



# AMALGAMATIONS OF THE FEMALE MIND

Green Family Art Foundation investigates rising artists in *Women of Now*.

BY TERRI PROVENCAL



“**M**emories, whether old, new, real, imagined or virtual, specified by moment and place, are then amalgamated, and form patterns that help define the rules and ways in which we live.” *Women of Now: Dialogues of Memory, Place & Identity*, the next exhibition from the Green Family Art Foundation, posits this in an essay and articulates this through the work of 28 female artists.

Banded about by behavioral health scientists ad infinitum—including the near-mythic Sigmund Freud, whose grandson was the great British portraitist Lucian Freud—memories are easy fodder for artists. However, memories handled in capable hands make you think, conjuring your own long-forgotten experiences, allowing for an interpretive view. It is the crux of this that makes the selected artists, on every collector’s waiting list, compel you to see what they will do next, which is why they are rising, and *fast*. Fortunately for us we get to see this sampling of exceptional work when the exhibition opens February 12 at Green Family Art Foundation.

In order to communicate their internal worlds, these artists have developed personal visual languages based on their own anthologies. The unique identity of each artist is what makes the work more convincing. A Canadian artist, Danielle Roberts, took a ferry to school throughout her childhood, often riding when darkness fell.

Above, left: Anna Weyant, *Maggie*, 2019, oil on panel, 48 x 36 in. Collection of Jonathan Travis, New York. © Anna Weyant, Courtesy of the artist and Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo; Above, right: Caroline Absher, *Studio*, 2021, oil on canvas 84 x 72 in. © Caroline Absher. Courtesy of the artist. Green Family Art Foundation. Left: Hannah Levy, *Untitled*, 2020, nickel-plated steel, silicone, 44 x 22 x 25 in. Green Family Art Foundation. © Hannah Levy. Courtesy the artist and Casey Kaplan, New York.



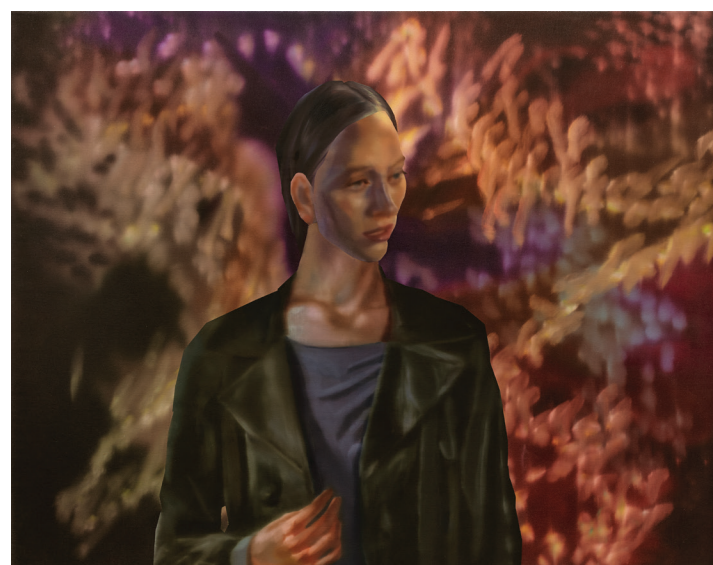
Growing up on Gabriola Island, she observed strangers who sat alone on their daily commute. A predatory work titled *Captain* by Danica Lundy nods to her own experiences as an athlete growing up, and her observation of the events that unfolded in the USA Gymnastics team abuse scandal at the hands of Larry Nassar. Brea Weinreb pays tribute to her friend Brian, a well-known drag queen, in *Demoiselles of Gay Beach*, recalling times they shared during San Francisco Pride Week. Known as Venus Soleil, Brian is cast as the central figure, and he's having a terrific time, confident as he looks directly at the viewer. In each artwork, we feel their sense of place.

The Green Family Art Foundation's team operates like stagehands, with everyone helping—refreshing in an often ego-driven art world. This exhibition reflects that collaborative spirit. Co-curators Clare Milliken and Bailey Summers work closely with the Greens. Milliken is the curator of the foundation and collection; Summers is the collection manager and program manager. Debbie and Eric Green's collection celebrates underrepresented artists: artists of color, emerging female artists, and LGBTQIA+ artists, and they want to share it with the public. Their son, Adam, is a respected New York-based art advisor and very involved. "Everyone plays a vital role," says Summers.

Milliken and Summers are proud of the show they curated together, and they have a lot to say about the artists and their work. Lily Wong's *Into the Thick of It* was spurred by "the artist's inability to be with her family due to the omicron flare," Summers relates. Emphasizing mental health in her work, Wong depicts the figure's anxiety viscerally as another partial figure runs behind a tree. Is the elusive figure the inescapable menacing virus?

Milliken says Dominique Fung's heroically scaled *Suspicious about Colour* stems from "the overt sexualization of Asian women." The painting will hang prominently in the main gallery, viewable from the River Bend window. In this 120-inch-wide canvas, Fung presents female porcelain figures and salacious innuendo, turning female objectification on its head. The conceptual underpinnings stem from the artist's observations of the approach to the display of Asian artifacts in severed historical context. Milliken avers, "She is looking at perfection and it's a collapse of past and present at once."

In the brilliant painting *Maggie*, a trompe l'oeil within a trompe l'oeil, Anna Weyant borrows from René Magritte's surreal window and curtain paintings. Maggie (a feminized name for Magritte) is a young girl in her leotard, clearly aggravated by the adult who has opened the curtain, though we only see the hand and wrist. Through the window we see an evening forest behind her that's



Top: Issy Wood, *Untitled (Study for my dad's next wife)*, 2019, oil on velvet, 55.10 x 70.80 in. Collection of Robert Lowinger, Miami. © Issy Wood. Courtesy of the artist and Carlos/Ishikawa, London. Below: Rute Merk, *Julia*, 2020, oil on canvas, 41 x 52 in. © Rute Merk, Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai. Green Family Art Foundation.



Dominique Fung, *Suspicious About Colour*, 2018, oil on canvas, 60 x 120 in. © Dominique Fung. Courtesy of the artist and Nicodim Gallery. Green Family Art Foundation. Right: Michaela Yearwood-Dan, *Beyond the veil of the mythical super woman*, 2021, oil, acrylic, ink and gold leaf on canvas, 78.75 x 59.12 in. © Michaela Yearwood-Dan. Courtesy of the artist, Tiwani Contemporary, London and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. Green Family Art Foundation.





## OPENINGS



Clockwise from top left: Brea Weinreb, *Demoiselles of Gay Beach*, 2021, oil on canvas, 56 x 48 in. © Brea Weinreb, 2021; Danica Lundy, *Captain*, 2020, oil on canvas, 60 x 36 in. © Danica Lundy; Danielle Roberts, *Two Sailing Wait*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 66 in. © Danielle Roberts; Lily Wong, *Into the Thick of It*, 2021, acrylic on paper, 29.50 x 41 in. All Green Family Art Foundation.

reflected in her leotard. Marveling at the genius, Milliken says, “Weyant’s practice is rooted in adolescence; that awkward moment of feeling your body change.” The Canadian-born, New York-based artist creates narratives through young female tragicomic characters that invite viewers to linger. The figures are quite often rebellious and endearing at the same time.

There is only one sculpture presented in the exhibition. Hannah Levy’s *Untitled* is a siren song, simultaneously intimidating and alluring. The razor-sharp, claw-footed sculpture is covered in silicone; the chair draws from her childhood. Instead of the ordinary “girl” things her peers wanted, the artist collected books about chairs and dreamed of becoming an industrial designer. The chair appears to move in a sexy saunter while reflecting an industrialized world.

Amalgamating from individuals she knows, Rute Merk draws inspiration from ’90s video games in her painting *Julia*. Unlike frustrated players of the games themselves, she controls the avatars in her paintings, investigating the real, the virtual, and the remembered. “One can influence and change the other,” Milliken says. *Julia* is confident, much like Caroline Absher’s self-portrait in *Studio*, painted during her residency at The Cabin, LA. But where *Julia* is poised, Caroline is completely at ease. Here we see an artist satisfied with a harmonious self-awareness, though not overtly, so void of arrogance. “She claims that identity as her own and shares it with the world,” says Milliken.

*Women of Now* examines the way these powerful voices use memory and place as artistic instruments to instill in their work their unique identities for the viewing audience. Though most of these highly sought artists are no longer emerging and have arrived, the Greens began collecting the work of women much prior to the art world’s female reckoning with their commitment to the work of Dana Schutz and Nicole Eisenman. This foresight is shared in *Women of Now*. **P**