



TERRELL JAMES

TERRELL JAMES

Trust

C A D O G A N



## FROM WILLIAM BLAKE TO TERRELL JAMES: A MEDITATION

I must create a system, or be enslaved by another man's. I will not reason and compare: my business is to create.

— William Blake, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*<sup>1</sup>

The title and premise of this essay may seem puzzling. On the basis of visual evidence alone there would seem little connection between the famed English poet-artist William Blake (1757–1827) and contemporary Texas artist Terrell James. But then we do not always “reason and compare” works of art with merely external criteria.

Since his death nearly two hundred years ago, Mr. Blake has inspired generations of Romantic and Beat poets, punk rockers, counter-culture writers, artists, filmmakers and free spirits. Did Blake’s rhyming poems, biting social commentaries or representational images also influence James’s elegant abstractions? The short answer is no—at least not in any stylistic way. Yet, since my first encounter with Terrell James thirty-eight years ago, fragments of Blake’s poetic and pictorial expression have surfaced like peripheral vision in my ongoing experience of both the artist and her work.

James and Blake were born into vastly different worlds. Yet they share a common creative lineage, their sensibilities and systems converging in three notable ways. First, despite the superficial disparities in their art, both artists draw inspiration from a common source, mined in deeply spiritual, intuitive and mystical realms. They share faith in metaphysical intuition over physical fact. Both have sought the spiritual to guide them as scribes of the invisible mysteries of the universe. Second, their artworks document explorations of infinite imagination and routine experience alike. Their expeditions might incorporate a wildly diverse variety of dreams, visions, revelations, myths, poems, sounds, thoughts, physical objects and memories. Third, both artists openly welcome contradiction (called “contraries” by Blake); disregarding conventional boundaries of linearity, time or space, they draw inspiration equally from past and present, imagined

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1. William Blake, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*, 1804, 10, 11, 20–21.

and actual, mythological and historical. The resulting artwork thus reflects both the intimate and universal experience of what it is to be a human being—defined by “systems” unique to each artist.

## SPIRITUAL REALMS

“Today’s meditation touches on not knowing, being present, and trust. Faith that something good might come. I think painting is my form of prayer.”

— Terrell James<sup>2</sup>

Byzantine icon painters, Surrealists and Abstract Expressionists have all sought inspiration in spiritual and mystical realms (as have artists before and since). James and Blake share this transcendent lineage—largely against the currents of their times. While careful to avoid accusations of sedition, Blake wrote scathing critiques of England’s sanctioned religious doctrine and boldly declared imagination the only vehicle of true spiritual vision. In “Proverbs of Hell” within his illuminated book *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Blake writes, “Prisons are built with stones of Law. Brothels with the bricks of religion. . . . As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays his curse on the fairest joys.”<sup>3</sup> Mindful of corruption within England’s church and its ties to the monarchy, Blake sought spiritual truth through his own visions and imagination. Journalist Henry Crabb Robinson, a contemporary of Blake’s, noted in his diary that Blake spoke of his visions “in the ordinary unemphatic tone in which we speak of trivial matters. . . . He thinks all men may partake of it—but it is lost by not being cultiv[ate]d.”<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting that Blake found biblical authority for his own visions in the many precedents of God’s direct communication with ancient prophets through dreams and visions.

Two centuries later, American film critic, poet and essayist Phillip Lopate shared his observation with Terrell James of her art as “a place for a holy encounter, a place for

one’s spirit to meet God . . . where God may or may not appear, but still a place that could allow that encounter.”<sup>5</sup> In the years since, James has continued to subvert human will, ego and social convention in her art, remaining receptive to spiritual guidance towards that holy encounter. Her pursuit stands, like Blake’s, in stark contrast to the worldly demands of market-driven data, dashboards and deliverables. James adds, “The genesis of my work is transcendent. . . . I have read and studied the mystics, St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. We must be still to take dictation from the true self, or the informing muse. The holy within. Our culture mistrusts depth. Spirituality is anathema.”<sup>6</sup> James describes a cynical distrust of spiritual depth encountered through centuries of recorded history, and by William Blake in eighteenth-century London.

In May of 1799, the Reverend John Trusler, an English priest and early self-help author of moralizing publications, commissioned Blake to create a series of artworks to illustrate Trusler’s own writings on subjects such as pride, humility and malevolence. When Blake did not respond as he had hoped, Trusler accused him of having an imagination that belonged more to “the world of spirits” and therefore unfitting for Trusler’s instruction. On August 16, Blake responded:

“[I] cannot previously describe in words what I mean to design, for fear I should evaporate the spirit of my invention. . . . And tho’ I call them mine, I know that they are not mine, being of the same opinion with Milton when he says that the Muse visits his slumbers and awakes and governs his song when morn purples the East, and being also in the predicament of that prophet who says: “I cannot go beyond the command of the Lord, to speak good or bad.”<sup>7</sup>

As scribes of unseen metaphysical and mystical harmonies, both Blake and James sought to minimize worldly distractions in order to not “evaporate the spirit of [their] invention.” Blake’s discovery in 1788–89 of a new printing method eliminated his dependence on publishers (and governmental oversight). He also vigorously resisted the urgings of patrons and well-meaning friends to adopt more socially accepted aesthetic images in order to improve his finances. James describes the importance of her studio as a “sanctuary” that enables “listening . . . and being still. Trusting the process, my approach, and the thing that I know that no one else knows.”<sup>8</sup>

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2. Terrell James, email to the author, December 9, 2022.

3. William Blake, “Proverbs of Hell” *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, c. 1790, <https://ia803405.us.archive.org/0/items/marriageofheaven00blak/marriageofheaven00blak.pdf>

4. Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson*, Vol. 2, ed. Thomas Sadler (Macmillan and Co., 1869).

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5. Terrell James, email to the author, December 9, 2022.

6. Terrell James, email to the author 1/24/2023

7. William Blake, letter to Dr. John Trusler, August 16, 1799, “Letters (Composed 1791–1827),” The William Blake Archive, [www.blakearchive.org](http://www.blakearchive.org).

8. Terrell James, email to the author, January 24, 2023.

## INFINITE IMAGINATION

“The imagination is not a state: it is the human existence itself.”

—William Blake, *Milton: A Poem in 2 Books*<sup>9</sup>

Blake believed that imagination is the essential channel of spiritual inspiration, proclaiming “Jesus and His Apostles and Disciples were all Artists.”<sup>10</sup> That conviction, and his new home-studio printing technique, fueled production of his illuminated, visionary and prophetic books. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Blake describes a mystical dinner conversation in his apparent present with Old Testament prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel. In this imaginative dialogue, Blake challenges their claim to direct communication with God and receives a Blakean response: “Isaiah answer’d, I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical Perception; but my senses discover’d the infinite in every thing . . .”<sup>11</sup> Blake freely manipulates time and space in his poetic narrative while its imagery defies the aesthetic conventions of his day. The illuminated book’s pages are filled with wildly intertwined outlines of vegetables, flames, words, color washes, snakes, trees and figures. Flames of fire transform into tree roots, while vines and branches merge with words or strands of hair. While Blake’s technical facility as a trained printmaker of classical renderings was often demonstrated in commissioned works—the graphic renderings and poetic narratives of these later illuminated and visionary books (produced in his home studio) reveal the full range of his imagination and aesthetic freedom.

James reminds us that the word “image” is found within “imagination.”<sup>12</sup> Like Blake, she employs a dizzying array of imaginative resources in her ideas and imagery, drawing upon memories, myths, objects, dreams, scientific facts, legends—the known and unknown. The artist recently shared her creative process for three related paintings: *A Piece of the World*, *Newcomer* and *Trust*. The genesis for James’s artwork surfaced during her study of an old book of black and white photographic studio images of Auguste Rodin’s *Burghers of Calais* (late nineteenth-century plaster studies). Inspired by Rodin’s

work, she then “turned [the images] on their sides” and saw in the resulting horizontal form an “anchor” for the composition of her first painting. James then resorted to the mystical in observing how the horizontal form then “floats up and repeats” like an echo. James describes those repeating, floating horizontal forms as “family members,” and later as “the firmament . . . breaking off and repeating itself, or giving a suggestion of a Platonic shadow.” James thus describes her working system as a fluid dynamic of optical perceptions (reorienting the Rodin images), mystical imagination (floating and repeating forms), biblical (firmament) and philosophical (Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” from the *Republic*) references, and gestalt psychology. She adds further, “In painting the second and third versions of *A Piece of the World*, I had the feeling of trust that a gestalt would come through the original painting. That my process and exploration would present whole paintings, not derivative ones.”<sup>13</sup> From this feeling of trust, she titled the final work, *Trust*. This account of her free association and integration of improbable, unrelated sources and concepts, were now interrelated in the artist’s painting, its horizontal frames of light and shadow revealing a new creative reality and a kindred spirit to William Blake’s infinite imagination—where ancient prophets chat with the artist over dinner.

## CONTRARIES

“Without contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence.”

—William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*<sup>14</sup>

Blake celebrated contraries, contradictions and contrasts in poetry and visual imagery throughout his oeuvre. Perhaps the best known examples are his *Songs of Innocence*, which he published in 1789, followed by *Songs of Experience* in 1793 and a combined version of both published in 1794 (the latter including a subtitle, “Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul”). Blake’s *Songs* were the first works produced by the poet-artist using the innovative new printing technique of relief etching, introduced to Blake in a vision of his dead brother, Robert, who explained the technique to Blake. This technical innovation transformed Blake’s work and life, enabling him to complete an

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9. William Blake, *Milton: A Poem in 2 Books: The author & printer W. Blake. To justify the ways of God to Men*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Keynes, 1804-1808), Plate 32, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47db-b5fb-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

10. William Blake, *The Poetical Works of William Blake*, ed. John Sampson (London: Oxford University Press, 1908).

11. William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell: A Memorable Fancy* [5], c. 1790, <https://ia803405.us.archive.org/0/items/marriageofheaven00blak/marriageofheaven00blak.pdf>

1.2 Terrell James, discussion with the author, December 7, 2022.

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13. Terrell James, email to the author, January 24, 2023.

14.. William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, ca. 1794, <https://ia803405.us.archive.org/0/items/marriageofheaven00blak/marriageofheaven00blak.pdf>.

entire book on a home press and eliminating the risk of the government’s censorship (as officials monitored London’s publishing houses). Blake termed the books “illuminated manuscripts,” evoking medieval manuscripts in which text and image are combined on the same page. While printed on Blake’s press, each is also hand-colored and hand-inscribed, making no two works alike. In *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, Blake addresses the same subject in contrasting poems and images. “The Lamb,” one of the illuminated poems in *Songs of Innocence*, presents charming poetic and visual images in a pastoral setting, as the poet questions the lamb in the poem’s first few lines:

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.  
By the stream & o’er the mead;<sup>15</sup>

The poem’s title is located at the top of the page in orange-gold lettering, matching the coloration of the poem’s text at the page’s center and vines along its border. At the bottom of the page is an image of a small nude child, arms outstretched to a lamb. There are multiple sheep resting behind the lamb and child, and a modest cottage in the lower right section of the page. Serpentine trees and vines frame the scene with intertwined branches and vines curling around the text and looping freely around trunks, branches and reaching towards text and title. The orange-gold coloration suggests the scene is suffused with an amber light from an invisible source and distant past. The overall effect of the rendering is childlike, spontaneous and nostalgic.

Blake’s *Songs of Experience* includes a contrasting poem and image titled “The Tyger.” The poet reframes the question posed in “The Lamb” in the first and fifth stanzas:

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,  
In the forests of the night;  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?  
  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?<sup>16</sup>

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15 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence: The Lamb* (1789) printed ca. 1825, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/347983>.

16 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence: The Tyger* (1794) printed ca. 1825, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/347983>.

The imagery is as dynamic and fluid as that seen in “The Lamb.” Vines and tree branches swirl, winding and curling around the poem’s title and text. The figure of the tiger strides along the bottom of the page and away from a tree at the lower right. As each of the poem’s images is unique, some prints reveal a smiling, slightly comical tiger, others are darker and vaguely ominous. But both poems narratives pose an age-old philosophical and spiritual question as to how good and evil can coexist. As in other contrasting poems in the Songs, they demonstrate the depth of Blake’s thought, his recognition of contradiction—and his dynamic graphic expression of both in his art. Scholars have noted that while Blake’s printing process often transformed or lost his original punctuation, he rarely corrected such accidents. Perhaps Blake, like James, accepted such mishaps as he did contraries—as aspects of our shared vulnerability and humanity: not to be corrected in art or life, but rather deemed “necessary” to human existence.

Terrell James incorporates such accidents and contradictions in her work, and admires their occurrence in the work of other artists. In a poignant tribute to artist Cy Twombly published in 2005, soon after the opening of The Menil Collection’s Twombly Gallery in Houston, James wrote: “In Twombly’s works, I see a broad variety of gestures and marks, sensual traces, deliberate references and incidental meanings. I also see inconsistencies, fragments, suggestions of stories and great, great beauty.”<sup>17</sup> James’s description of Twombly’s fragments and inconsistencies might as easily describe her own work, and Blake’s.

The rapport I sensed between Blake and James first emerged during studio visits and casual lunch conversations with James in her native city of Houston. During one such visit years ago, I sat with the artist on her studio floor as she gazed dreamily at a small horizontal artwork populated with green vertical elements. She spoke of how its imagery might remind her of “zydeco swamp gas.” I wondered what “swamp gas” was but saw no connection between it and zydeco (black Creole music of Louisiana and Texas). Yet, James had linked them on the spot. The scientific definition of swamp gas (or marsh gas) describes a natural process of decaying plant matter that produces biogenic gases consisting primarily of methane (a microbial-type gas produced by bacteria). A second, more mystical and colorful account of swamp gas is found in folkloric reports of mysterious lights and flames appearing in bogs or swamps, attributed variously to ghosts, extraterrestrial aliens or geologic activity.

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17. James, quoted in “Heroic and Painterly: An Artist’s Thoughts on Cy Twombly,” *Houston Chronicle*, May 27, 2005. Cited by Stephanie Buhmann in “Place and Transition in The Work of Terrell James,” *Hover: Terrell James* (Houston: Art League, 2016).

From that casual conversation on a studio floor long ago came the realization that James, like Blake, fully welcomed contradiction and sought to explore the spiritual mysteries of the universe. Her spontaneous combination of contemporary zydeco music with “swamp gas” described her own memories and experiences of a time, place and experience—memorialized in that modest artwork. Divergent interpretations of swamp gas, mystical and scientific, merged with the artist’s experience of that regional music. Hearing James discuss her artwork in such diverse, imaginative terms prompted this unexpected linkage to William Blake. It also suggested a portal to an understanding James’s art, each work a record of a new journey into both the artist’s personal world, and the collective, universal consciousness of the divine.

On August 23 of 1799, Blake wrote a beautiful and moving defense of his creative vision:

“I know that this world is a world of imagination and vision. I see every thing I paint in this world, but everybody does not see alike. . . . The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in the way... . But to the eyes of the man of imagination, nature is imagination itself. As a man is, so he sees.”<sup>18</sup>

In 1997 James named her new work *Field Studies*, quoting the nineteenth-century plein air tradition of color note taking in the field. In 2001, James explained her documentary process as “a sort of pun in painting” in which she mixed direct observation with memory, emotion and her sense of a collective memory. Describing *Field Study No. 2*, she stated: “It feels like a meadow, my memory of experiencing a meadow, and may evoke “meadow” in a collective memory as well.”<sup>19</sup> Like the Blakean “As a man is, so he sees,” James’s description reveals her employment of both optical and inner vision.

“Memory and objects help us remember and piece together our world . . . now I think that holding a rock, you can see the whole history of earth in your hand. The geological time recorded in the sediment, the formation of the solid rock.”<sup>20</sup>

Like the meadows of her *Field Studies*, James finds epic, universal significance and metaphorical depth in rocks and fossils, with their representations of transformation

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18 William Blake, letter to Dr. John Trusler, August 23, 1799, “Letters (Composed 1791–1827),” The William Blake Archive, <https://blakearchive.org/copy/letters?descId=lt23aug1799.1.ltr.01>.

19 Alison de Lima Greene, “Terrell James: Intimate Immensity,” *Terrell James* (Houston: Terrell James, 2010), 3.

20 Terrell James, email to the author, January 24, 2023.

and evolution. James explains: “I have been fascinated by the transformation of the ocean bed becoming the desert floor, and by fossils that record this vast shift.... Making art involves transforming material into the art object, a kind of alchemy transforming base metal into valuable gold, and in my mind, matter into spirit.... Painting and drawing takes me... into a communion with something beyond my self.”<sup>21</sup>

To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour

—William Blake, “Auguries of Innocence”<sup>22</sup>

By Deborah Velders  
Spring 2023

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21 Terrell James, email to the author, January 24, 2023.

22 William Blake, “Auguries of Innocence” from the Pickering Manuscript, c. 1803, published 1863, *Poets of the English Language* (Viking Press, 1950), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43650/auguries-of-innocence>

Trust

2022

oil on linen, 127cm x 163cm

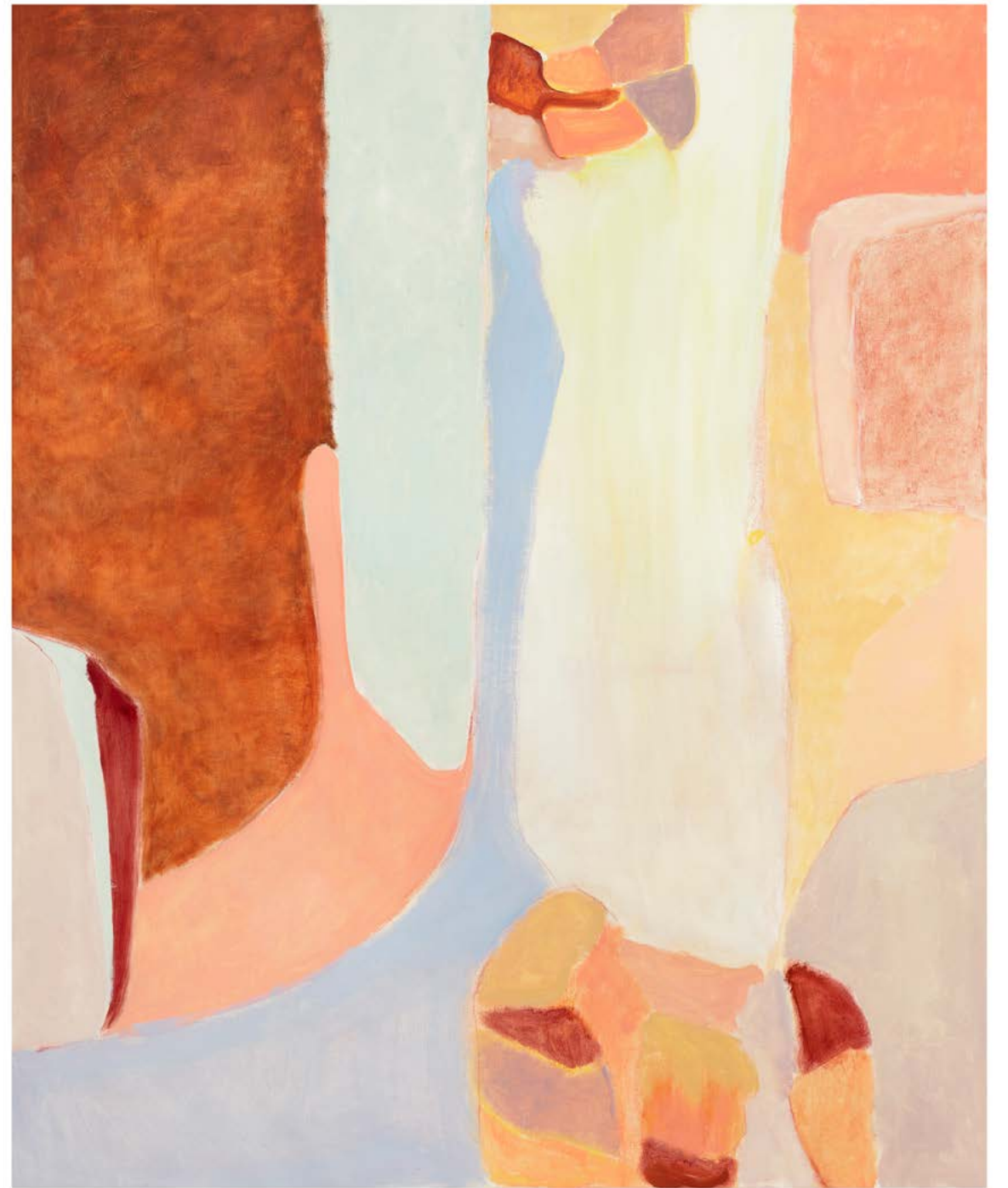




Cleft

2023

oil on linen, 147cm x 122cm



Alibi

2022

oil on canvas, 168cm x 168cm



The Shell Collector

2022

oil on linen, 122cm x 147cm



Disciples

2023

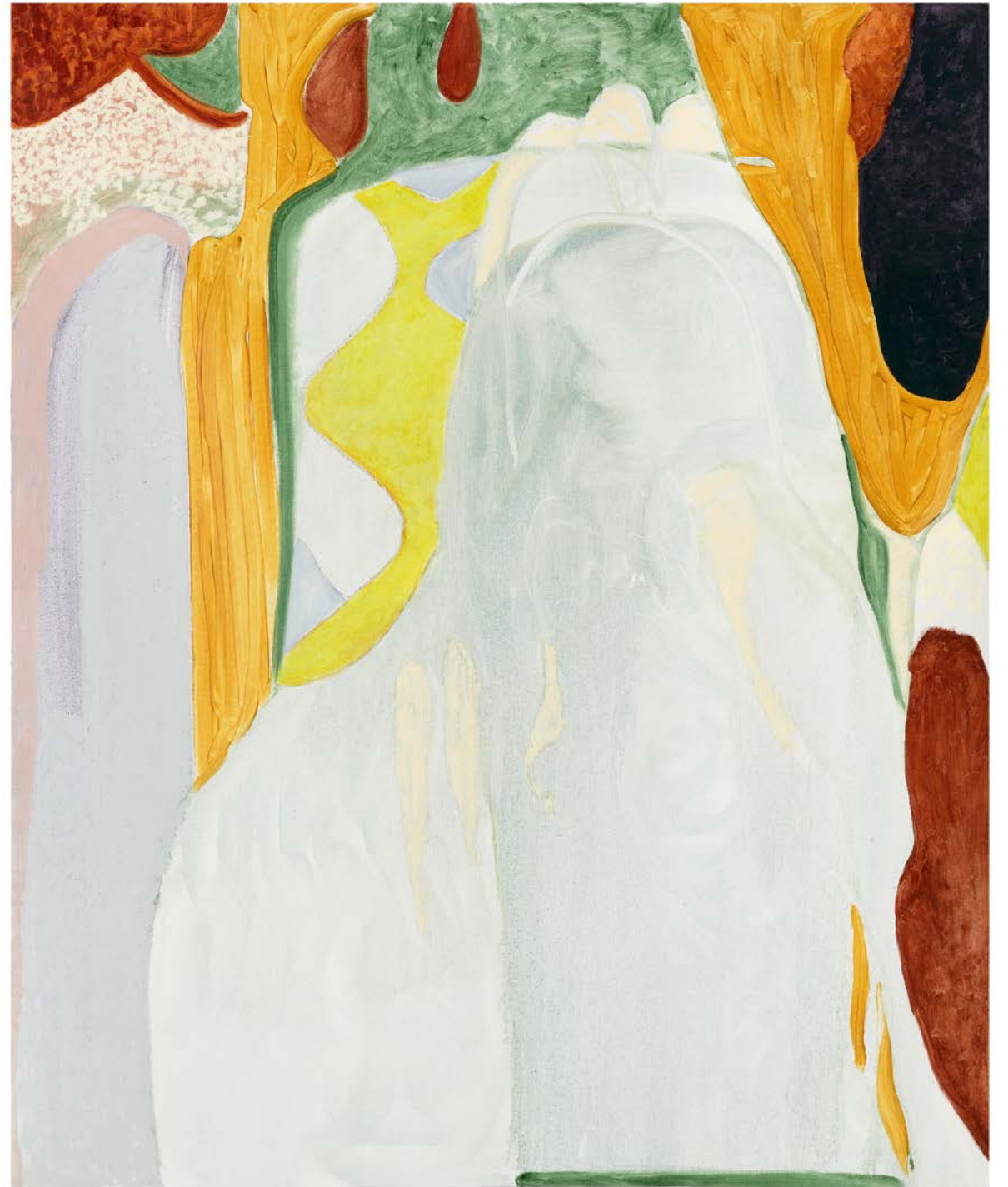
oil on linen, 147cm x 122 cm



La Reina

2023

oil on linen, 147cm x 122 cm



Blue Circus

2022

oil on linen, 74cm x 107cm



Split the Lark

2023

oil on linen, 147cm x 122cm



Lasso

2022

oil on linen, 122cm x 147cm







Cadiz

2022

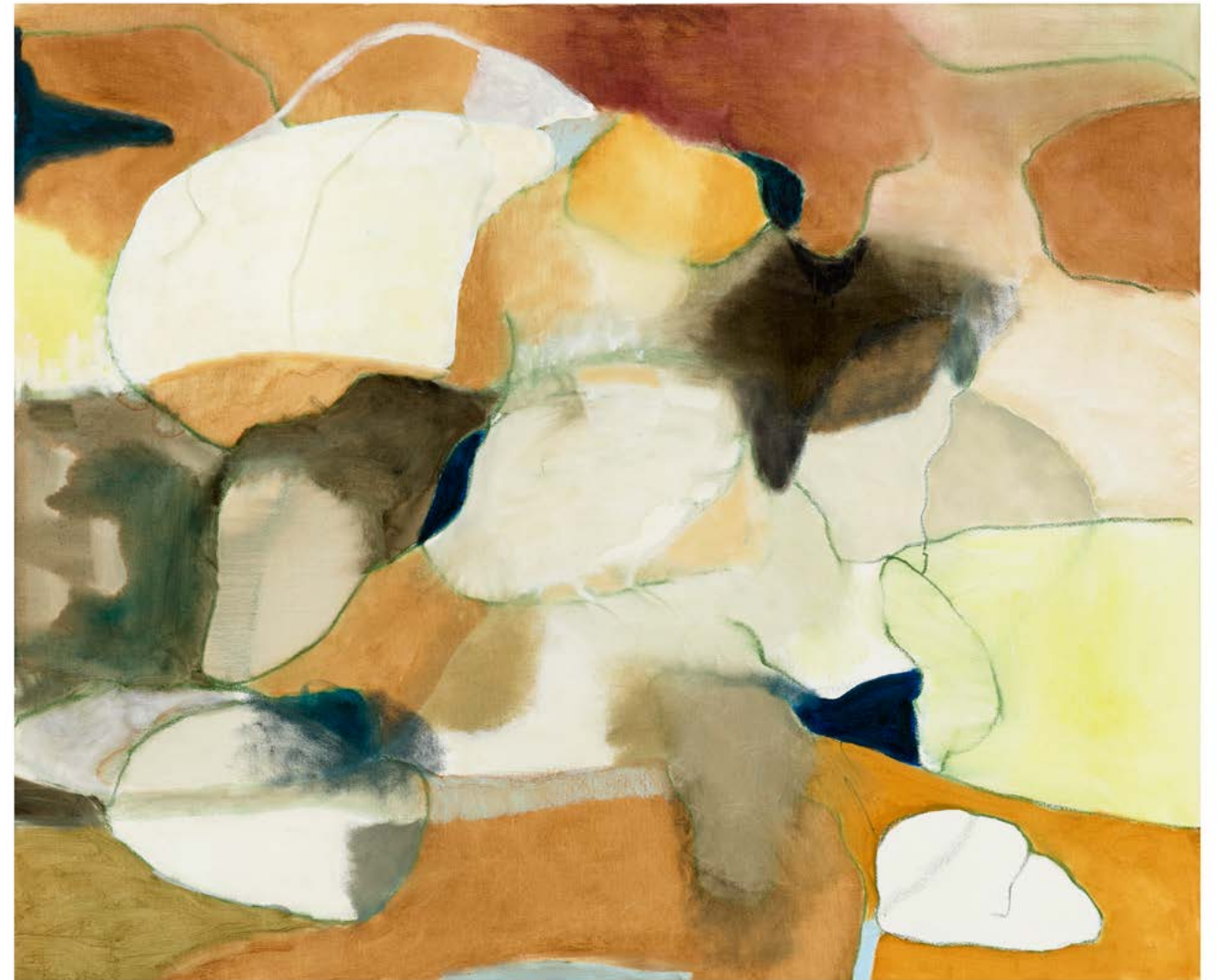
oil on linen, 74cm x 107cm



Plebiscite (Eva)

2022

oil on canvas, 122cm x 147cm



Shell-Scented

2022

oil on linen, 60cm x 94cm



Wayfarer

2023

oil on linen, 147cm x 122cm



Atotonlico

2022

oil on linen, 74cm x 107cm



The Prophetic Stream

2023

oil on linen, 147cm x 122cm



Ways to Disappear

2023

oil on linen, 122cm x 147cm





Truce

2022

oil on linen, 84cm x 112cm





Isla

2022  
oil on board, 61cm x 46cm



Today's Apparitions

2022  
oil on board, 61cm x 46cm



Novice

2022  
acrylic and oil on linen, 41cm x 31cm



Water

2023  
oil on linen, 41cm x 31cm

## TERRELL JAMES (b.1955)

is an artist living and working in Houston, Texas.

1972-73 School of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas

1973 Instituto Allende, San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico  
Print Annex, Ignacio Ramirez Cultural Center, Instituto de Belles  
Artes, Universidad de Mexico, San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico

1973-77 BA Fine Arts, Sewanee: The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee

1978-79 School of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas

## REPRESENTATION

Cadogan Gallery, London, UK

Josh Pazda Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX

Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR

Jason McCoy, Inc., New York, NY

Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX

Zand Fine Art Consultancy Ltd., Hong Kong

## SELECTED MUSEUM AND FOUNDATION COLLECTIONS

Casa Lamm Cultural Center, Mexico City, DF

Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX

Edward Albee Foundation and private collection, New York, NY

Fundacion Vergel, Cuernavaca, Mexico and New York, NY

Menil Collection, Houston, TX

Mobile Museum of Art, Mobile, AL

Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, TX

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX

Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA

Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, WA

Transart Foundation, Houston, TX

The National Gallery, Washington, D.C.

The Old Jail Art Center, Albany, TX

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Trust*, Cadogan Gallery, London, UK  
*Story*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, UK
- 2022 *One Eye Sees, the Other Feels*, Mobile Museum of Art, Mobile, AL
- 2021 *Second Sight*, Cadogan Contemporary, London, UK  
*Painting from Here*, Barry Whistler, Dallas, TX  
*Terrain*, Cadogan Contemporary, Hampshire, UK  
*Between Land and Water*, Froelick Gallery, Portland  
*Circle of Intimates*, Jason McCoy, New York, NY  
*Bright Shores*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 2020 *Break in to Enter*, Jason McCoy, Inc., New York, NY
- 2019 *Rinsing the Eye*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Fable*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2018 *Postulates*, Cadogan Contemporary, London, UK
- 2017 *Sotol View*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2016 *Hover*, Texas Artist of the Year Exhibition, Art League, Houston, TX  
*Remembering the Poison Tree*, Cadogan Contemporary, London, UK  
*Heretics*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2014 *Divided Sight*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Four Decades*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2013 *Maritime Forest*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 2012 *Troupe: New Paintings*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2011 *Terrell James: Field Study*, Cameron Art Museum, Wilmington, NC  
*Four Paintings*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Citizen*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2010 *Mooring*, Jason McCoy, Inc., New York, NY  
*Studio Windows and Field Studies*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2009 *Terrell James: Announcement*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2008 *Preoccupations*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Terrell James*, Gerald Peters Gallery, Dallas TX  
*Plants & Animals*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2007 *Place for Two Stones*, Jason McCoy, Inc., New York, NY  
*Terrell James*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 2006 *Drawing into Painting*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2005 *Paintings*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Terrell James*, Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, NM
- 2004 *The Paintings of Terrell James*, Jason McCoy, Inc., New York, NY  
*Drawings and Monoprints*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX

- 2003 *Terrell James: New Paintings*, Gerald Peters Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2002 *Terrell James: Painting*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler, Houston, TX  
*Los Invitados*, Casa de Chavon, Fundacion Centro Cultural, Santo Domingo, DR
- 2001 *Quisqueya*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Impression and Sensation: Painting of Terrell James*, Pillsbury Peters Fine Art, Dallas, TX  
*Ring of Seas and Summers*, City Gallery at Wells Fargo Plaza, Houston, TX
- 2000 *Rising*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler, Houston, TX
- 1999 *Fissure*, Froelick Adelhart Gallery, Portland, OR
- 1998 *Field Studies*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1997 *Shields*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler, Houston, TX  
*Rock Bridge Cloud*, Froelick Adelhart Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Terrell James*, Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, TX
- 1995 *Shaker Rag Hollow and Other Perimeters*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1994 *Monotypes and Etchings*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1993 *Landscape with Memory of Bone*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1992 *The Quiet Birth of an Island*, Loyola Gallery Downtown, New Orleans
- 1991 *The Lure of Things That Are Seen and Heard*, C.G. Jung Center, Houston, TX  
*Shroud of Field and Stone*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1989 *Archaic Figures*, Graham Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1985 *Scarred Enclosures, Sacred Walls*, Graham Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Terrell James: Tropical Cities*, Delgado College Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 1982 *Mixed Media on Paper + Wall Constructions*, Graham Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1981 *Works on Paper*, Bishop's Common, University of the South, Sewanee, TN
- 1978 *Terrell James: Recent Work*, Christ Church Cathedral, Houston, TX

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *The Curatorial Imagination of Walter Hopps*, Menil Collection, Houston, TX
- 2022 *New Acquisitions*, Modern Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, TX  
*Summer Set: Terrell James, Mark Fox, Sherrie Levine*, Josh Pazda Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Works on Paper*, Kinder Building, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX  
*Bearing Witness: Fundraiser for Ukraine*, Blaffer Art Museum, Houston, TX  
*Texas Artists: Women of Abstraction*, Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, TX  
*Works on Paper*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2021 *The Marzio Years: Transforming the Museum of Fine Arts*, Houston, 1982-2010, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston, TX

- 2020 *Texas Women: A New History of Abstract Art*, San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, TX  
*Women on Top*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Ubiquitousness of Viewpoints 2*, Yamaguchi Institute of Contemporary Art, Yamaguchi City, Saikote, Japan  
*A Collection of Friends: Selections from the William F. Lassiter Estate*, Inman Gallery, Houston, TX  
*40th Anniversary Exhibition*, Cadogan Contemporary, London, UK
- 2019 *Absolutely Abstract*, Yucca Valley Arts Center, Joshua Tree, CA  
*Monumental II*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2018 *Four Artists / Four Rooms: Fox, Havel, James, Shepherd*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*44 Artists from Texas*, Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts, Lubbock  
*Contemporary Artists in Houston from the Collections of William J. Hill and MFAH*, Glassell School of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX  
*Summer Group Exhibition*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Works: Terrell James & Ann Stautberg*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Winter Group Exhibit*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2017 *Overhead and Under Foot: Contemporary Topographies on Paper*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston, TX  
*Summer Group Exhibit*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Fall Group Exhibit*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2016 *Ninth International Biennial Ink Art Exhibition*, Shenzhen Art Institute, Shenzhen, China  
*30, Thirtieth Anniversary Exhibition*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Paintings*, Sitka Center for Art and Ecology, Portland, OR  
*Tangled Up in Blue*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas,  
*On Site in 16 Cities*, Berlin Collective, Berlin, Germany  
*Dragon Street Inaugural Exhibit*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2015 *WET: Fresh Fictions*, Williams Tower, Houston, TX  
*In Situ*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York, NY  
*Texas Abstract*, Barry Whistler Gallery, TX  
*Red, Yellow, Blue*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Chill: Winter Group Exhibition*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2013 *Drawing*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Now, Then & Again*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2012 *Southern/Pacific*, Gallery Homeland, Portland, OR  
*Palm Springs Pop-Up*, Froelick Gallery, Palm Springs, CA
- 2011 *70 Years of Abstract Painting - Excerpts*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York, NY  
*Plastic is the New Paper: Works from the Collection*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
- 2011 *Working in the Abstract: Rethinking the Literal*, Glassell Studio School, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
- 2010 *Berliner Geschichten: Terrell James, Bo Joseph, Adam Raymont*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2009 *SAVE BERLIN!*, Stadtbad Wedding, Berlin, Germany  
*Kunsthalle: Deutschland nach Portland*, Gallery Homeland, Portland, OR  
*Abendlicht*, Jason McCoy, Inc. New York, NY  
*Summer Exhibit*, Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, NM  
*Winter Group Show*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2008 *Inaugural Desoto Building Exhibit*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2007 *Amistad*, Museo de la Nacion, Lima, PE  
*Contemporary Painters*, Gerald Peters Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2006 *Out of Abstraction*, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington, TX  
*Houston Contemporary*, Museum of Shanghai, China  
*Three Americans*, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong
- 2005 *Empty Bowls Project*, Houston Museum of Contemporary Craft and Heritage Gallery, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, Houston, TX  
*Winter Group Show*, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Independent Vision*, Art League of Houston, Houston, TX  
*Barrett Collection*, Meadows Museum, Southern Methodist University, Dallas,  
*Abstract Paintings*, Heritage Gallery, J.P. Morgan Chase Building, Houston, TX
- 2004 *Faculty Exhibition*, Glassell Studio School, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX,  
*Modern and Contemporary Artists*, Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, NM Gallery Artists, Froelick Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2003 *Recent Acquisitions*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX  
*Ongoing Installation*, Free International University World Art Collection, Zeiss, Netherlands  
*One of a Kind: Monotypes from the Collection*, Portland Art Museum, OR
- 2002 *Liquid Corporation*, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong, China  
*Small Projects*, DiverseWorks, Houston, TX
- 2001 *Sublime: The Landscape Re-Envisioned*, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington  
*Contemporary Work*, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong, China  
*Women Rule*, Devin Borden Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Lay it Down*, Dramos Studio, Houston, TX  
*Winter Exhibit*, MacKinney Avenue Contemporary, Dallas, TX
- 2000 *Works on Paper: Acquisitions, 1997-2000*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX  
*Four Artists: Leandro Erlich, Joseph Havel, Terrell James, Dean Ruck*, Old Jail Art Center, Albany, TX  
*Monoprints, John Calaway and Terrell James*, Tembo Cerling Print Studio, Houston, TX

- 2000 *Printwork*, Froelick Adelhart Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Teeny Weenie*, Lawndale Art Center, Houston, TX  
*Fotofest: Photography and Printmaking*, Tembo Cerling Print Studio, Houston,  
*A Few Friends*, Meredith Jack Studio, Houston, TX  
*Thirteen Artists on October 13*, Stewart Gallery, Boise, ID  
*Art League Houston Invitational*, Art League Houston, Houston, TX
- 1999 *Sensibilities: From Representation to Abstraction*, Hong Kong Visual Arts  
Centre, Hong Kong  
*BIO: Between Image and Object*, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington, TX  
*New American Sublime*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX  
*XCXL: Exquisite Corpse Extra Large*, Lawndale Art Center, Houston, TX  
*Twentieth Century American Women*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
- 1997 *With a Quiet Strength: Virgil Grotfeldt/Terrell James*, Galveston Arts Center, TX  
*Coleccion Permanente*, Centro Cultural/Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City, DF  
*Wabi Sabi*, Takara Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1996 *Anne Burke/Terrell James*, Froelick Adelhart Gallery, Portland, OR  
*Vernacular: Lawndale Art and Performance Space*, Lawndale Art Center,  
Houston, TX  
*Cerling Etching Studio: The First Five Years*, Transco Tower Gallery, Houston  
and Galveston Arts Center, Galveston  
*Intimate*, Barbara Davis Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1995 *Texas Modern and Postmodern*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX  
*Faculty Exhibition*, Glassell School of Art, Houston, TX
- 1994 *Works on Paper from the Permanent Collection*, Centro Cultural-Arte
- 1993 *Seeing the Forest Through the Trees*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX
- 1992 *The Improvisational Spirit*, Transco Tower Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1991 *Recent Acquisitions*, Centro Cultural/Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City, DF  
*Texas Dialogues*, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington, TX
- 1990 *Direct References: Drawing by Texas Artists*, Glassell School of Art, Houston, TX  
*Project Houston*, DiverseWorks, Houston, TX
- 1989 *Water*, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Messages From the South*, Sewall Art Gallery, Rice University, Houston, TX  
*Another Reality*, Hooks-Epstein Gallery, Houston, TX, McNay Art Museum, San  
Antonio, TX and Arkansas Art Center, Little Rock, AR  
*Large Scale/Small Scale*, Sewell Art Gallery, Rice University, Houston, TX
- 1988 *Drawn from Life: Contemporary Interpretive Landscape*, Sewell Art Gallery,  
Rice University, Houston, TX  
*Group Exhibition*, Jack Tilton Gallery, New York, NY
- 1987 *Small Wonders*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Abstract Sensibilities Now*, Lawndale Annex, University of Houston, TX



**Contact for information:**

[www.cadogangallery.com](http://www.cadogangallery.com)  
[info@cadogangallery.com](mailto:info@cadogangallery.com)

Cadogan London  
87 Old Brompton Road  
London SW7 3LD  
+44 (0)20 7581 5451

Cadogan Milan  
Via Bramante 5  
Milan 20154  
+39 028 969 0152

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