

# HYPERALLERGIC

## 10 Exhibitions to See in Upstate New York This May

Arlene Shechet's muscular ceramics, Z. Cecilia Lu's monstrous-yet-heartwarming assemblages, Lothar Osterburg's lonely sculptures, and more.

By Taliesin Thomas  
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Marcelle Reinecke, "Detour" (2024), acrylic and flashe on panel, 20 x 16 inches  
(image courtesy the Ruffed Grouse Gallery)

In his celebrated "Sonnet 18" (1609), Shakespeare writes that "rough winds do shake the darling buds of May." So, too, does the lively art scene in Upstate New York flutter with a robust round of shows this month. The Wellin Museum celebrates the visual splendor of René Treviño's queer twist on Mexican-American traditions, while Storm King Art Center presents the radical pioneering ceramicist Arlene

Shechet's latest monumental sculpture. Bethany Collins's austere work at Alexander Gray soberly repositions public notices by formerly enslaved individuals seeking family members, and Catalina Viejo Lopez de Roda's exhibition at Gallery 495 explores the soulfulness of faces in a series of ink drawings and embossed metal wall sculptures. Savaggi Arts in collaboration with Bank Arts Center presents Kate Raudenbush's monumental laser-cut sculptures that double as allegorical environments for self-exploration, while Collar Works's mobile FLOCKart shipping container project, currently parked in Rensselaer, exhibits a series of playful ceramics by Chinese-American artist Z. Cecilia Lu. Among the consistent charms of the Hudson Valley is the seasonal energy, and art-lovers can encounter the rough winds, the darling buds, and the thrill of upbeat exhibitions that complement the unabashed rebirth of life exploding across the region this month.

### **Eureka! Presents: A Celebration of Collaboration**

Celebrating four years of community and creative connectivity for queer and trans artists of color, the small press and residency Eureka!, based in Kingston, presents a lively group exhibition at DRAW Studio in the city's Midtown Arts District. Featuring a range of artworks by more than 50 artists who have been in residence and collaboration with Eureka! since its founding in 2020, the show includes paintings, ceramic, sculpture, cyanotypes, books, and prints that reflect a triumphant spirit of activism, care, and playfulness. The artist Mercenary's photo "Staff Meeting 1" (2022), featuring a joyful woman as she explores a lush green landscape, and Luka Carter's groovy series of ceramics, *Barabell Goblets* (2023), share an affinity for Matisse-inspired whimsy. The Eureka! residency program continues to collaborate with local partners and residents this season, providing visiting artists with the necessary space and resources to re-imagine their practices and to enact creative futures similarly motivated by justice and infused with joy.

DRAW at MAD ([drawkingston.org](http://drawkingston.org))  
24 Iwo Jima Lane, Kingston, New York  
Through May 18

### **Z. Cecilia Lu: *Body Ajar***

This May, Collar Works's mobile gallery, FLOCKart, arrives in Rensselaer with the exhibition *Body Ajar*. Let us further unpack this special scenario: Collar Works is a nonprofit art space in Troy devoted to supporting emerging and underrepresented artists. Their FLOCKart project is a mobile gallery, residency, and arts education program rolled into a renovated shipping container that roams the region. This month, FLOCKart presents an exhibition of large-scale and smaller wall ceramics by Chinese-American artist Z. Cecilia Lu. Inspired by ancient Chinese cooking vessels and infused with concepts such as decay, transformation, and healing, Lu's assemblages are strangely monstrous and heart-warming at once. Her piece "Bottle Gourd Requiem" (2023) is comprised of glazed stoneware, peach pits, and a mini gourd and appears to be one part medicinal ritual altar and one part brute mutant. "Loam-Foam Cradle II" (2024) is not only a curious mound of stoneware and paper pulp – it also looks like a mother tending to three children tucked into her massive belly: clay lovingly reshaped to provoke and inspire.

FLOCKart by Collar Works ([collarworks.org](http://collarworks.org))  
Woodland Hill Montessori School, 100 Montessori Place, Rensselaer, New York  
Through June 1



Lothar Osterburg, "Piranesi" (2013), wood, paper, metal, paint, 80 x 36 x 42 inches  
(image courtesy the artist and Pamela Salisbury Gallery)

### **Lothar Osterburg: A Celebration of the Small**

With an eye toward the American dream from an immigrant's perspective, *A Celebration of the Small* at Pamela Salisbury Gallery and Carriage House in Hudson presents a series of small-scale models, photogravures, and sculptural installations that explore a realm between fact and fiction. This adventurous solo exhibition – the artist's third with the gallery – takes us on a journey into the past 25 years of Lothar Osterburg's creative practice through artworks that conjure nautical worlds full of potential and abandoned realms that defy the imagination, all carefully constructed by way of analog methods and techniques. His photogravure "The Great Wave" (2014) is an image of a small boat at sea made entirely of crumpled paper. His miniature three-dimensional models offer a peek into his previous studio spaces through a fisheye lens, and works such as "Summer Cabin" (2024) and "Attic" (2021) are incredibly detailed in their mini movie set appearance. Osterburg's delicately suspended worlds reveal a curious loneliness, while also leaving space for wondering and wandering.



Pamela Salisbury Gallery (pamelasalisburygallery.com)  
362 1/2 Warren Street, Hudson, New York  
Through May 12 (Pamela Salisbury) and June 9 (Carriage House)



René Treviño, "Regalia, Premonition" (2023), mixed media, dimensions variable  
(© René Treviño; photo by John Bentham, courtesy the artist)

### **René Treviño: *Stab of Guilt***

Featuring 200 artworks in a range of materials, *Stab of Guilt* at the Wellin Museum is a dazzling cornucopia of multi-media artworks, as well as Treviño's first solo museum exhibition. The queer, Baltimore-based Mexican-American artist's work reflects his investigation of diverse symbolism and cultural references, including Mayan, Aztec, and Catholic histories, combined with personal affinities such as astronomy, pop art, and LGBTQ+ culture. His *Walls of the Yucatán* series (2016), for example, comprises six rainbow-hued paintings that combine the Pride Flag with the topography of stone, producing a layering of worlds both ancient and contemporary. *Sunspots by Day, Asteroids by Night* (2023) consists of 20 archival digital prints with mixed media on bamboo paper, a collaging of celestial objects with blocks of color that conjure a spiritual warmth. As we drift into his welcoming

universe, Treviño's imaginative use of fabric, beads, fringe, feathers, and faux fur create striking ceremonial outfits and sculptural wall pieces, reflecting his masterful orchestration of historical visual norms with current social realities.

Ruth and Elmer Wellin Museum of Art at Hamilton College ([hamilton.edu](http://hamilton.edu))  
198 College Road, Clinton, New York  
Through June 9



Paul Gagner, "Three Full Moons" (2018), oil on canvas, 40 x 32 inches  
(image courtesy the artist)

## **Brain Candy**

Curated by Iris Jaffe, *Brain Candy* brings together a diverse array of works by 12 artists through the theme of neuro-aesthetics and the edifying effects of art for personal harmony and psychic well-being. The psychedelic palette of this lively show reflects the powerful effect that color has on us: Jenny Kemp's "Hip" (2023) and "Hooked" (2023) are groovy and luscious, while Melissa Staiger's blow-out painting "Rooted No. 22" (2023) is a marvelous example of how the sheer pleasure of seeing art can increase dopamine and fire up the neurotransmitters connected with affection and bliss. While the overall show solicits a smile, it is Paul Gagner's painting, simply titled "Thank You" (2014), that encapsulates the heart of the matter: gratitude as a mindset that provides us with the brain-candy sweetness that we all crave.

Peep Space (peepspaceny.com)  
92 Central Avenue, Tarrytown, New York  
Through June 9



Bethany Collins, "Untitled (A Branch of the Tree)" (2016), charcoal on found paper, 10 x 6 3/4 inches  
(image courtesy Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York)



### **Bethany Collins: Years**

How does language both define and obscure identities? How does text both reveal and abscond? Artist Bethany Collins explores what she calls “the dust of language” in *Years*, her second solo exhibition with Alexander Gray Associates in Germantown. This austere presentation of black embossed prints of notices once placed in public places by formerly enslaved individuals seeking their families and loved ones is a powerful reminder of loss. Collins obfuscates the text in these documents by covering it with unforgiving black squares. The raven-hued square in the middle of “Untitled (Astronomical)” (2016), comprised of charcoal on found paper, is a devastating example. Her gestures of erasure and absence to drag out meaning also highlight a timeless dance between black and white – both as color and as identity – that discloses the issues of race and biography embedded in these pages.

Alexander Gray Associates (alexandergray.com)  
224 Main Street, Germantown, New York  
Through June 16



Marcelle Reinecke “Harvest Moon” (2024), acrylic and flashe on panel, 22 x 30 inches (image courtesy the Ruffed Grouse Gallery)

### **Julia PolICASTRO and Marcelle Reinecke**

This two-person show at the Ruffed Grouse Gallery in Narrowsburg is an amusing pairing of dynamic figuration and biological abstraction. Taking inspiration from late Medieval and early Renaissance aesthetics, Julia PolICASTRO's recent three-dimensional quasi-sculptural paintings engage with familiar shapes such as windows, architectural spaces, and organic forms to create atypical vignettes. "Windowsill Sunset" (2024), made of wood, acrylic, foam board, plaster, and joint compound, for instance, nearly pops off the wall with its playful presence. Figurative painter Marcelle Reinecke employs a rich color palette to tease out visions of female figures engaging in familiar activities such as swimming, napping, and hiking in the woods, all laced with a voyeuristic edge. In "Harvest Moon" (2024), several characters stand around a tremendous midnight fire that illuminates their distinct moods: one figure slugs a drink; another, hooded in blue, looks off blankly; and a woman with freckles stares right at us as the dude to her left lights up her cigarette. The mood is fascinatingly bizarre – I wanted to enter the picture plane, directly into Reinecke's peculiar party.

The Ruffed Grouse Gallery ([ruffedgrousegallery.com](http://ruffedgrousegallery.com))  
144 Main Street, Narrowsburg, New York  
Through June 23

### **Kate Raudenbush: *Inner Landscapes***

In 2008, I attended Burning Man in Nevada. It was the blow-out experience of a lifetime. The highlight of that outrageous and unrivaled adventure in American art and festival culture was encountering Kate Raudenbush's sculpture in the middle of that dusty desert (known as the "playa," among burners). What a thrill, then, to learn that Bank Arts Center, in collaboration with Savaggi Arts in Newburgh, is presenting *Kate Raudenbush: Inner Landscapes* in an extended spring-into-summer exhibition. Featuring illuminated, monumental sculptures arranged as energetic portals that double as allegorical environments, Raudenbush invites her audience to experience her art installations as a vehicle for self-exploration and empowerment. "Breaking Point" (2023), consisting of arrows in a half arc facing inward to create the sculptural shape of a figure made of light, ushers us into the magic, while the layered steel of "Ancestors" (2023) gives the impression of a figure woven within a personal history. Exploring the dynamic intersections between spirituality, sculpture, and architecture in works that solicit sublime states of transcendence, this exhibition is not to be missed.

Savaggi Arts and Bank Arts Center ([thebank.art](http://thebank.art))  
94 Broadway, Newburgh, New York  
Through July 27

### **Arlene Shechet: *Girl Group***

Over 20 years ago, I discovered the muscular ceramic work of Arlene Shechet. She was a badass sculptor then, and remains so now as a leading powerhouse artist of her generation. *Girl Group* at Storm King Art Center brings together her smaller indoor ceramics and commanding outdoor sculpture in wood and steel for the first time. Since beginning to work with clay in 2006, she has radicalized the landscape of American ceramics by way of her brave, bold, and singular style and progressive working methods: She redefines clay and steel by melting, contorting, and twisting up these materials to create artworks that appear to defy gravity. Six new monumental sculptural



commissions plus smaller study artworks such as her green-and-blue torso-like "May Monday" (2022) make their debut here, marking a new phase of her creative process via industrial materials.

Storm King Art Center ([collections.stormking.org](https://collections.stormking.org))  
1 Museum Road, New Windsor, New York  
May 4–November 10