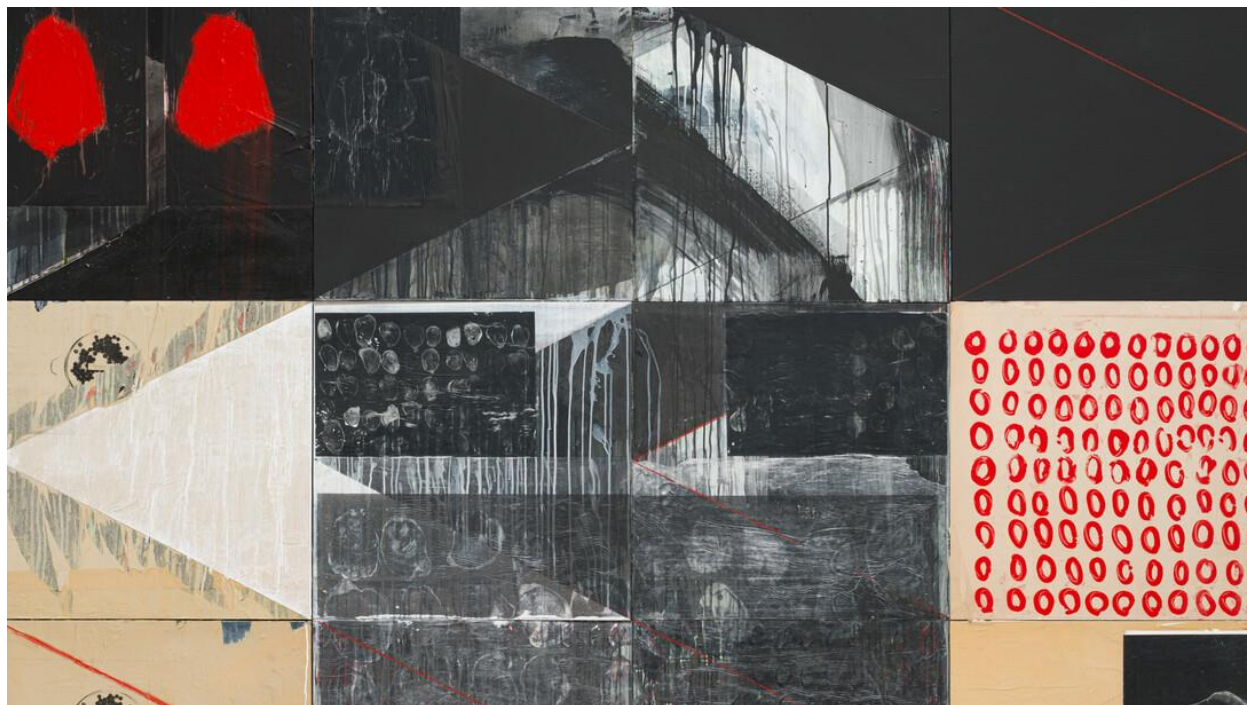


CRISTIN TIERNEY

Milk and honey

6 Sep — 19 Oct 2024 at the Cristin Tierney Gallery in New York,
United States

14 AUGUST 2024



Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to announce *milk and honey*, a solo exhibition of new and recent work by Sara Siestream (Hanis Coos). This is the artist's first solo exhibition in New York and with the gallery. Concurrently with this exhibition, Siestream's work will be featured at *The armory show* in a special joint presentation with Elizabeth Leach Gallery. *milk and honey* opens on Friday, September 6th, with a reception from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The artist will be present.

Siestream is an Oregon-based multidisciplinary artist and member of the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians. Her work combines the ceremonial traditions of her ancestors with contemporary modes and materials nested at the intersection of social and ecological justice, education, and Indigenous feminism. Her process is informed by observations of nature within a formal structure and improvisational practice.

Highlighted in *milk and honey* are Siestream's paintings that combine hard-edge geometric weaving patterns, collage elements, and gestural paint handling. One, titled *un-ring bells*, is eight feet wide and eleven years in the making. It features dynamic black, white, natural wood, and red shapes overlaid with graphite lines

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and expressive, dripped paint. The work also contains collaged lithographs of found objects; a Pyrex lid with a broken string of Cobalt trade beads, a fortune cookie message reading, "share your fortune with others, it will bring you good luck", an empty Dansk dish, and her petroglyph-style mark-making. Xeroxed photo transfers of extinct Indigenous oyster shells are also placed throughout the work. In recent years, these oysters have emerged from eroded middens adjacent to traditional village sites in the Coos Bay estuary. These ancient oyster beds and villages were destroyed by the colonization of the bay, beginning in the 1800s. The carefully arranged shells serve as a memorial for what has been lost and a warning of ongoing colonial violence against the land and its inhabitants.

In her "minion" sculptures, Siestreem ruminates about social justice, specifically as related to gender equality and women's rights. She sees these works as protectors that simultaneously uplift the good and punish the bad. Slip-cast models of dance caps are adorned with meticulously strung (Indigo-dyed cotton) strands of red, luminous glass beads, abalone (commonly seen throughout Indigenous regalia), and found buttons, creating ethereal forms that transcend time and space.

The beadwork catches the movement of air created by the audience's bodies and gently sways, activating an informal ceremony between the artwork and the viewer. The intertwined strands of beads speak to the interconnectedness of Indigenous people across generations and into the future. Through these works, the artist contributes to the tradition of Indigenous contemporary fine art created on this land mass, steeped in and for a multicultural world. They serve as channels of remembrance, resistance, and dreams of a future of opulence, abundance, and equality.

Art is a historic record and public education, an expression of cultural authority, and an act of love. I hope my people see themselves in mine, and that it brings them joy.

(Sara Siestreem [Hanis Coos])

In September, Siestreem's work will be featured at *The armory show* in a special joint presentation by Cristin Tierney Gallery and Elizabeth Leach Gallery. The art fair will open the same week as milk and honey.

Sara Siestreem (Hanis Coos, b. 1976, Springfield, OR) is a multidisciplinary artist from the Umpqua River Valley on the South Coast of Oregon, working in painting, photography, printmaking, weaving, and large-scale installation. She was awarded the University of Oregon's 2022-23 CFAR Fellowship and the 2022 Forge Project Fellowship, which recognized her as one of six Indigenous individuals

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representing a broad diversity of cultural practices, participatory research, organizing models, and geographic contexts that honor Indigenous pasts and build Native futures. Her work, which has been exhibited internationally, is in many collections, including the Gochman Family Foundation (Miami, FL), Forge Project (Mahicannituck [Hudson River] Valley, NY), Missoula Art Museum (MT), Museum of Fine Art (Boston, MA), and the Portland Art Museum (OR).

Siestreem's work was recently included in the landmark 2023 book *An indigenous present*, conceived and edited by Jeffrey Gibson (Mississippi Choctaw/Cherokee). Coming from a family of professional artists and educators, she began her training at home. Her lifelong mentor is Lillian Pitt (Wasco, Warm Springs, Yakama), and her weaving teachers are Greg Archuleta (Grand Ronde) and Greg A. Robinson (Chinook Nation). Siestreem graduated Phi Kappa Phi with a BS from Portland State University in 2005. She earned an MFA with distinction from Pratt Art Institute in 2007. She created a self-sustaining weaving program for the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw people. She lives and works in Portland, Oregon, and is represented by the Elizabeth Leach Gallery.