

100 Lagoon Pond Floating Gallery



Out of Paradise

Sarah McCoubrey, Ella Mahoney, David Opdyke, Peter Edlund, Marion Wilson
EcoShopArtist: Tattfoo Tan

June 9 — July 7, 2024

Opening reception: Sunday, June 9, 4-6pm

Cash bar "pride" drinks by mixologist, Lizzie Marchand

100 Lagoon Pond Floating Gallery, located in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, is a living sculpture and a cultural platform that offers a lens to the intersectionality of the eroding coastline and warming waters - and the human activities that affect it. Founded, repurposed and curated by Marion Wilson, who is known for upcycling mobile structures, The Floating Gallery is the island's first (and only) art gallery on the water. The Floating Gallery opens the season with its first exhibition, *Out of Paradise*, a group exhibition featuring five artists' exploration of humankind's relationship to the natural world. Sarah McCoubrey, Ella Mahoney, David Opdyke, Peter Edlund, and Marion Wilson offer a counter-narrative to the dominant view of humans' dominion over nature which ultimately destroys. Referencing John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the exhibition instead encourages a shift to loving care and stewardship which can inspire a more harmonious and sustainable approach to the environment today.

Sarah McCoubrey's realist paintings explore the intricate relationship between humans and the natural world. By blending imaginative storytelling with meticulous observation, her work encourages us to think about our impact on the environment and how we coexist with the land. Drawing from various artistic traditions, including Dutch masters, Hudson River School landscapes, and Hieronymus Bosch's fantastical worlds, McCoubrey's skillful technique and attention to detail yield radiant paintings with extraordinary depth.

Ella Mahoney is a member of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah); an artist, illustrator, and teacher. Mahoney's painting techniques encompass the use of oil, acrylic, and silk painting. Her paintings draw inspiration from creation stories as well as

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from narratives of her personal experience of indigeneity through lenses of love and nature. She has also illustrated multiple children's books for the Wampanoag Language Reclamation Project. In her recent work, Mahoney invites audiences to play and participate in creating soft spaces, connecting them to each other and their environments. She hopes to promote a deeper understanding of how the stories we tell affect our views of the world.

Born in post-industrial Schenectady, New York in 1969, artist David Opdyke makes artwork that explores globalization, consumerism, and civilization's abusive relationship with the environment. Opdyke finds postcards from the early 1900s, when America believed it would never run out of Nature to drive it, resources to mine, money to make. Opdyke says he paints in the anxiety, contradictions and absurdity that are easier to see now.

Peter Edlund examines social and political issues through oil paintings. His work has addressed the inherent contradiction between the mythic, utopian image of the great American landscape and the actual social and political reality of racism and genocide in this country. Edlund feels compelled to confront the collective amnesia of American society by using the "landscape" as a means of expression, purposefully taking this apparently romantic and apolitical genre, and injecting it with politics and historical accuracy. Since 2020 Edlund has been working on a number of painting series which examine indigenous landscapes and how colonialism and industrialization have altered them, and in some cases irreparably. In his series *Sullivan's March*, he addresses George Washington's removal of the Haudenosaunee people from the New York colony during the Revolutionary War. In *Before New York* and *Avant Paris*, Edlund paints imagined landscapes based on historical research to give us a view of the original land on which these cities were built.

Marion Wilson, a painter, professor, and social practice artist, includes a suite of watercolors of falcons and ducks in distress - the first paintings she made aboard The Floating Gallery contemplating humans relationship and impact on her new aviary neighbors in the contaminated western arm of Lagoon Pond in Vineyard Haven, MA. Wilson's art investigates ecology and landscape to foster a closer connection to self and place. Through paintings, photographs, and repurposed architectures, she interrogates our relations to nature at a time when extreme climate change threatens ecosystems, livelihoods, and communities. Her individual studio work explores industrialized landscapes and useful and stress tolerant botanies with a special interest in moss. In 2004 she built a pushcart on the Bowery commissioned by the New Museum; in 2008 with college students she re-purposed an American Eagle RV into a mobile classroom

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and moss lab; and in 2010 the renovation of a drug house into a community art center in upstate NY. The Floating Gallery is the latest iteration of mobile platforms.

Out of Paradise presents a timely and powerful reminder of the urgent need to reevaluate our relationship with the natural world. As we navigate the complexities of climate change, coastal erosion, and environmental degradation, The Floating Gallery offers a poignant reimagining of our place within the world and our responsibility to not only preserve but work in tandem with it. As a cultural space directly on the water, the Gallery is both a platform and a lens to the lagoon's ecosystem. The Lagoon Pond is the second largest estuary on Martha's Vineyard and the most impaired of all the Island's ponds. Water quality and resulting habitat and aquatic life have been severely degraded, primarily by excess nitrogen entering the watershed. The goal of Floating Gallery is to assist in the preservation of this fragile lagoon coastline through real scientific interventions while using the poetics of art to engage in human experience – keeping awe and wonder at the forefront.

Gallery hours: Wednesday to Saturday from 1pm-6pm

100 Lagoon Pond

Vineyard Haven, MA 02568