveal how experience is composed with invisible overlays, producing different ways of inhabiting and perceiving the same place.

The present is never encountered alone. Memory and speculation disrupt any unified sequence of time. “If time appears directly, it is in *de-actualized peaks of present*; it is in *virtual sheets of past*.”<sup>2</sup> Reality forms as a crystal-image: actual and virtual become indiscernible as past, present, and future momentarily occupy the same plane. Within this cognitive interface, traces of what has been and what may come exert equal force on the observer. This structure of experience suggests a body continuously distributed across time rather than fixed within it.

Brandi Twilley’s work revisits formative moments of trauma including her hands paralyzed by Lyme disease and the burning of her home, spanning both the catastrophic event and its aftermath as nature overtakes the damaged interior. Brandi’s repeated depictions of past traumas suggests the ongoing influence of these experiences on her lived-present. As a spatialized form of memory, these image-events collapse the boundaries between mind, body, and home, framing both paralysis and destruction as persistent conditions. Reflecting on the loss of function in her hands which prevented her from painting and drawing, Brandi recalls, “My thoughts were, ‘my hands don’t belong to me and I don’t get to keep them.’ They are being reclaimed by nature like everything that dies and transforms.”<sup>3</sup>

Rebecca Twilley’s work emerges from a fundamentally different relation to time and perception. Living with schizophrenia, her condition intensifies a mode of experience in which connections multiply and symbolic forms organize space. A nonlinear representational order emerges as visible and invisible elements of the perceptual field coalesce. The coexistence of real and imagined figures, symbols, and text in her paintings and drawings emphasizes this layered visual reality. As Rebecca describes her painting entitled *Take Your Medication or See What Happens*, “And this is about the hallucinations, the invisible people, the demons that touch you, the psycho part of life actually that you don’t see, but in this painting you can see. There are people touching me, medication going in me. And you can see the demons trading medication and me and... The green resembles being sick.”<sup>4</sup>

The material context of Rebecca’s work is unmistakably shared with Brandi’s; the two often paint the same interiors or the same Crest Supermarket, at times even working collaboratively on a single composition. Yet, when seen together, each artist’s work refracts the other. Rebecca’s iconographic density and expanded realities reframe the symbolic order of Brandi’s recurring imagery, while Brandi’s sustained engagement with trauma and their immediate material environment anchors Rebecca’s work in lived conditions. Together, the works generate a vantage that exceeds either practice alone, allowing perception to circulate between them. Within this shared field, images appear distributed across time and subjectivity, forming a composite vision that emerges only through their relation.

<sup>1</sup> Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988), p. 134. Originally published in French as *Matière et Mémoire* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1896).

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. H. Tomlinson and R. Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 130. Originally published in French as *Cinéma 2, L’Image-temps* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> In conversation with the artist.

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