

# Trade Winds

Patrick Alston    Mildred Howard  
Ben Aronson    Masie Love  
Dewey Crumpler    Dr. Esther Mahlangu  
Patrick Eugène    Nnenna Okore  
Liam Everett    Gordon Parks  
Genevieve Gaignard    Andre D. Wagner

June 26 - August 19, 2026

## Opening Reception

Friday, June 26, 2026, 6 - 8pm

Jenkins Johnson Gallery presents *Trade Winds*, a new group exhibition opening Friday, June 26, 2026. Featuring a multigenerational selection of artists with wildly divergent practices, *Trade Winds* explores how contemporary art discourse is moving away from singular overwhelming trends and is instead fragmenting into a large number of concurrent and codominant threads which have their own space to succeed on their own terms.

Throughout contemporary art history, grand statements like “Painting is dead” dominated critical discourse: a single major narrative overwhelming the field, with a large number of artists either participating in, orbiting around, or explicitly reacting to that monolithic center. This same structure was pervasive throughout cultural production, whether in the prevailing fads of fashion, or the Top 40 on the radio.

In our digital age with vast accessibility to any option at any time, the post-pandemic “New Normal” has shifted towards a more granular and personalized engagement with art. We can access our interests at a moment’s notice, rather than being subject to the whims of larger industrial choice making.

For much of the 2020s, people have waited to determine what new central theme would dominate the contemporary art field: What comes next? Is abstraction back after the popular wave of



Patrick Eugène, *To be titled*, 2026, Oil on panel, handcrafted walnut frame, 83 x 51 in (210.8 x 129.5 cm)

figuration? Will photography shine where painting once dominated? The emerging reality in which we live suggests that there may not be a central theme at all, but instead, we may be in an epoch that is defined by its themelessness. The concurrent potential of seemingly oppositional standpoints—abstraction and representation, formalism and conceptualism, the emotive and the cognitive, the analytic and the intuitive, image-making and object-making—has created compelling new ground for critical engagement. These contrasting positions are not antagonistic to each other, they can coexist and succeed on their own terms.

Practices no longer are characterized as “following a trend” or “going against a trend,” but instead they simply are what they are, there’s no monolithic center around which everything else has relative distance. What might first appear

to be contradiction is in reality the predominant atmosphere of our moment in contemporary art: multipolar, heterogenous, and self-determined freedom.

*Trade Winds* presents a group of artists whose practices create compelling and unexpected intersections as part of the larger contemporary discourse. We look forward to not simply finding the contrasts in their practices, but emphasizing and celebrating them. One foundation of the exhibition is Gordon Parks, one of the most legendary creative forces of the 20th century. Born in 1912, Parks is best known as a photographer but his creative impulses lead him to direct multiple feature length films, compose music, write books (including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry), and even painting.

This wide-ranging vision of creativity speaks to the importance of self-determination for artists, and we believe may become a critical motif of our era.



This same openness to creative impulse informs the work of Dr. Esther Mahlangu and Mildred Howard, who bring sculptures to the exhibition but their practices are limitless in their imagination. Mahlangu, whose practice stems from the traditional cultural practices of the Ndebele people of South Africa, is a living legend and cultural icon, and her relentless creative drive brought the colors and forms of Ndebele house painting to every imaginable surface which could host it—from painted canvases and vessels to found objects of all kinds. Mildred Howard conversely began her creative journey in dance and ultimately found herself as a boundaryless visual artist working with collage, assemblage, sculpture, and installation. Concurrent to *Trade Winds*, Howard's first major museum retrospective will be on view at the Oakland Museum of California.



Throughout the show, many of the wall-mounted works strain definitions between sculpture, painting, assemblage, collage, fiber work, neon, and countless other gestures—more than we can summarize here, and a space which we encourage viewers to explore with open minded

Images:

Above: Gordon Parks, *Untitled, Mobile, Alabama*, 1956, archival pigment print, 28 x 28 in (71.1 x 71.1 cm)

Below: Liam Everett, *Untitled (arrhythmia)*, 2026, Ink, oil, sand, wood ash on linen, 42 x 36 in (106.7 x 91.4 cm).

sympathies to how a work's creative lineage may occupy a space outside what it seems, and how its formal and conceptual characters may harmonize with other artists in the show which might on first glance appear to be of a whole other discipline: Does the meandering path of a glass neon tube share kinship with the spiraling stitches of a fiber sculpture? Can the spontaneous alignment of physical forms which allow a figurative photo to take place have more in common with an abstract painting's processes than with the careful construction of a figurative painting? Can the history laid bare through the found components of an assemblage reach equally far back as an illusory space depicting history?

Each artist in the exhibition brings to the table a unique and unmistakable perspective, and the emerging relationships proposed through the exhibition further elucidate and celebrate those qualities.

*Trade Winds* opens Friday, June 26, 2026 from 6-8pm, and will be on view through August 19, 2026. During the run of the exhibition, we will also have special extended hours on Wednesday, July 15, as part of the ADAA's annual Summer Tribeca Gallery Walk. We will soon announce more details about this activation.

The exhibition is on view at 385 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY in our new Tribeca space. This arrangement has been made possible through an innovative arrangement made with fellow ADAA member Marian Goodman Gallery. For more information about the exhibition please email [info@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com](mailto:info@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com) and follow us on Instagram [@jenkinsjohnsongallery](https://www.instagram.com/jenkinsjohnsongallery).

Images:

Above: Mildred Howard, *Do We Have the Right to Remain Silent*, 2021-2026, Bronze

Below: Nnenna Okore, *Between the Split*, 2024, hessian, burlap, cheesecloth, dye and wire, 52 x 60 x 12 in (132.1 x 152.4 x 30.5 cm).

