

Press Release
Welancora Gallery
Frieze Los Angeles
February 20-23, 2025
Santa Monica Airport | Booth E6
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Carl E. Hazlewood, *Grey Beauty Red Cloud*, 1997 Acrylic Polymer Emulsion on Canvas, 10 x 46 x 1 inches

Welancora Gallery is pleased to announce our participation in Frieze Los Angeles. The fair is open to the public from February 20 to February 23, 2025. For the third consecutive year, the gallery will be located in the Main Section of the fair. We are located at booth E6.

Our group presentation will include a selection of triptychs on canvas by Carl E. Hazlewood, works on hand cut paper by Oasa DuVerney, oil paintings and watercolors by Debra Cartwright, and acrylic resin paintings by Chris Watts. In this intergenerational presentation of work, the artists create spaces of solace for African Americans navigating their existence in the United States. Through migrations of space and time, the works on view depict a legacy of African American and Black diasporic memory.

Captured through his memories of the lush and vibrant colors found in the flowers, foliage, and soil in his native Guyana, **Carl E. Hazlewood's** triptychs from the 1990s and early 2000s take on a process oriented, modernist approach, that highlights the persistence of cultural and personal memory encoded in the way that he perceives color. These early works loosely call to mind the materiality of Frank Bowling's abstractions, while simultaneously existing in an in-between space with subtle references to the geometric shapes at the foundation of Hazlewood's newer paintings and site specific wall installations. With references to Anansi the Spider, a character from West African and Caribbean folklore, Hazlewood meditates upon ideas of resilience through the act of shape shifting – a personification of the Black modernist experience. **Oasa DuVerney** utilizes flowers and the urban landscape to protect the Black body, providing her subjects with a level of grace and care that they are not often afforded. Orchids reoccur in the work (Helliborine, Coral Root, Dragons Mouth, Lady Slipper, and Snakemouth).

They are native to New York City and symbolic of Black womanhood; mischaracterized as difficult, exotic, and not belonging – but in fact still present and standing. **Debra Cartwright** navigates the maternal history of her family, which spans from Virginia to New York and the landscapes in between. Her works layer waterscapes, family stories, historical accounts, and personal reflections. This approach creates a textured exploration of migration, selfhood, and the intersections of violence and resilience in Black American experiences – evoking themes of birth, caregiving, and the hidden rituals that sustained these women across generations. From Virginia’s rivers to the urban landscapes of New York, revealing how these stories resonate within larger Black geographies. **Chris Watts’** choice to house his abstract paintings within wood panels that reflect the color and contours of mid-century design situates the work within both visible and invisible narratives that integrate spatial, temporal and spiritual experience. A native of High Point, North Carolina, Watts’ work becomes a mediation of protests in the American South (such as the Greensboro Four sit ins). Illuminating new contexts of reflection, Watts’ ‘ambient paintings’ are screens, windows, and spaces that sculpt materials — wood, poly chiffon, resin, natural and synthetic pigments — into elevated luminous forms that act as ceremonial objects. Through an interplay of transparency and opacity — darkness and light — wooden structures that frame light, space and formless color, act as guides in the exploration of sacred meditative spaces and encounters with the immaterial. The sculptural forms echo both light-soaked stained glass windows and traditional Asian and European standing screens, historical intermediaries of the unknown in public and private space.

About the Artists:

Carl E. Hazlewood (b. 1951, Guyana) is a multimedia artist known for his abstract reflections on landscape, identity, and symbolism. From the beginning of his precocious career as a fifteen year old professional artist working in late 1960’s Guyana, Hazlewood has always made abstract art. He uses the structural language of abstraction as a clarifying act of progress in what he considers an unstable world. Through a suite of shapes and symbols, his work speaks to the power of resiliency through references to Anansi the Spider, a prominent character in West African and Caribbean folklore. More broadly, Hazlewood’s approach to his work and life seeks to counter the insinuation that there may be limitations on what he should do or what he can achieve. Carl strives for an art and life of open possibilities, for a poetic presentness beyond time, place, race and other distracting polemics. After many years of creating free form site-specific installations and other combined-media works, Hazlewood has made new paintings that reflect a heightened sense of introspection in their approach to themes and concepts regarding identity and how one exists in our current social and cultural reality. Paint on canvas retakes its place alongside the extemporaneous wall works the artist has become known for over the last ten years or so. “Without sounding overly dramatic or romantic, my paintings are, at least in the conventions of naming, an acknowledgment of the persistence of cultural and personal memory encoded in the way I see color—that is, landscape color, skin color, pure prismatic color.” -Carl E. Hazlewood.

Solo exhibitions of his work include *BlackHead Anansi: Constellations* at Charlotte and Philip Hanes Gallery, Wake Forest University, South Carolina (2023); *Racing Thoughts-Fever Dreaming* at Art Basel Miami Beach (2022); and *BlackHead Lyricism* at Welancora Gallery in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn (2022). Hazlewood has been the recipient of fellowships at the MacDowell organization (2023, 2015); the Brown Foundation at the Dora Maar House, Ménerbes, France (2018); and the Bogliasco Foundation, Italy (2018). His fifty-two-foot-tall wall work, *TRAVELER* (2017), was commissioned by the Knockdown Center, Queens. Hazlewood participated in the Art Cake residency at Cordy and Ethan Ryman's Studio Program in Sunset Park, Brooklyn (2020–22).

Oasa DuVerney (b. 1979 Queens, NY) is known for her figurative works utilizing graphite on paper. DuVerney's work centers itself in social and political commentary that relates to her social status as a woman of color and a working-class person. She draws on elements from nature: waves, snakes and mountains to explore the ways in which people of color exist in contemporary society. Oasa's work is part of the collection at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. Her work was part of *Flight into Egypt: Black Artists and Ancient Egypt, 1876–Now*, previously on view at a new exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Tisch Galleries. Her work in this exhibition has been acquired by the museum.

DuVerney received a B.F.A. from SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology and an M.F.A. from CUNY, Hunter College. Oasa is an Assistant Professor for the School of Art and School of Design at Pratt Institute. Selected exhibitions, residencies and media include: (2021) Brooklyn Hi-Art Machine: Paradise Is One's Own Place, Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn, NY; (2021) Jon Gray of Ghetto Gastro Selects, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, NY, NY; (2020) 2020 Women To Watch, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; (2020) Twenty Twenty, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; *BLACK POWER WAVE*, BRIC, Brooklyn, NY (2019); *Something To Say*, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn NY (2018); *The Window and the Breaking of the Window*, Studio Museum in Harlem, NYC (2016); *The Brooklyn Biennial II*, BRIC, Brooklyn, NY (2016); *Through A Glass Darkly*, Postmasters Gallery, NYC (2012); Rush Philanthropic Foundation Artist Residency (2016), Smack Mellon Studio Artist Residency (2014-2015); LMCC Workspace Residency (2012-2013); *The Guardian* UK, UK (2019, 2015), *The Independent*, UK (2016), *Hyperallergic* (2015, 2016, 2021), *Palestine News Network* (2013), and *The New York Times* (2022, 2020, 2012, 2011).

Debra Cartwright (b. 1988. Annapolis, Maryland) is an artist interested in depicting the relationship between the Black female body and American medical history. She uses paint and mixed media to explore selfhood and her own positioning as the daughter of a gynecologist. Themes around her work include re-embodiment, myth creation, violence, theft and intimacy. She explores a critical understanding of the past while also proposing an examination of the present American healthcare system.

Cartwright received her BA in Art History from the University of Virginia in 2010; she received her MFA in Painting from Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts in 2023. She has held solo exhibitions at Frieze LA (2024), Montclair Art Museum (2024), and BODE Projects

(Berlin, 2023). She has participated in group exhibitions at TERN Gallery (Nassau, Bahamas, 2024); Swivel Gallery (New York, 2024); Fridman Gallery (New York, 2024), Untitled Art Fair Miami (2023); New York Academy of Art (2023); Sotheby's (New York, 2023); Westbeth Gallery (New York, 2023); forMAH Gallery (New York, 2023); Allouche Gallery (New York; 2023), and CFHILL (Stockholm, Sweden, 2020). In 2024, Cartwright was a resident at the Wassaic Project.

Chris Watts (b. 1984) was born in High Point, North Carolina. He attended the MFA program at Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT, after graduating from the College of Arts and Architecture, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, NC, and the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Wroclaw, PL. The artist has held various artist residencies, among them the Marek Maria Pienkowski Foundation, Chelm, PL; McColl Center for Art + Innovation, Charlotte, NC; the Art & Law Fellowship Program, at Cornell University Art Architecture Planning, New York, NY; Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Program, New York, NY; and, the 2022-2023 Soros Justice Fellowship Program. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. He is a featured artist in the documentary film, *The Art of Making It*, directed by Kelcey Edwards, and from the Emmy-nominated producer Debi Wisch (*The Price of Everything*). The film had its world premiere at the 2021 Hamptons International Film Festival. Watts shares his time between New York and North Carolina.