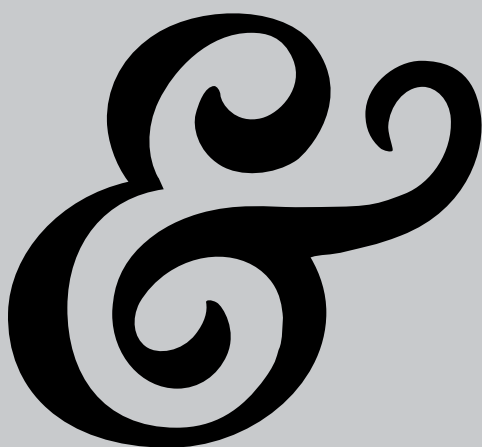


**N**

**Stella Alesi**



**Momo**

**Michelle Marchesseault**

**Evan Horn**

**Michael Hall**

**June 25 – July 24, 2022**

**&** describes Stella Alesi's art and practice: flowing always to new forms and new reasons.

Alesi works in a series, each an era in a moment, marking the emotional time of the making. They seldom revisit a series. Alesi moves to the next one, and the next, and the next. And, and, and...

**&** is a community of artists

Alesi invited four artists to contribute—friends and those they admire from afar. All searching abstractionists, seeking to make a spirit material. Each balances rigor with freedom, finding an eternal in the moment of making: Momo, Michelle Marchesseault, Michael W. Hall, Evan Horn.

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*Next Page*

**Stella Alesi**

“#296 april 20, 2022—vermillion”

“#300 may 11, 2022—turquoise blue”

“#297 april 19, 2022—cadmium orange”

“#299 may 7, 2022—perm. green light”

comfort series, 2022

oil on oil paper mounted to panel, 43 x 31 inches



## Questions

## & Answers:

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1.

Do you ever wonder, how are feelings going to get through abstracted or nonrepresentational work to viewers? How does creating the work intersect with your feelings? I think some viewers suspect abstract = rational design sense, but so much more animates us artists and art lovers.

—Momo

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2.

Do you ever imagine not making art? Could you? What might that look like?

—Stella Alesi

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3.

Is there any one particular medium that you think of as your “true love,” that you always come back to or always find inspiration in?

—Michael W. Hall

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4.

Under what circumstances do you feel the most empowered and creative in the studio?

—Evan Horn

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5.

What if any is your favorite flower?

—Michelle Marchesseault

# Stella Alesi

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1.

I don't wonder how feelings are going to get through abstracted or non representational work, I just start and keep at it.

I am amazed when it happens well.  
Usually best seen in hindsight, but sometimes in the moment, on the best occasions the feelings come through loud and clear.

the work is the struggle, the joy and the comfort made visual —

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2.

At times I do imagine not making art, when I'm tired or right after I install a show. The feeling lasts for a day or so and I think of all the traveling I will do, all the gardening, baking and visiting with friends.

Then the urge to make comes back in the form of visions in my head and itching in my hands and I realize I can(?) stop.

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3.

Oil paint is and has always been my one true love. I work with other mediums and materials, but nothing gives me as much joy as squeezing oil pigment onto my palette—the joy is visceral.

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4.

Half way through a new series is when I am most empowered and creative in the studio. The difficult work of finding what I want to create is underway, and I'm just working, effortlessly, happily in my zone.

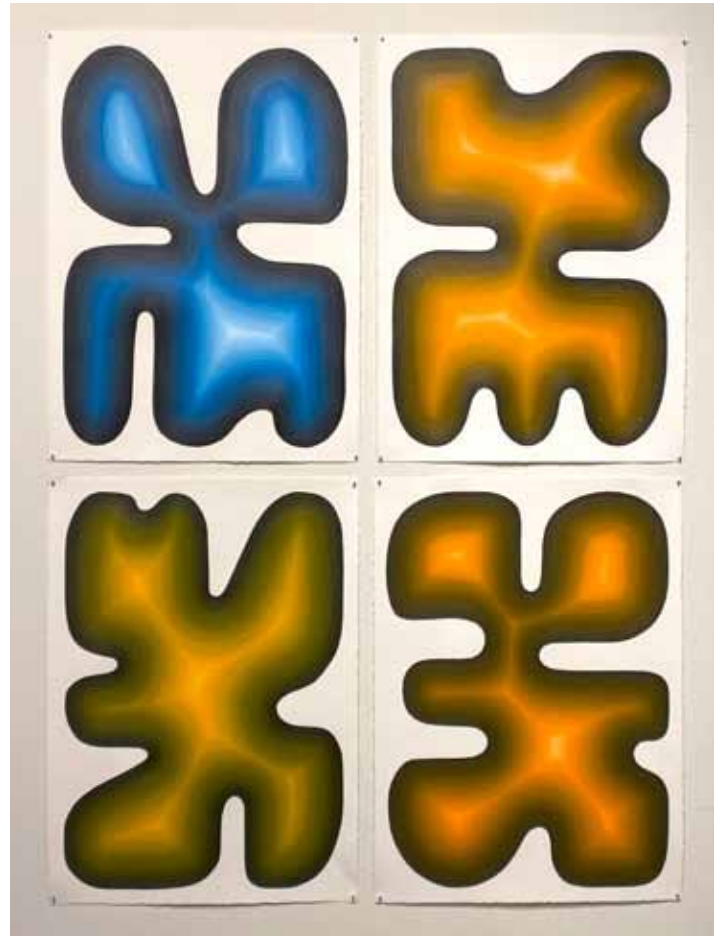
I know I'm nearing the end of a new series when I feel all my options are exhausted.

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5.

I love all flowers.

Zinnias in the garden in the summer, poppies and bluebonnets in the spring—Asiatic Lilies in the house, all big with graceful lines and a powerful fragrance. Peonies, of course, and lilacs, because they don't grow in Austin and I miss them.



## Stella Alesi

clockwise from upper left:

"march 2nd, 2022"

untitled

"march 3rd, 2022"

"march 7th, 2022"

comfort series

oil on oil paper

22.5 x 30 inches, unframed

# Momo

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1.

I often wonder this while working (which is why I contributed the question). And it's really more of a question than any answer that I have. Design in all its forms hopes to achieve something for people's hearts. And the Art type of designing really has no way to quantify success. Since all rules need to be broken but contained within, problems are good, contradiction is best, etc. Yet coming out if this nebulae, the right signal seems to reach the right people. How? If the audience knows the artist is passionate that helps. But in the work itself?

I fall back on the music analogy. That notes like colors can have harmonies, dissonance, melodies, a composition sets up all types of rhythms and silence. And music conveys feeling. It can also be smart like math, just like design can be rational. But a door opens (with no lyrics or representation) to some innate place we function, having to do with how we evolved, how we're wired, that's full of raw emotion. Does that happen? I hope so.

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2.

Once a weirdo, always a weirdo. Making finished artworks might be the least artistic thing we do. I've gone through phases while "really living" in my 20's when art making wasn't centered but everything else more than compensated, from dreams, adventures, sex, dress, dance, strange puzzles, strange discomforts and curiosities.

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3.

No. Color as a medium has been a constant presence though. I can remember every little discovery going back my whole life, so that must be a kind of true lasting love.

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4.

Studio benefits are weird. I've been most creative locked into a tiny airline seat. Then frustrated in my 5000 sqft place. A lot of artists I talk to relate to this. It's often having less that helps. So working very late, or deciding to skip a party, or trapped inside during a rain storm, provides less options. I personally used to go through a bad cycle for years, where I'd (unconsciously?) rely on becoming completely broke and even homeless to find this state of painful focus. That felt better than the dull agony of wasting opportunities. I'm better now.

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5.

I dug up native Gaillardia from fallow areas around my studio, to grow in the empty lot that's become my garden. 3 years on now, it's completely covered and I have to edit where they grow, like a haircut with a weed wacker.



## Momo

"Grip of the Rip"

2022

acrylic, vinyl, and colored

pencil on raw canvas

120x100 cm

# Michelle Marchesseault

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1.

I don't wonder about translating feelings. My work is best when I am present with mine and whatever happens is left behind. I'm surprised and elated when I it reaches out to someone.

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2.

I couldn't make much work during the pandemic. I felt a giant emotional void, huge anxiety. I have fantasized about 'quitting' making art many times but why would I do that when it would make me sick?

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3.

Paint is my true love but I like to make anything out of anything.

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4.

I feel most empowered when I have privacy and I am full of joy.

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5.

The poppy



**Michelle Marshesseault**

"Who?" 2022

vinyl paint on canvas

18 x 24 inches



**Michelle Marshesseault**

"Descending" study, 2022

vinyl paint on linen

18 x 24 inches

# Michael W. Hall

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1.

I see abstract art as one of the better ways of communicating feeling because it is often non-representational and thus, it doesn't always dictate an intended response. Much like instrumental music, abstract visual work is able to convey a certain mood while still allowing space for the viewers own emotions and personalities to add timbre and nuance to their experience and interpretation of the piece.

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2.

Even if I were to press pause on painting in my life, I'm someone whose brain just can't sit still. I'd certainly just spend more time playing music, making videos, baking bread, gardening, finding other ways to use my hands to communicate and share ideas and add flavor to the spaces I find myself occupying.

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3.

Gouache on paper. I love the feeling and look of Arches rough press paper, combined with the flat color, serigraph-like aesthetic of gouache. There's nothing else like it and that influence shows in my approach to acrylic painting and even how I think about sculpture.

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4.

When my finances feel secure, even if only temporarily, I am free to focus on exploring my ideas to the fullest and create my best work. It's unfortunate that money can have so much influence, but the looming threat of impending financial ruin is a true creativity-annihilator at times.

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5.

Currently, Antelope Horn milkweed. It's green petals make it less noticeable, easily fading into the background, but looking closer, its curious clusters of flowers are like subtle psychedelic fireworks exploding among the weeds. They're also of vital ecological importance, so we should probably all be planting more of them.



**Michael W. Hall**

"Fence Climber", 2022  
acrylic on shaped panel,  
29x49 inches



# Evan Horn

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1.

Feelings are a tricky thing to express w much clarity in a work of abstract art. I like to hold the feelings close as I'm working and often find the work being informed unconsciously with more efficacy than a determined expression of emotion.

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2.

No. I don't think I would be as happy. It would feel like something is missing. My energy is a creative energy so if I wasn't making art I would probably have a dozen children. Or become a chef—the more convenient career with 12 kids.

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3.

I hope it's clear that clay is my true love. I literally have to love every ceramic sculpture into being.

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4.

I work well under pressure and with deadlines. I also feel great in the morning after watering my plants and eating breakfast. When there is love in my life I feel doubly capable in the studio.

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5.

I love orchids! My dancing ladies are presently in bloom:)



**Evan Horn**  
"Of Crystalline Structure"  
2022  
volcanic ash on stoneware  
18x14x12 inches



**Evan Horn**  
"Ratio & Motif"  
2022  
unglazed white stoneware  
9x17x10 inches



**Evan Horn**  
"Winged Vessel"  
2022  
unglazed white stoneware  
19x11x10 inches

**Stella Alesi**

“#298 may 6, 2022—yellow green”

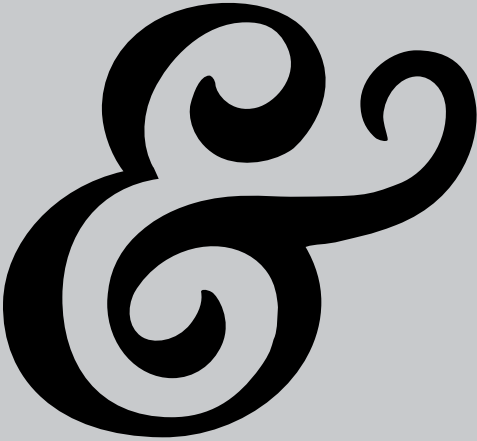
“#295 april 18th, 2022—yellow deep”

comfort series

oil on oil paper mounted to panel

43 x 31 inches





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