



## ***FINE MATERIALITY***

Jess Willa Wheaton, Alison Kudlow, & Whit Harris  
June 1 — July 15, 2023

The Performance of Materiality in works of art extends beyond physical matter and broadly encompasses all relevant information related to the work's physical existence. An artwork's visual content coupled with the artist's personal history, as it pertains to the origin of the work, are all relevant to the aesthetic experience.

The artwork's physicality - aspects which can be sensed and verified by the viewer on a visceral level - is naturally a primary consideration of a work; physicality impacts content and, subsequently, meaning. Secondly, the apparent subject or object matter, and how that dialogues within the narrative of our contemporary culture, are just as relevant.

Considerations of materiality can be universally applied, in the aesthetic assessment of diverse contemporary forms that range from traditional, low-tech media to conceptual or ephemeral works.

The art featured in ***Fine Materiality*** creates further discourse about how art functions via its materiality, and how the act of making brings forth and informs its ultimate meaning. The exhibition features the artwork of **Jess Willa Wheaton, Alison Kudlow, and Whit Harris.**



Jess Willa Wheaton's works first appear as a materially continuous whole, and pictorially continuous space. Yet a close secondary read reveals an intensely orchestrated surface, running with subtle paper seams that draw together several different found original sources. These internal structures comprise the anatomy of gelled imagistic surface: image arrived at through touch, and thought. Driving Wheaton's interest in this complex, nonlinear, and labyrinthine working process is the demand it makes on her to enter an intimate dialogue with thousands of physical images, and to meet them at their preexisting original material reality, size, and scale.

Glass oozes from Alison Kudlow's bulbous unglazed ceramic forms, a carefully honed result of custom developed kiln programs. She heats the glass until it is viscous and then quickly drops the temperature to pause the drips, giving her materials agency to embody heat, gravity, and time. Glass, scientifically considered either a supercooled liquid or an amorphous solid, has properties of both states of matter so is an ideal material for Kudlow's categorically slippery works. Her clay forms are simultaneously bodily, botanical, geological, but their seemingly organic origins and fragile materiality are interrupted by metal interventions.

Whit Harris paints and sculpts gesticulating nude figures within Arcadian landscapes as metaphors for concepts pertaining to vulnerability, dissonance, and experiences of Black individuals living under White hegemony. By layering techniques such as dripping, scratching, and smearing within her paintings,, she creates complex tones and textures that represent an aftermath, reminiscent of scars from the hardships of life. The act of drawing also plays a significant role in Harris' process, her hand gestures acting as a connecting thread between her different artistic practices. The movements she makes carry emotions that are transmuted into marks on paper, recording both personal experiences and ancestral connections. These figures become vessels for narrative aftermath, allowing her to reassemble and explore the stories and experiences of Black individuals.

*Fine Materiality* will run at our 13 Monroe Street location from June 1st to July 15, 2023 with an opening reception on June 1st from 6 to 9 pm.