

The sky is higher here

Curated by Leila Seyedzadeh

Works by Hedwig Brouckaert, Simone Couto, Edi Dai, Saba Farhoudnia, Victoria Martinez, and Ingrid Tremblay

On view February 19th – March 27th, 2022

Opening: Saturday, February 19th, 2022, 1-6 pm

Opening/closing reception TBA

Transmitter is pleased to present The sky is higher here, a group exhibition curated by Leila Seyedzadeh. It features artists: Hedwig Brouckaert, Simone Couto, Edi Dai, Saba Farhoudnia, Victoria Martinez, and Ingrid Tremblay.

Why is it that all that blue refuses to be contained? It refuses to be shaped, measured, and revealed in all its dimensions. It is the panorama that we see from the earth, the dome that we cannot reach, a 'bowl' flipped on top of our existence, yet occupying no space. By studying the moon and the stars, by connecting our moods to the way it smiles or cries, we still try to make sense of it and make it accessible, because somehow, despite the insurmountable distance between the earth and the sky, and despite its defiance to be understood, it feels deeply familiar. We know that only something as magnificent, shapeless, and borderless as the sky can hold the sum of all our heart's grieves and hopes without ever pouring over.

The Sky is higher here was born out of a collective search to dissolve the unseen boundaries between what is free of the physical and what is not. It is an attempt to mirror what we find in the sky and what it reveals in us. It is only ironic that we need to weave a thread between physical objects that manifest it and what it means to us. Through a variety of mediums such as painting, textile, photography, textile weaving, mixed media, and more, each artist examines the vastness of the sky and finds refuge in this great space without borders. This collection explores time, location, displacement, memory, grief, hope, and identity. It brings together an all artists line-up to interpret their individually felt yet commonly-shared experiences.



Hedwig Brouckaert, *Flesh of Light (I)*, Mixed media on archival inkjet print on Moab rag bright 300 paper, 2017

The sky is higher here

The sky is not blue in all places
There are mountains,
There are trees
There are no mountains,
There are trees
Yet the sky is higher here
The shadows follow me
The outlines around the objects
My imagination of the perception of the objects
A single sugar cube dissolved in the ocean
Tied to a familiar object in a suitcase
I have placed my hand on driftwood of memories
From the zenith to the nadir, from the abyss of the ocean to the apex of the sky
Towards which haven in this endless ocean?
“Here my heart is full of yearning and wistfulness
And every instrument whose sound I hear is inharmonious
Let’s pack our travel satchels
And head towards an endless journey
To see whether the sky is the same color in other places” *

Leila Seyedzadeh

*Mehdi Akhavān-Sāles

About the artists:

Hedwig Brouckaert grew up in Flanders, Belgium, and has been living in NYC since 2011. Brouckaert works with mass media imagery to create introspective and tactile works, ranging from drawings to site-specific installations. She received an MFA from the University of California, Davis, after completing a Masters in sculpture at the Sint-Lukas Hogeschool in Brussels and a Postgraduate at the Higher Institute for Fine Arts in Belgium.

Simone Couto is a conceptual artist born in Brazil and based in the United States. Couto investigates how identities and biographies are negotiated and constructed through the poetics of hospitality, relationship, reciprocity, and belonging. Her body of work reveals a commitment to both individual and collective-collaborative engagements with communities and places of ecological importance. She holds a BA in Living Arts and an MFA in Art Practice from the School of Visual Arts.

Edi Dai is an artist living and working in Los Angeles, California. They explore complexities hidden within objects often considered to be quotidian in nature. Sometimes, these investigations take form as an experience where the goal is to destabilize known truths or expectations. Often, it takes form as an object that mirrors the everyday. Dai received an M.F.A. in Painting and Printmaking from the Yale School of Art in 2019 and a B.A. in Studio Art from the University of California, Irvine, in 2010.

Saba Farhoudnia was born in Tehran and is based in New York. Her paintings are monumental in scale and explore the human condition's challenges. She merges the art of drawing, painting, language, and verse through brushstrokes, geometric forms, calligraphy, and gestural marks to evoke drama, pain, humor, and beauty. Farhoudnia honed her skills by earning a BA and an MFA from The University of Science and Culture in Tehran, Iran. She also received a second MFA in Painting from the LeRoy E. Hoffberger School of Painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore.

Victoria Martinez is an artist who honors her Mexican-American ancestry through textile-based projects, including installation art and painting. Her work is inspired by public art, ancient sites from Latin America, architecture, and the urban environment. Martinez has a BFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and an MFA from Yale University School of Art in Painting and Printmaking.

Ingrid Tremblay is a French-Canadian/Syrian artist from Montreal. Her work is recognized and supported by the Canada Council for the Arts and the Quebec Council. Tremblay completed an MFA in Sculpture & Extended Media at The University of Texas at Austin in 2018, where she received the Graduate School Recruitment Fellowship and the Quebec Research Fund Fellowship.