

# Two Coats of Paint

Gallery shows

## Connecting collage and curation at C24

October 24, 2024 12:59 pm



Dan Cameron, *Classical Scene (Biohazard)*, 2023, collage, marker and acrylic on poster board, 24 x 33 1/2 inches

Contributed by [William Eckhardt Kohler](#) / "Make It or Break It," now showing at [C24 Gallery](#) in Chelsea, features a group of artist known for their curatorial practices who use collage or found objects to disrupt, critique, and reflect reality. The implication here that collage in particular has become a prominent part of our visual vernacular suggests a pervasively fractured way of seeing the world and a compulsion to reorganize it. Each artist explores how fragments, juxtaposed images, and collected objects more broadly articulate new associations and understandings that encompass personal history, culture, and art history.

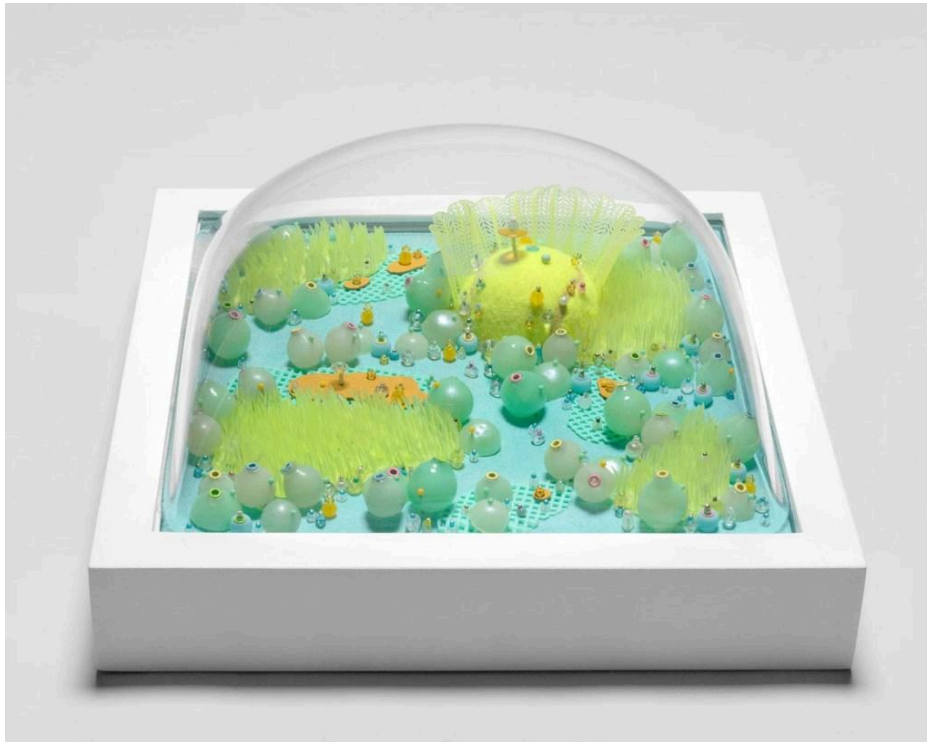
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Dan Cameron's work observes mid-twentieth-century culture through a subversive lens. Using the grid as an organizing mechanism, he incorporates disparate and tangential images and forms, establish a framework that is both playful and pedagogical. Threading together the aesthetics of comic books, vintage advertisements, and classical imagery from South American and Mexican sources, he evokes both wistfulness and discomfort. In *Classical Scene (Biohazard)*, a row of upside-down classical vases can also be read as a fragment of Baroque balustrade and, in silhouette, as butt plugs. In *Family Tree 3*, Cameron juxtaposes banal images of men, women, and children at work and at play, hinting at the absurdities and contradictions of cultural ideals of gender, age, and achievement.



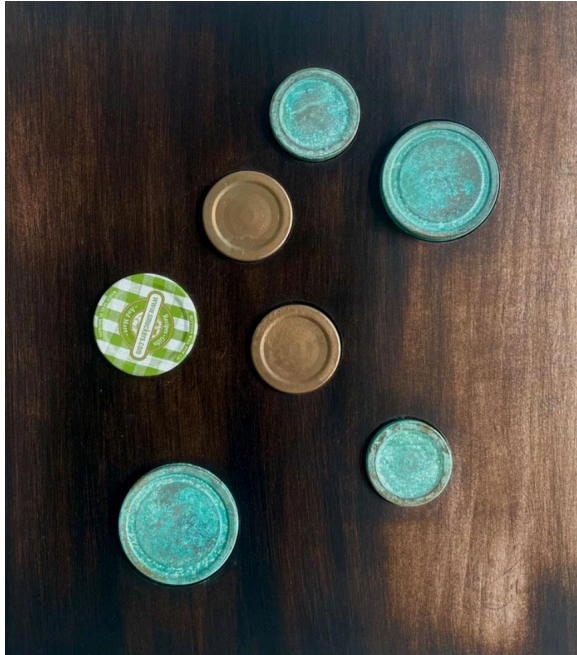
Dan Cameron, *Family Tree 3*, 2024, collage and marker on paper, 13 x 13 inches

**Sally Curcio** constructs meticulously contained worlds that evoke the charm of old science fiction. Her works seem to constitute miniaturized, idealized landscapes, enclosed in large snow globes or terrariums. These environments are antiseptic and, imbued with both 1950s optimism and dystopian undertones, eerily idyllic. She may be speculating that the future could be sanitized, with nature and memory preserved under glass.



*Sally Curcio, Atlantis, 2008, mixed media with beads and found objects (bubble sculpture), 6 x 12 x 12 inches*

Michelle Grabner's contributions are perhaps the most celebratory, though not naively so. Found objects infuse the mundane with a sense of personal and cultural memory. She draws on Americana, conjuring images of breakfast tables and kitchen rituals to nostalgic effect, but also in a way that scrutinizes their place in our shared cultural narrative.



*Michelle Grabner, Untitled, 2024, wood, bronze, and steel, 17.5 x 15.5 x 2 inches*

D. Dominick Lombardi combines collage and painting to create an absurd and surreal visual clash. Vintage images of old cars, cameras, businessmen, politicians, and actresses appear in what could be mutant thought bubbles. Improvisational chromatic twists read like Bauhaus art grafted onto archived newspapers. In *CCWC 164*, a slice of Hubert Humphrey's head might be suspended amid twists of black psychedelia depicting brains or intestines. The piece seems to ask, whose idea was all this anyway?



*D. Dominick Lombardi, CCWC 164, acrylic, collage, and plexiglass, 2024, 18 x 14 inches*



Yohanna M. Roa's approach is both tender and disruptive, employing embroidery, crochet, and beading to purposefully stitch over art history. In *Window*, a Dutch landscape's figures are cut away like lost memories, the frame composed of fragments of master paintings. *Doily* is a reproduction from an art history textbook sewn over with a diagonal grid in what could be an act of protest against the historical repression of women in the West.



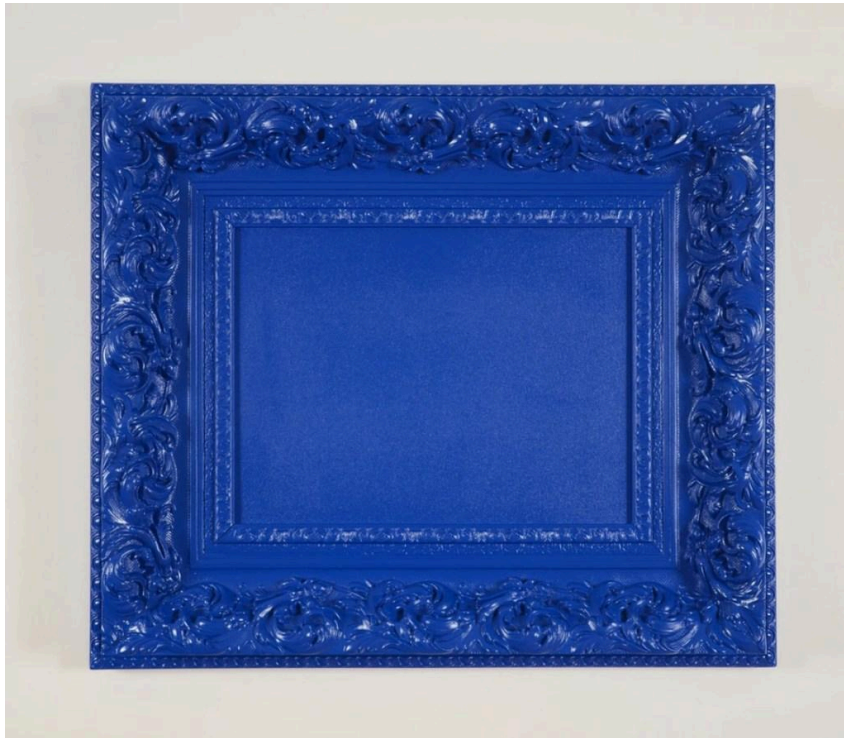
Yohanna M Roa, *Window*, 2022, pearl paper print, pages of art history books, textile intervention, 24 x 31 inches

Richard Klein uses everyday familiar found objects, especially objects made of glass, constructing metaphysical sculptures that produce an optical play of materiality and immateriality. Several of Klein's pieces use clusters of discarded eye glass lenses as if to remind us that seeing is never a straightforward act. Certainly looking and seeing is a foundational act of scouring the world for the objects that he repurposes.



*Richard Klein, Hydrant, 2016, eyeglasses, sunglasses, glass jars, brass, acrylic paint, 33 x 24 x 34 1/2 inches*

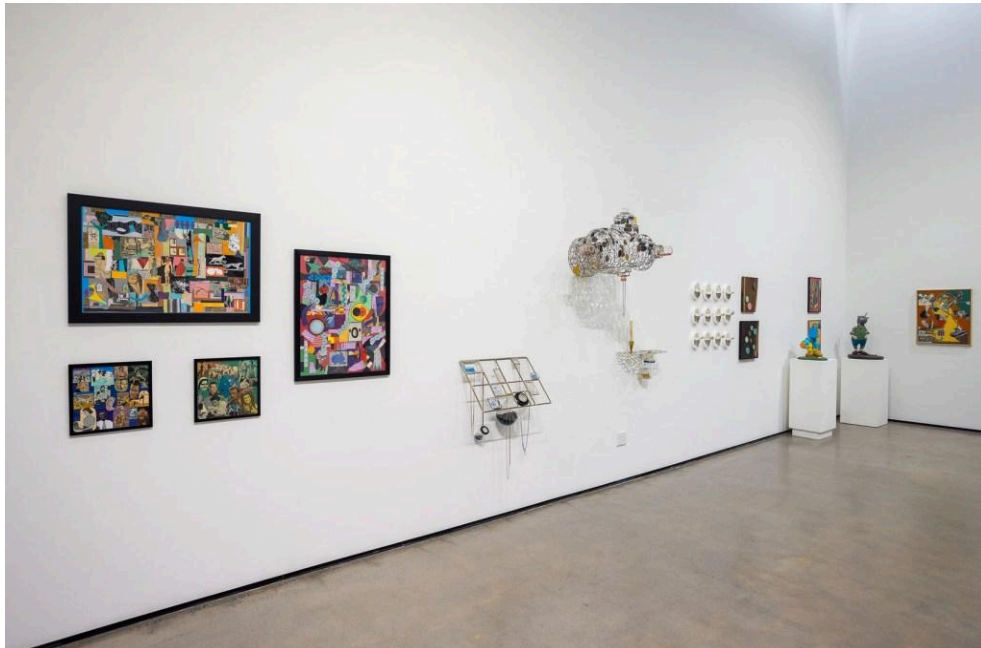
Matthew Deleget is the most visually blunt of the assembled artists but also possibly the most consistently conceptual. Antique-style frames and canvas are spray painted in monochrome, challenging our ideas about whether something is a painting or an object. The traditional picture window view into the world has become screened over, blocked and reasserted as a physical object and also a minimalist abstraction.



*Matthew Deleget, Vanitas (True Blue), 2014, enamel spray paint on canvas and decorative frame, 23 x 27 x 3 inches*



Across the exhibition, the artists engage in a quiet dialogue about materiality, nostalgia, and the evolving role of collage, their modes of art-making affirming their curatorial sensibilities. In both domains, they ask us to reconsider how we arrange and re-arrange our visual world, the way everyday objects or pop-culture fragments can become tools for reimagining the familiar. The art here thrives on ambiguity, favoring the subtle over the declarative, raising questions rather than prescribing answers. Curation itself becomes an act of collage, as each artist contributes to a broader consideration of how images, objects, and their meanings can be deconstructed and reassembled. In an era in which the barrage of images can feel overwhelming, these artists demonstrate the value of slowing down and re-examining how the past and present intersect.



*C24 Gallery: "Make It or Break It: Art by Curators," 2024, installation view*

**"Make It or Break It: Art by Curators,"** C24 Gallery, 524 West 26th Street, New York, NY. Through November 8, 2024. Artists: Dan Cameron, Sally Curcio, Matthew Deleget, Michelle Grabner, Richard Klein, D. Dominick Lombardi, Yohanna M. Roa.

About the author: **William Eckhardt Kohler** is a painter based in Chicago and sometimes New York or Philadelphia. He received a Pollock-Krasner Grant in 2020 and participated in the Sharpe-Walentas Residency Program in 2022-23. His most recent exhibit was in 2024 at Helm Contemporary in NYC. His next show is in 2025 at 65Grand in Chicago.

<https://twocoatsofpaint.com/2024/10/connecting-collage-and-curation-at-c24.html>