



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Fleisher Art Memorial Announces 2024 Wind Challenge Exhibition Series and 2025 Call for Entries**



Lauren Pakradooni, *Battle (for Pastures)*, 2023, aquatint etching in artist's frame, 29.5 x 26 x 1.5 inches.

PHILADELPHIA, February 9, 2024 — Fleisher Art Memorial is pleased to present their 2024 Wind Challenge Exhibition Series with a trio of shows featuring the work of nine contemporary artists from the region. The first exhibition in the series, on view from February 13 through March 9 in Fleisher's Dene M. Louchheim Galleries, showcases the work of Kim Altomare, Natessa Amin, and Lauren Pakradooni. A second exhibition featuring the work of Joseph Lazaro Rodriguez, Erik Ruin, and Sean M. Starowitz will follow from April 2 to 27, with the third and final installment of the 2024 series running through the month of July with works on view by Alexis Granwell, Brynn Hurlstone, and Idalia Vasquez-Achury.

Established in 1978 as The Challenge and now known as the Wind Challenge, Fleisher's annual juried competition has long been committed to featuring the work of exceptional artists living in the Philadelphia region. Since its inception, the series has introduced work from over three hundred contemporary artists to a broad audience while helping emerging artists advance their professional careers. Beyond the opportunity to exhibit in Fleisher's galleries, the program has also provided increased exposure through related programming and additional exhibition opportunities coordinated in collaboration with the Dina Wind Art Foundation.

Jurors James Britt and Kathleen Eastwood-Riaño explained that in making their decision about this year’s cohort, they “selected artists who are expanding their practice in unique ways, blending different mediums and incorporating disparate processes to create new forms of artwork that convey compelling narratives about the precarious nature of our existence through our bodies and physical environment.” They were drawn to the artists’ individual approaches to making as “void of pretense, reflective of our collective desire to make sense of the world by using familiar materials, combining unorthodox techniques with current technologies that are representative of our experience today, bringing us closer to the utopia we desire.”

The exhibitions were organized by Gerard Silva, Director of Exhibitions and Community Outreach. “The Wind Challenge continues to be an important intersection between art and community in our region,” said Silva, “with each exhibition bringing three talented individuals into one shared space.” Opening receptions for the exhibitions will be held on the following Friday evenings: February 16, April 5, and July 12. Each opening reception, scheduled for 6–8 pm, will be preceded by an Artist Exchange panel discussion—led by the artists and delving into their work and creative process—in Fleisher’s adjacent Sanctuary from 5–6 pm.

Fleisher also recently announced the 2025 call for entries for the 47th season of the Wind Challenge Exhibition Series. Selected artists will have their work featured in a 2025 exhibition, as well as receiving a \$750 honorarium. Submissions will be juried by Colette Fu and Heidi Ratanavanich, with applications due by April 29, 2024. Visit [fleisher.org](http://fleisher.org) or [Submittable](#) for more information and submission guidelines.

The Wind Challenge Exhibition Series is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Wind Foundation.

#### About Fleisher Art Memorial

Founded by industrialist Samuel S. Fleisher in 1898 as one of the nation’s first community-based art centers, Fleisher Art Memorial is renowned for its long-standing mission of making art accessible regardless of economic means, background, or artistic experience. Fleisher provides free and low-cost studio art classes along with opportunities for emerging and seasoned artists to exhibit their work. Extensive arts education and community-based programming also reflects the organization’s commitment to strengthening communities by developing, sharing, and promoting creative resources.

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