



Molly Metz, Bloom, 2026, Acrylic, Flashe, collaged newsprint on canvas, 35 x 33 in (88.9 x 83.8 cm), double-sided, METZ 69

Molly Metz: Rock Garden

November 19, 2026 – January 16, 2027

Rock Garden is Molly Metz's third solo exhibition at the gallery. Over the past five years, Metz has developed a unique approach to painting whereby natural phenomena are transformed into highly detailed abstraction that evoke aquatic and terrestrial life forms as if viewed under a microscope. Some paintings exit the earth entirely and enter the realm of outer space where strands of illuminated matter exist within midnight blue portals—in this instance more telescopic than microscopic. She paints (and sometimes collages using newsprint) worm forms, threads that conjure unraveled DNA, capillary and vein-like structures, organelles, and biomorphic shapes seemingly suspended within an aqueous soup. Metz has only become more exacting with her mark-making over time, creating tiny pointillist gestures that build to become both decorative flourishes and what seem to be renditions of diatoms (single celled algae that take on fantastical shapes). Counterbalancing this, Metz often paints the reverse side of her paintings, a secret surprise distinguished by a more extemporaneous, gestural style than the tightly controlled work on the front.

In the past, Metz has made ceramic, wall-based sculptures similar in spirit to her paintings. For *Rock Garden*, she further explores the possibilities of painting as object with carefully crafted plaster paintings in artist frames hanging alongside her canvases. The matte colors of the plaster surfaces imbue hard, topographical objects with a felty softness. These hybrid works riff off of the looser technique seen on the back of Metz's paintings in an attempt to showcase a side of her practice usually hidden.

Having recently relocated from the city to the country, Metz has delved into beekeeping and gardening. Confronted with a rocky drainage spillway next to her home, Metz transformed this neglected space with logs and larger stones to divert the water flow in order to grow native plants. Tending what she has dubbed her Rock Garden through "weeding, watering, adding seeds, adding new plants and sculpting the shape of beds and paths," Metz sees gardening as sharing kinship with painting, a symbiotic working relationship. While creating and nurturing her garden, she is "also stretching canvas, prepping surfaces, mixing colors, watering my paint cups (so they don't dry out), adding a mark, a color, and a gesture to a painting."

Attuned to her surroundings, Metz keenly observes the activities of birds, insects (especially bees), and other animals which subtly enter into her paintings not so much as representation but more as palette influences

and abstract forms. Using vintage animal recognition guidebooks with those appealing 1950s illustrations, her paintings take on the iridescence of reptile skin and bird feathers, but always remain grounded in a realm not quite of this world.

Molly Metz has a BA from Kutztown University (2014) and an MFA (painting) from Tyler School of Art (2016). Metz has had two one-person exhibitions at Fleisher/Ollman, *Close Closer* (2021) and *Vernal Pool* (2024). Other solo exhibitions have taken place at Day Space, Philadelphia and Friends Indeed, San Francisco. Metz has been featured in group exhibitions at Peep, Fjord, Pilot Projects, Woodmere Art Museum, and Space 1026 (all in Philadelphia); YUI Gallery, New York; and Adams and Ollman, Portland, OR. She was awarded a Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant in 2025.