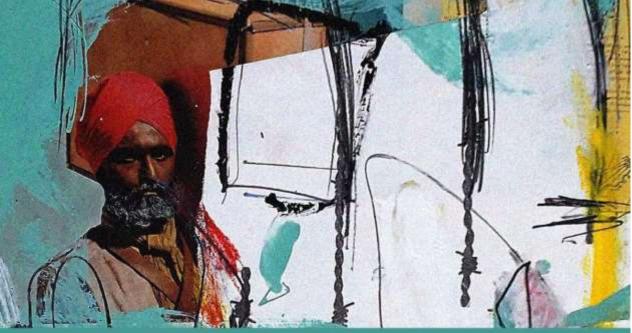
## nspirational 89 art magazine

Paul Warren Suresh K Nair Global Art Project Natalie Dadamio Robert G Ross Gianni Mantovani Shipra Bhatia Yuri Marushkin



#### **CROSSINGBORDERS:** WE ARE ALL IMMIGRANTS

GAP Members and invited Artists at Westbeth Gallery NYC CrossingBorders : Exhibition Oct 25th- Nov 10th, 2024 \* invited quant artist \*\* Nine Eighteen Nine Ended artist to show at Westbeth

Ale Feijo Avaro Sánchez Ana Gabiño \*\*Anne Dushanko Dobek Jennifer Amy Homer Hynes \*\*Anne Rogers Joanne Rogers Asya Abdrahman Judith Rohrer \*\*Arthur Rogers Asya Abdrahman \*\*Oluwanbe Amodu Antoinatta Ellis Williams Kari Manwiller \*Bea Last \*Karinne Grenier \*John David Caudie Katya Coll Brian Auerbach Katle Korotzer Context Forter Colleen Gianatiempo Corrie McCluskey David Jenowe Des Tivenan Diane Milams \*Diego Rios Elise Marshall Emmanuel C. Montova \*Ethan Owusu \*Frans van Viegen Gail Winegar Gien Rogers Heether Wilcoxori

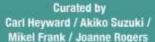
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Joining the Exhibition at Nine Eighteen Nine Studio Gallery Nov 16th, 2024 - Jan 4th, 2025

Will White Laurie Smithwick Julio Gorsalez Lee Ko Margaret Fileman



January & 2014









#### Global ART Project: The Collaborative Future Crossing Borders (We Are All Immigrants)

Curated by Global ART Project Founders Carl Heyward and Akiko Suzuki With Guest Curation in North Carolina by Mikel Frank and Joanne Rogers

Presented at

Westbeth Gallery New York City

October 25-November 10, 2024

And

Nine Eighteen Nine Studio Gallery Charlotte, North Carolina

November 16, 2024 - January 4, 2025

What Borders are you willing to cross?

*"Love is an act of will – namely, both an intention and an action."* 

- bell hook, All About Love, 1999 "The function of art is to do more than tell it like it is – it's to imagine what is possible." bell hook, Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations, 2012

*"The enemy is a very good teacher"* 

• The Dalai Lama (from Steven Pressfield, The War of Art, 2002)

#### Transgress

What does it mean for an artist to cross borders, push boundaries, overstep - in other words, to transgress? The Global Art Project (GAP), a vanguard collaborative social art practice, has for the past 13 years been building pathways beyond traditional gallery walls for artists to participate in the art world and discover the answer to that question for themselves. Recognition by GAP co-founders Carl Heyward and Akiko Suzuki in 2011 of both the need of artists worldwide to share work responding to issues of race, injustice and the relationship to created borders, and the increase of global accessibility via social media, led to the creation of a practice that since its beginning has had hundreds of members in some 19 countries. Art practice in the form of social engagement or social justice is still an evolving field in the first quarter of the 21st century. Early exploration of this idea came from Judy Chicago, who in the late 1960's and 1970's began to turn away from 5

Minimalism's purity of form as an expression of infinity or spirituality. Chicago transgressed the bounds of the highly judgmental, masculine and capitalistic art world environment of her time by daring to use verboten feminine imagery in works such as 'Birth Project' and the 'Dinner Party. Since that time, women's and gender studies have increasingly been instituted, growing concurrently with a socially engaged art movement in which artists address every kind of personal, social and political boundary.

Yet even with the cultural changes that have occurred, GAP Crossing Borders (We are all Immigrants) 2024, faces the fact that through undeniable global geo-political, environmental and philosophical problems, artists are still struggling with how to challenge, break through or accept the borders that limit us.

#### Translate

When an artist works past a boundary, whether psychological, cultural or physical, they are faced with risk. It can be quite psychologically 'expensive' to face fears triggered by conditions as diverse as traumatic personal memory or geopolitical conflict. For Heyward, who is interested in experimenting and working alongside other artists, the outcome may be ephemeral. He must summon a trust in his belief that 'unadulterated spontaneous inspiration', which, as he put it in a 2020 interview, will lead to a manifestation of creativity that will be able to deal with anything.

GAP's yearly residencies in Europe, Africa, North and South America and Japan over the past 13 years have been a generative source of this creative capital for Heyward as well as participant artists. The residencies remind artists that creativity does not exist in a vacuum, that the energy fueling art is renewed in community. Ideas and energy are shared; a risky proposition, yet one with a big payoff in connection and courage to continue working in the face of daunting borders.

Akiko Suzuki's 2019 "Songs of the Little Bird",

conceived during the GAP residency in Senegal, with its use of torn and lightweight materials that threaten to fly away, visually translates the frustration of immigrants who may lack the power to express themselves. Whether crossing a border willingly or because of forced migration, women and children often possess only the power of the 'quiet voice'; a voice that depends on unreliable systems of compassion to be heard.

#### Transmit

Collage as a form which encourages reuse, reinvigoration and reimagination is both a way of life and an art form embodied by Carl and Akiko, who both use the technique in their own work.

Unlike social practices designed to make use of a specific built environment, or to educate or otherwise inform a specific group of people, the flexible structure of GAP has allowed for a sort of freeform mode of artistic exchange between member artists on social media, as well as the public in the form of workshops and residencies. From the beginning, GAP artists have exchanged fragments (frags) by mail, of

artworks that might otherwise be discarded or simply left in storage. This reaffirms connections between individual artists; many times in pleasant recognition of a given frag when a recipient posts images of artwork incorporating the gift.

Both Heyward and Suzuki are committed to breaking barriers that have kept people from making art. GAP workshops make use of multiple techniques designed to overcome common art making insecurities around skill level, cost of materials and uncertainty about qualifications. There is collage, of course, as well as painting and drawing. Heyward maintains a fairly vast bank of frags he encourages participants to sift through to find new starting points. Sukui brings sewing machines, cloth and thread. It is with delight that participants learn to attach paper, thread and cloth in ways that are newly expressive while also perhaps sparking long lost memories of cutting patterns and making clothing.

A signature element of the workshops is the day -long creation of the 'wailing wall', a massive 12' to 15' collaborative painting which combines the spontaneity of pure automatic mark making with

well timed compositional assessment. Throughout the day everyone present is invited to approach the wall with loaded paint brushes and an openness to risk. By turning around and painting backwards, the painter is freed to forget about the appearance of the mark, and allowed to simply create while enjoying the physical experience of painting. In fact, joy is itself an outcome produced in these encounters with the materials of art making, in the presence of those also committed to sharing a will to create.

#### Transition

While the beating heart of GAP is the daily flow of images, notes and critique generated by GAP artists on social media channels, with the residencies and workshops serving as visible limbs, GAP has also provided a channel through which its artists may speak to the public. The Crossing Border shows in Ghent, Belgium 2020; Lafayette, California 2020; Benicia, California (Gender Gap)2020, and The 2024 Crossing Borders (We are all immigrants) show have opened the doors so the public is able to physically interact with the work of close to 100 artists from 19 countries. The current show will

travel from its first opening in New York City to a second opening in Charlotte, North Carolina. In this 2024 show, a juried selection of artists using a wide variety of media interpret the concept of 'The Border' in their choice of term: Historical, Geographical, Environmental, Political, Philosophical, Personal or Spiritual. The work reflects an artists community familiar with the ways borders manifest in lived reality through ongoing systems of oppression and control. A reality that may include the impossibility of finding a safe haven. The flip side and one hopes, the benefit, of such a close observation of these harsh realities is that complacency may be disrupted and change might occur.

#### Transform

 "I know we are at an evolutionary moment in whatever way it might be defined, but I live a little ahead of all that and always have" (C. Heyward, personal communication, 2023

The Global Art Project, a socially engaged art form as practiced by Carl Heyward and Akiko

Suzuki is essentially an environment for the possibility of change. Using the tools of technology to launch their combined passion for connectivity and change through art marking, Heyward and Suzuki have given the art community access to something of a 4th dimension.

The 2024 Crossing Borders show asks the additional question, 'where can we find a safe haven?', with regard to institutional lack of compassion or worse, silence, around various international immigration crises. The subtitle of the show, "What Borders are you willing to cross?" is an urgent call to action for the artists involved, as well as the public, to deal with this question. The response to that question comes in the form of the art works created by the global art community of GAP.

Unlike early 20th century modernists who turned their attention to form, medium and process in order to push away the horrors of two world wars, the artists of GAP are challenged to consider and present content. Content that has the capacity to inspire an evolution of change. As Heyward writes, 'we are all Immigrants'. We are also storytellers. The stories artists tell with

their work shape identity and then bring experience into corporeal form.

The world that embraces racism, sexism, privilege, ableist thought and action is still the one we live in day to day. There is no promise of finding the "end of the rainbow". A frank reckoning by GAP artists with these problems is evident in the work presented in the 2024 Crossing Borders show. By creating GAP, a global space of inclusion which values differences and offers places for action, Heyward and Suzuki have fueled a vehicle for artists to discover new ways of being.

#### **Article by Katie Korotzer**

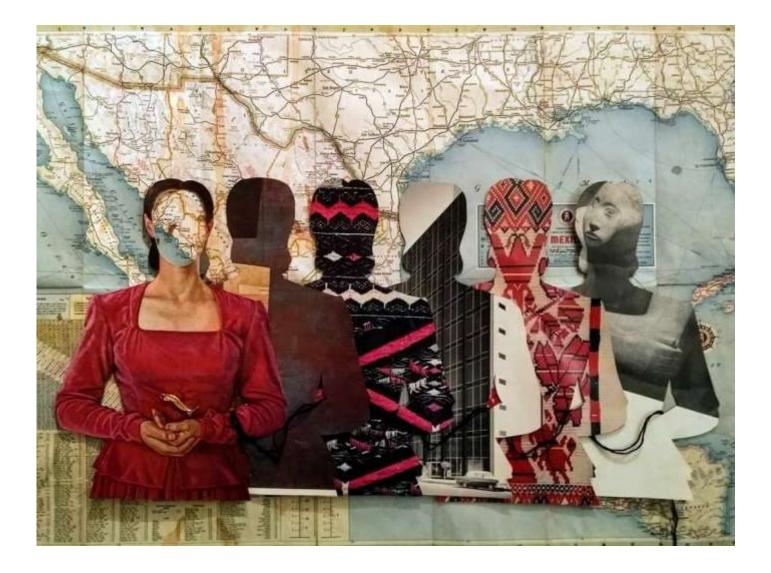
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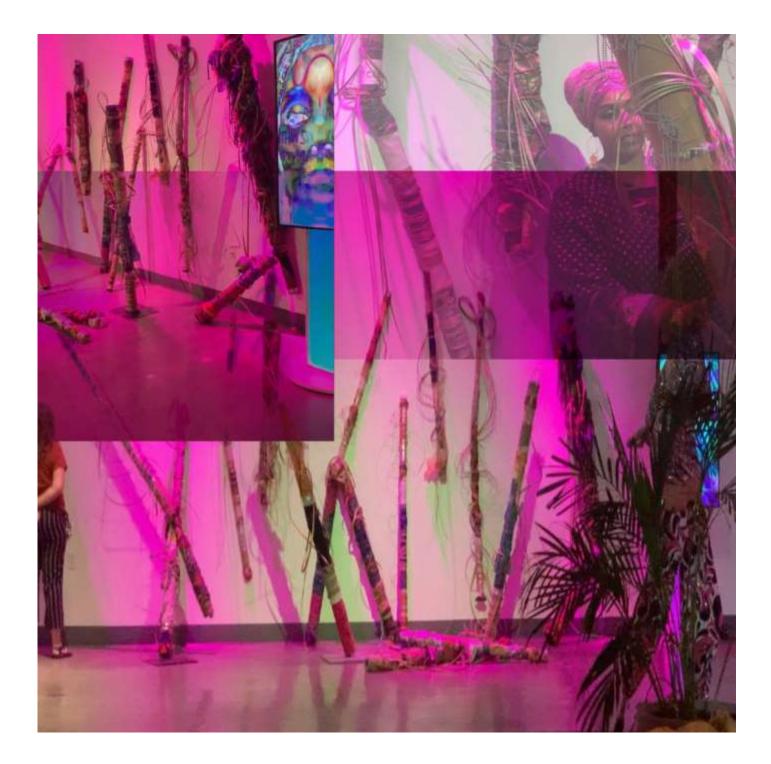
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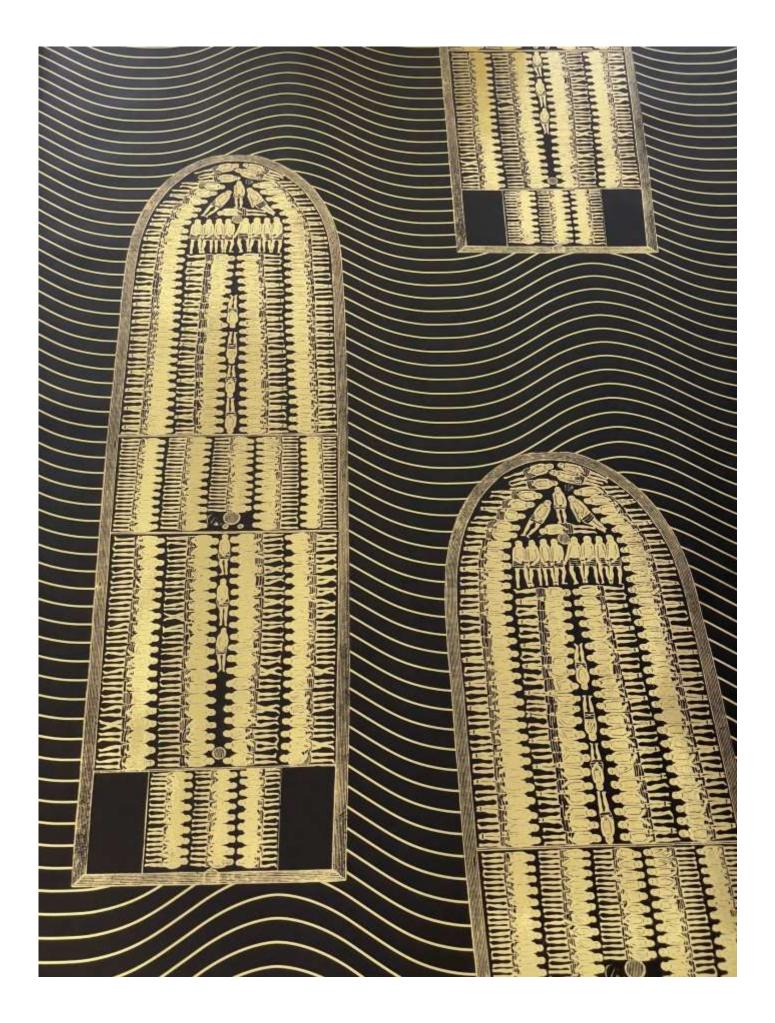








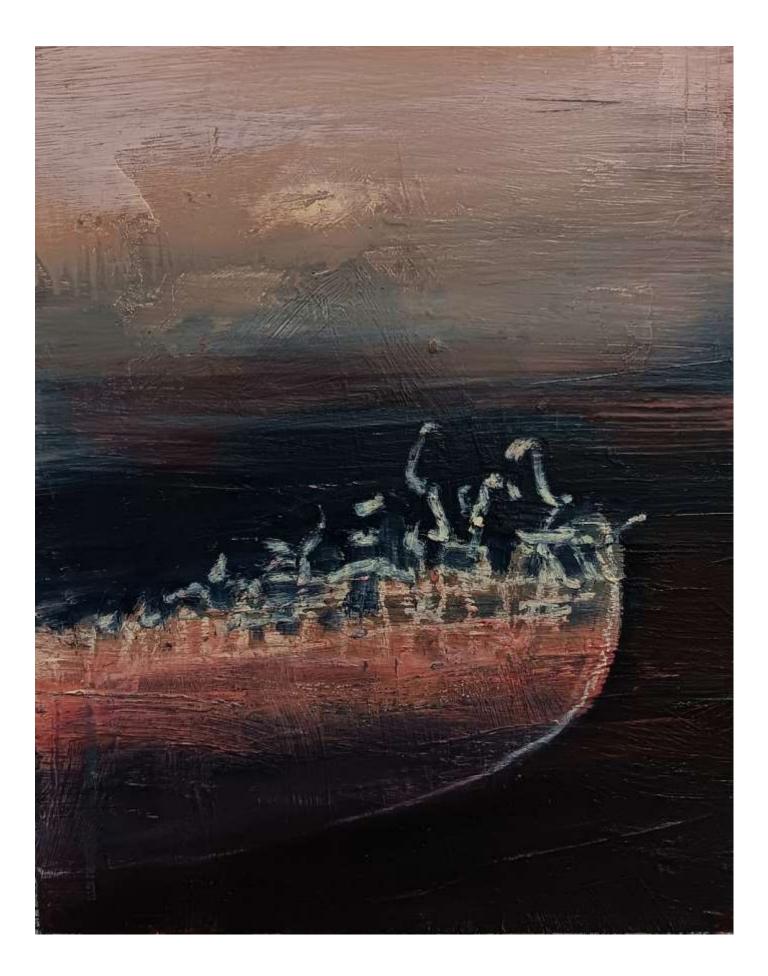




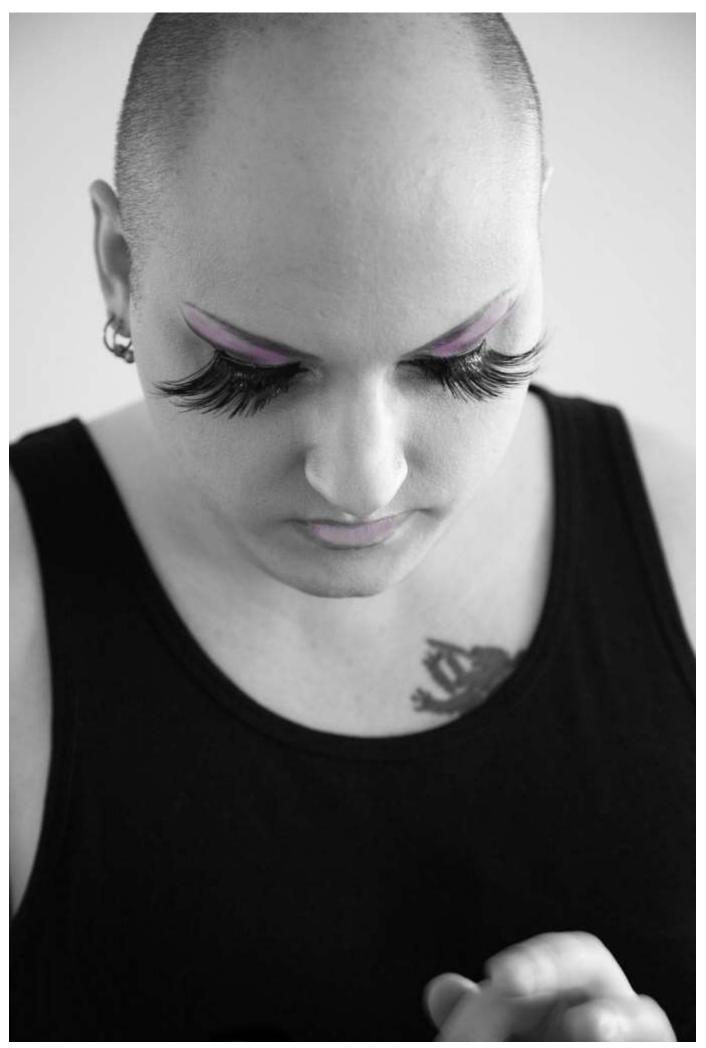




















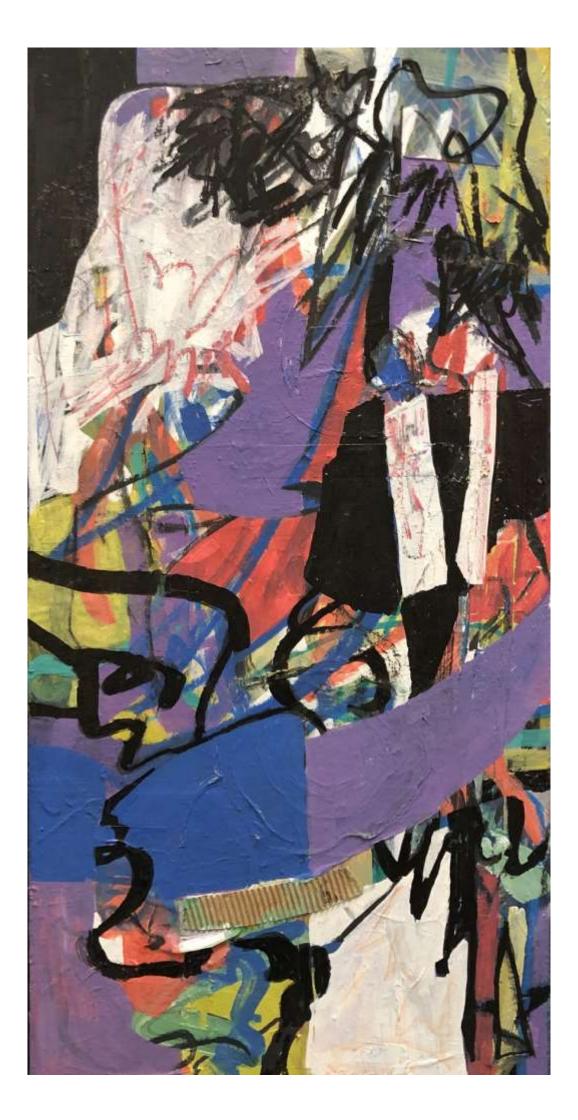


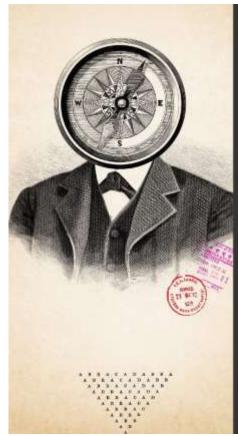












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GAP

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Curated by Carl Heyward / Akiko Suzuki / Mikel Frank / Joanne Rogers

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