

***THE UNFATHOMABLE UNDERSTANDING***  
**MOSHGAN REZANIA and ROBERTA JEAN SMITH**  
April 24 - June 6, 2025

**Virtual Exhibition Opening**  
Thursday, April 24, 2025 | 10:00 AM



Lola Shepard is pleased to announce *THE UNFATHOMABLE UNDERSTANDING*, a dual virtual exhibition showcasing the color-saturated Abstract Expressionist paintings of **MOSHGAN REZANIA** and **ROBERTA JEAN SMITH**. The exhibition will debut online at the gallery's website on **Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 10:00 AM** and remains accessible through June 6, 2025.

In *THE UNFATHOMABLE UNDERSTANDING*, Moshgan Rezania and Roberta Jean Smith share a passion for vivid color and abstract interpretations of the natural world, distilling the essence of sky and land through prismatic works that radiate vitality and warmth, making them the perfect complement to the élan of spring.

Influenced by her local surroundings and childhood memories of her homeland's resplendent landscape, Moshgan Rezania conveys the ebullience of nature's color spectrum through her bold and tactile paintings. Roberta Jean Smith, inspired by her international travels, revels in the spectacular effects of nature through her interpretations of the otherworldly hues of Iceland's Aurora Borealis and the enigmatic Fairy Circles of Namibia's desert. Together, their immersive compositions feature rich depth and complexity, with layered fields of kaleidoscopic color that envelop the viewer in a full sensory experience, reflecting the artists' unfathomable understanding of Mother Earth's transcendental beauty.

**MOSHGAN REZANIA'S** polychromatic paintings channel the nuances of the artists who inspire her, such as Cézanne and de Kooning, while reflecting her singular vision. Embracing plein air painting, she works in various nearby outdoor settings, from New York's idyllic countryside to the forests of Bear Mountain and the beaches along Connecticut's coastline. With a focus on visible brushwork, Moshgan paints in impasto, using oils, pastels, and acrylics to achieve rich intensity and texture with brushes of all sizes. Her scenes are characterized by expressive, gestural strokes and an exuberant color palette. Many of her works offer a close-up view of the environments she depicts. Some pieces are identifiable as specific plants, while others blur into an abstract symphony of brilliant hues and tones.

Moshgan's journey to becoming a professional artist began in the wake of Iran's Cultural Revolution in 1979, when the government closed public universities. She eventually enrolled in the prestigious private Kamalolmolk School of Fine Arts, one of the few institutions still in operation. There, she studied under a visionary artist with a deep appreciation for Western art forms who emphasized artistic freedom. Under his tutelage, Moshgan's technical skills flourished, and the focus on creative autonomy became the foundation of her plein air practice in New York, from her early Expressionist pieces to her current Ab-Ex creations.

As her artistry evolves, she increasingly prioritizes color over form. Shaped by the intense hues of her native country, including fields of red poppies, wildflowers, blue mountains, and indigo skies, she follows an internal compass that guides her creative path. These colors, once lived and breathed by her nomadic grandmothers in their daily lives, now pulse through

her work, serving as a lasting tribute to their legacy. Her angular still lifes, fluid landscapes, and luminous floral compositions reflect the maturity of an artist devoted to uninhibited expression. Whether depicting the delicate pink and white lilies of *Lily of the Valley*, which slowly unfurl in her backyard each spring, or the vibrant poppies in works like *Spring Poppies*, which evoke memories of her childhood in Iran, where “they blanket the fields, creating a dreamy landscape,” Moshgan’s art speaks directly to the soul.

Based in Santa Monica, CA, abstract landscape painter **ROBERTA JEAN SMITH** recreates the magnificent beauty of two magical landscapes: the dazzling Aurora Borealis over Iceland’s night skies and the mysterious circular grassy formations known as “fairy circles,” which populate Namibia’s desert sands in a seemingly endless pattern. Through the use of brilliant high-key colors and expressive brushwork, Smith interprets the stunning spectacle and poignant allure of these remote and breathtaking environments.

In her *Aurora Borealis* paintings, Smith depicts the swirling, dancing northern lights of shimmering pinks, fiery reds, ethereal greens, fleeting streaks of blue, and warm oranges. Her use of confident brushstrokes and contrasting hues in such works as *Aurora Mackerel Magenta* and *Aurora Cumulus Aqua* encapsulates the mesmerizing intermingling of colorful lights glimmering off the snow-covered landscape.

Equally fascinating are Smith’s interpretations of the Namib Desert’s inexplicable “fairy circles.” She skillfully conveys this grandeur by highlighting the desert’s rich hues of oxidized reds and oranges, along with its circular patterns. Viewed from an aerial perspective, the paintings evoke the natural wonder through complementary colors, overlapping shapes, and visual spatial effects that draw the eye in and out of the compositions’ depth.

Smith’s abstract paintings result from extracting the resonance of her experiences through visual cues such as relative brightness, complementary and contrasting colors, overlapping shapes, and other elements of perception. She often paints the same subjects repeatedly, continuously exploring these images to move closer to the quintessence of her experience and seeking to marry shapes with color in new and fresh ways.

Meticulous about her brushes and paint consistency, Smith emphasizes color as an expressive tool. She uses glazes to create washes of color, diverse brushwork to project depth, and brilliant hues to capture luminosity. Initially drawn to acrylics for environmental reasons, she has since developed a deep appreciation for the paint’s qualities, making them her medium of choice. In many of her works, Smith incorporates fluorescent paints to enhance both background and accent surface colors. When light hits the artwork, the background colors reflect directly, creating a radiant effect. Under certain lighting, the colors take on a more subtle role, while in other conditions, they vibrate with intensity, bringing the work to life with a dramatic, ever-shifting presence.

**MOSHGAN REZANIA** is an Iranian-born artist currently living and working in Westchester, New York. Her artwork has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions across the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Notable exhibitions include the Hudson River Museum (Yonkers, NY), the National Association of Women Artists (NY), the United Nations (New York, NY), the Gallery of Graphic Arts (New York City, NY), Domain Design (NJ), the Joseph Fischl Gallery (New York City, NY), Sterling Gallery (New Orleans, LA), Back Room Gallery (Beacon, NY), Mariana Gallery (Cold Spring, NY), Soho East (Irvington, NY), Roof Top Gallery (New York City, NY), and Viewpoint Gallery (New York City, NY), among others. Internationally, her work has been displayed at La Cantina Restaurant (Milan, Italy), Darya Baigi Gallery (Tehran, Iran), Shiv Gallery (Tehran, Iran), and Barg Gallery (Tehran, Iran). Moshgan’s artwork has also been featured in several publications, including *The Connection*, *Art Affair*, *Art News*, and *Art Trends*.

**ROBERTA JEAN SMITH**, born in Cleveland, Ohio, and currently based in Santa Monica, California, is an interdisciplinary artist working in painting, photography, and printmaking. She studied under the esteemed Op artist Edwin Mieczkowski at the Cleveland Institute of Art before leaving Ohio to earn both a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree from the USC Marshall School of Business. Since 2007, Smith has shifted her focus back to her art practice, furthering her education through courses at UCLA and specialized workshops in intaglio printmaking at Crown Point Press. Additionally, she has studied photography with renowned photographers such as Peter Turnley, John Paul Caponigro, and Elizabeth Opalenik. Smith has exhibited her work in three presentations at The Other Art Fair.

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