

GIOVANNI'S ROOM



Haley Mellin
Conservation Imperatives

November 12 - December 28, 2023

This exhibition will support land conservation and Ukrainian people

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Giovanni's Room is pleased to present *Conservation Imperatives*, an installation by Haley Mellin, from November 12 – December 23, 2023. This is the artist's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles and will consist of large-form wall drawings, paintings, and texts on the natural world and habitats. The exhibition's title is abbreviated from *Conservation Imperatives: Securing the Last Unprotected Terrestrial Sites Harboring Irreplaceable Biodiversity*, a forthcoming paper that the artist co-authored and is set to be published in *Frontiers*, a community-run and open-access journal. Stacks of papers by Indigenous leaders and conservation biologists will also be available for viewers to take home.

Biodiversity habitat conservation and advocating for environmental protections are central in Mellin's artistic practice and activism. As the natural environment that the artist often finds herself in is ephemeral, decaying, and malleable, *Conservation Imperatives* will undo the standard perception that an exhibition is unchanging throughout its duration. In preparation for the show, Mellin shifted the discursive space of the gallery into a studio, and the large works were made there. The content of the works will show the transitional physical condition that terrestrial landscapes are in, as they face anthropogenic conversion and destruction. The materials used, such as the artwork's frames, are sourced from recycling sites.

The exhibition will involve periodic performances on the resident piano in the gallery. Los Angeles musician Jay Israelson will perform during the opening reception. The instrument, an antique baby grand piano dating to the 1890's, is courtesy of Lindon Schultz, the architect of the gallery space. The inclusion of music and performance in the show emphasizes not only the relationship between the viewer and the object, but among participants in a communal space. The playing of music shifts the norm, as the experience of viewing art is often a relatively quiet one. No environment is a static space with completed objects – can the gallery itself not be fluid, as nature so often is?

To quote Shannon Jackson in "Seven Windows" in Harrell Fletcher's *The Best Things in Museums Are the Windows*, "Rather than conceiving of art as a thing bound by a frame or balanced atop a pedestal, art becomes most interesting as a structure for enabling interaction amongst those who engage with it." The artworks have an intertwined relationship with indigenous landback and protection work that she supports as they are made while doing this work. Mellin says, "education, art and conservation are things we do in consideration of the future." This show follows on from a 2022 solo show at The Journal Gallery which centered on Mellin's text *On Biodiversity and Betadiversity* published by Adam Marnie and F: Houston.

- Adrienne Ramsey

The artist thanks Jeremy Maldonado, Niels Kantor, Arianna Rosen, James Duncan, Jim Ringseis, Sophia Cohen, Adam Marnie, Adrienne Ramsey, Lindon Schultz, Invisible Dole, Frank Benson, Jay Israelson, Karl Burkart, Eric Dinerstein, Andy Lee, Philip Tanimoto, Marco Cerezo, Laura Stewart, Chris Jordan, Elias Barrera, Pedro Us, Sammy Owen, Kai Anderson, Fulcrum Press, Robert Price and Noon Projects.

The presentation of this series of paintings and drawings will be completed in two upcoming shows on ecology at Hauser & Wirth New York in January 2024 and at Dittrich & Schlechtriem Berlin in April 2024. An artist talk on biodiversity habitat conservation will be hosted at the gallery on November 12, 2023. Please reach out to Jeremy Maldonado for information on attending the talk or to view the recording.



Haley Mellin
Cloud forest
2023

Pencil and ink on paper in artist frame
11 x 8 ½ inches



Haley Mellin
inner peace, outer peace
2022-2023 Pencil and ink on paper in
artist frame
11 x 8 ½ inches





EXIT





Haley Mellin
Ukraine deforestation
2023
White and black chalk and charcoal
on primed canvas
108 x 84 inches







Haley Mellin
Forest undergrowth, cloud forest biome
2023
Brown and black charcoal on primed canvas
108 x 84 inches



Haley Mellin
Blue Oak, Berryessa National Monument
2023
Gouache on canvas in artist frame
11 x 8 x ¼ inches









Haley Mellin
Cerro Amay, Guatemala
2023
Graphite and chalk on hand oil-primed linen
108 x 84 inches







Haley Mellin
Cerro Amay, Guatemala
2023
Charcoal and chalk on hand oil-primed linen
108 x 84 inches







Haley Mellin
Ukraine deforestation, Russian occupation
2023
Charcoal on primed canvas
84 x 136 inches





Haley Mellin
our painting
2023

Gouache and ink on canvas on board in artist frame
15 3/4 x 10 3/4 x 1/4 inches



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Artist Bio

Haley Mellin is an artist and conservationist. Mellin founded the initiative Art to Acres to support large-scale land protection. On behalf of the art community, the nonprofit has supported 33 million acres of new protected areas ranging from indigenous conserved areas to National Parks. To engage climate sustainability in art communities, Mellin supported the founding of Conserve, the MOCA Environmental Council, Art and Climate Action, Artists Commit, GCC Los Angeles and GCC New York. Starting in 2020, she initiated the first carbon emissions calculations in exhibitions for many museums, including the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, ICA Miami, documenta, and Kunstmuseum Bonn and received grants from the Teiger Foundation in 2022 and 2023 to continue this work.

Mellin currently focuses on observational painting in nature. The presentation of this series of work will be completed in two upcoming shows on ecology at Hauser & Wirth New York in January 2024 and at Dittrich & Schlechtriem Berlin in April 2024. Recent shows include The Journal Gallery, New York; Micki Meng and Parker Gallery, New York; Bischoff Projects, Germany; and Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Belgium. A graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, Mellin has a PhD from the Steinhardt School in Visual Culture and Education and attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program. She is the 2023 Max Beckmann Distinguished Visitor at the American Academy in Berlin and the Neue Nationalgalerie. She is mentored by South African/Italian artists and educators rosenclaire.

Mellin's recent solo and group exhibitions include "Walk Against the Wind" at Micki Meng and Parker Gallery in New York, New York (2023), "Flora and Fauna" curated by Ryan Steadman and Haley Mellin, Fleischmann's, New York (2023), "Haley Mellin Tennis Elbow 109" The Journal, New York, New York (2022), "Take Care Project" at Fondazione 107 in Torino, Italy (2021); "Bananas" at Fort Makers in New York, New York (2021); "Hudson House: Phase 2" curated by Jesse Jag at Hudson House in Hudson, New York (2021); "Real Estate," curated by Adam Marnie at F in Houston, Texas (2020); "Animal Kingdom" at Alexander Berggruen in New York, New York (2020); "Online Exhibition: Drawn Together" at Unit Gallery in London, United Kingdom (2020); "Week 10" at The Tennis Elbow Window in New York, New York (2020); "The Fine Art Quarantine Coloring Book" curated online by Brooke Wise (2020); "King Dogs Never Grow Old" at Diane Rosenstein in Los Angeles, California (2020); "Shoulder" at Shoulder Gallery in Los Angeles, California (2018); "Warhol & Mellin" at Kantor Gallery in Los Angeles, California (2018); "Hot Mud" at JAG Projects, Spook Rock Farm in Hudson, New York (2017); "Zine Tornado" at MoMA Ps1 in Queens, New York (2016); "Haley Mellin" at Bischoff Projects in Frankfurt, Germany (2016).

