

## SUSAN INGLETT GALLERY

## LONGFORMS

*Hope Gangloff: Color Whisperer*

By Becket Gourlay



Installation view at Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.

Hope Gangloff welcomes summer in her most recent solo exhibition at Susan Inglett Gallery. The prismatic canvases and panels fill the gallery with thermal and emotional warmth, in an even mix of landscapes, still-lives, and a recent revival of the portraiture that was the hallmark of her early career. Painted environments thrum with life, be they distant forested mountains or finely detailed florals, like the pink blooms in *Dianthus*. Friends of the artist recline by lakes, laundry on the line dances in the wind, and a string of lights flicker and glow amid a thunderstorm. The relaxed portraits and vibrant landscapes point to an estival state of mind, an ode to the long days and balmy nights spent among friends and family.

Gangloff's paintings always begin in graphic line, allowing the compositions' subjects, scale, and perspective to settle before illuminating with her distinct palette. Cheekily referred to as "coloring book pages" in their earliest stages, Gangloff's inspirations are immediate and pulled from her environment, using photographs, sketches, and memories as reference points.

These fleeting moments are immortalized : the feeling of a breeze on a hot summer day by the lake, or watching a lightning storm from the front porch, waiting breathlessly for the next bolt and accompanying thunderclap. In *Spring Porch*, one can see an abandoned hot-dog stand as jagged lightning smites it, a mere silhouette in the blaze. The momentary flash bathes the titular

*Dianthus*, 2025

porch in shadows from the surrounding flora. Gangloff admits that this specific tableau is mere fantasy, an event that has not (yet) occurred. But in the composition, she wills it into being, an indulgent moment of imaginative musing.



*Spring Porch, 2025*

*Dreamscapes grown from the seeds of the artist's personal environment, Gangloff's dynamic scenes tempt you into a world of her own making: one of enrapturing color, sweeping lines, and familiar objects turned surreal.<sup>1</sup>*



*Matthew (Holtzclaw) & Prakash (Puru), 2025*

In her studio, Gangloff surrounds herself with these scenes from her own life, becoming the basis for not only the content of the work but also a guide towards a feeling of “rightness” in each painting. Certain technical aspects of the compositions resist realism. In *Matthew (Holtzclaw) & Prakash (Puru)*, the arm of one subject subtly juts from the edge of the frame, occupying more space than the canvas could contain. His bare feet, the left stained with blood that drips from his knuckles, feel slightly larger than life. In fact, all three sets of unadorned feet depicted in the show seem to share in this scale, giving the owners a sense of sturdiness and presence. Holtzclaw, the bleeding and barefoot subject, relates that his decision to appear sans-shoe hearkens back to his youth in the mountains. He explains that appearing in painted portraits happen so rarely, if at all, and thus he wanted to be represented as authentically as possible: feet planted firmly on the ground.

Well-known for her palette, which has grown increasingly vibrant, even occasionally psychedelic, Gangloff wields her colors intentionally and intuitively. This evolution stems from her propensity to work bit by bit, allowing colors to travel across paintings when inspiration strikes. Once inspired to use a shade that may have previously been intimidating, or



not “right” (for example, greens and purples are rarely seen in earlier works, but are now key), they begin to make their way from canvas to canvas. This makes it easier for a viewer to identify a period or body of work, like how Gangloff sees them each as different “chapters” of her life.

*She keeps all her lines at a careful density, just tight enough to support patch after patch of glowing color – because for Gangloff, color is really the thing.*<sup>2</sup>

These departures from familiar colors, or being “sucked into color holes,” as she puts it, can be attributed to the life of a working artist, tubes of paint or specific brushes getting lost in the shuffle, then reappearing months or even years later, ready to be reintroduced and to reinspire. She carefully considers her palette selection, yet allows them to reveal themselves to her as she works, instinctively “tuning” them to create depth and harmony on the canvas.

Hope’s earlier paintings involved a slice-of-life style of portraiture and still-life, documenting the cast of characters that populate her sphere. After spending time in Monterey Bay painting conservationist Julie Packard for the National Portrait Gallery, landscapes became the focal point of her practice. Upon returning to New York, Gangloff promptly packed her bags and moved upstate, where she devoted herself to landscapes. As she settled in her new home and developed connections and friendships, portraiture has reappeared, a product of the sense of intimacy and community Gangloff infuses into each portrait. Yet landscapes remain, and made in the spirit of a love letter, Gangloff captures her favorite places in ways that feel nostalgic and cherished, even to those of us who have never been.



*'Bittersweet' Barn, 2025*

*Painter Hope Gangloff has more than hit her supple, sensual, optical stride. Landscapes ... and still-lives are all made with brilliantly focused mark-by-mark accumulation and retinal density, tangerine color, and a love of vision itself.*<sup>3</sup>

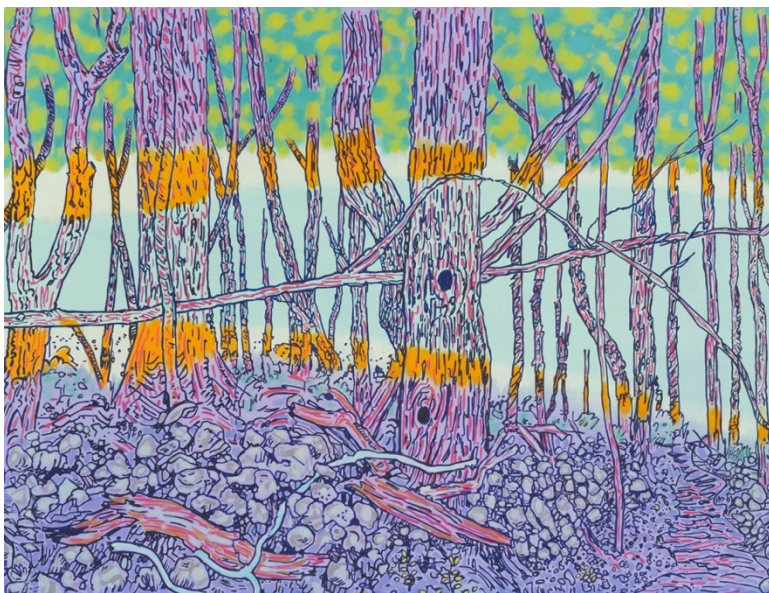
Even if the subject of her work is inanimate, Gangloff still finds a way to capture the spirit of whatever she paints. In an interview with Brainard Carey, Gangloff states that barns are deeply nostalgic locations for her, dating back to the barn in the backyard of her childhood home and site of her first painting studio. Not unlike her own studio, a barn is the site of projects and inventions in various states of completion, a tinkerer's paradise that contains the evidence of a maker's handiwork. She finds inspiration there, and in the subject matter and titling of *'Bittersweet' Barn*, Gangloff ruminates on this nostalgia, where past meets present. The titular

structure, unhindered by a roof sagging in disrepair, leaps from its canvas in blazing scarlet, complemented by a forested backdrop of acid-green and emerald.

Growth is broadly apparent as one views the work. Flowers burst forth from the foregrounds as verdant moss creeps over fallen logs, armies of trees backdrop multiple works, and in still-life *Ceramics*, plant clippings are propagated in mugs and other sundry ceramics. The greens are lushly saturated, Gangloff's bid to outdo Mother Nature herself. In the most psychedelic and abstract work, *Hidden Brook At Dusk*, bands of sky blue, orange, and purple wash over a wall of trees. Sketch-like in its rendering and surreal in its coloring, the work has the effect of one's eyes adjusting to the half-light. This is another instance in which Gangloff leans into the fictive and dream-like, calling to the fore the way our memories retroactively alter, adjust, and fantasize. Here, the natural magic of a hidden brook is emphasized in acrylic.



*Ceramics, 2025*



*Hidden Brook At Dusk, 2025*

As mentioned before, this exhibition marks the return of Gangloff's portraiture, the return of the animate. In *Waggie and James*, the eponymous canine and artist peer out from the canvas, both making direct eye contact with the viewer. One can assume the position of Gangloff herself, deciding that this moment, this composition captures the essence of the sitters perfectly.





*Waggie and James, 2025*

*"'Color trance' is a good way of describing Gangloff's work: In her portraits, contrasting neon hues – blue and orange, purple and yellow – intersect to disorienting effect." Anna Furman, T Magazine, 2018.*

*James (Case-Leal) and Arnold (Lehman-Richter) sit with their backs to bodies of water, enjoying moments of repose. James braids his hair as wisps of hair that won't make it into the plait are toyed with by the wind. The breeze is almost palpable, and it's possible that these works were worked on or started on the very dock we see under Arnold's feet, as Gangloff occasionally works in the plein-air style of Hudson River School painters who came before her. Sun-soaked and carefree, Gangloff's friends relax in the sunshine while she paints them.*



*Arnold (Lehman-Richter), 2025*



*James (Case-Leal), 2025*

These scenes of Gangloff's environs are suffused with the joy she feels in their making. A viewer can find parallels between her experiences and theirs, recalling their own barefoot friends and favorite spots in the shade. We wonder what tranquil lake we will soon visit, or the next thunderstorm we will find shelter from. Simultaneously personal and universal, the paintings insist on the communal experience: we bear witness to Gangloff's milieu, and via her dynamic brushstrokes, purposeful color, and personal testament, are reminded of our own.



Installation view at Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.

## Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Hefty, Kathleen. "Hope Gangloff," The Brooklyn Rail, 23 November 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Heinrich, Will. "What to See in N.Y.C Galleries Right Now," The New York Times, 26 October 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Saltz, Jerry. "14 Things to Do in New York," New York Magazine, 11 November 2019.



**HOPE GANGLOFF** (b. 1974) attended The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. She is well known for her vibrant portrait and landscape paintings that combine a distinctive bright palette with intricate linework. Her early portraiture garnered attention for its intimate observation of relatable moments, from a road trip with friends to a late-night house party. Gangloff's work was recently exhibited in "Forces of Nature: Voices That Shaped Environmentalism" at the National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C. and in "Women Painting Women" at the Fort Worth Modern, as well as a solo exhibition at Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC, in May 2025. Other solo exhibitions include the Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University; the Broad Art Museum, East Lansing; and Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Grinnell College Museum of Art, Grinnell; National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.; the Broad Art Museum, East Lansing; the Kemper Museum, Kansas City; and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, among others.