

# SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY

## NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

### Maysey Craddock

#### CV

b. 1971

#### EDUCATION

- 2003 MFA, Maine College of Art, Portland, ME
- 1993 BA in Sculpture and Anthropology, Tulane University, Newcomb College, New Orleans, LA
- 1992 University of Georgia, Study Abroad Program, Cortona, Italy

#### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 *Woebetide*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN  
*Soil and Sea*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX
- 2019 *Edgelands*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2018 *Understory*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN  
*Ephemeral Field*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX  
*suspended terrains*, David Lusk Gallery, Nashville, TN  
*Ruin is a Secret Oasis*, Museum of the University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS
- 2017 *Maysey Craddock & William Christenberry: Permanence and Change*, Pulse Miami, Miami, FL  
*Riverine*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 *unfolding shores*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN  
*Lost Bay*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX
- 2015 *Langsam Sea*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 *Strand*, David Lusk Gallery, Nashville, TN  
*Angle of Repose*, Staniar Gallery, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA  
*the land is already shadow, the land is already sea*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX
- 2013 *A Different Kind of Landscape*, two person show with Erin Harmon, Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN  
*Angle of Repose*, Baum Gallery, University of Central Arkansas, Conway, AR
- 2012 *Forest for the Trees*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN  
*Hinterland*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX
- 2011 *Other Spaces*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY  
*Intricate Terrain*, Taylor Bercier Fine Art, New Orleans, LA
- 2010 *Lines and Structures*, James F. Byrnes Institute, Stuttgart, Germany  
*Natural Course*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN

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- 2009 *Borderland*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY  
*Rooted*, Pan American Art Projects, Dallas, TX
- 2008 *Terrain*, Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, WA  
*Pieces of Sky*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 2007 *new work*, Koelsch Gallery, Houston, TX  
*Reclamation*, Pan American Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2006 *unsaid*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 2005 *Three Feet High and Rising*, The Foyer, Munich, Germany
- 2004 *undercurrent*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 2003 *In Between: Flywheels and Washing*, The Foyer, Munich, Germany  
*Passed and Pending*, Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, WA  
*MFA Thesis Exhibition*, Maine College of Art, Portland, ME
- 2002 *Songs of Innocence*, Karen Mitchell Frank Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2001 *a vessel, a path*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 2000 *Traces of Living*, Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, WA  
*Object Resonance*, Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA  
*Minor Histories*, Karen Mitchell Frank Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 1999 *The Written Landscape*, Karen Mitchell Frank Gallery, Dallas, TX  
Grove Grill, Memphis, TN
- 1998 *Soundings*, Ledbetter Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN  
*Objects and Their Desires*, Karen Mitchell Frank Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*The Middle of the Moment*, Wyndy Morehead Fine Arts, New Orleans, LA  
The Bradshaw House Gallery, Birmingham, AL
- 1997 *Conversation*, Levy Gallery, Buckman Performing Arts Center, Memphis, TN

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2021 *Spring Selections*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2020 *heed*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis and Nashville, TN  
*Tactile Response*, David Lusk Gallery, Nashville, TN  
*In 7, 6, 5...*The Art Museum of the University of Memphis, Memphis, TN
- 2019 *Pulse Miami*, Miami, FL  
*Color Schemes: The Value of Intensity*, Crosstown Arts, Memphis, TN
- 2018 *southXeast: contemporary southeastern art*, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL  
*The Bleak and the Burgeoning*, Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville, AR
- 2017 *To See is to Have*, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX
- 2015 *Land Rush*, David Lusk Gallery, Nashville, TN
- 2014 *On Your Mark: Opus I*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX

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- 2013 *Dolce Far Niente*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY  
*Five from Memphis*, The Arts Company, Nashville, TN  
*Under the Influence*, Baton Rouge Gallery, Baton Rouge, LA  
*Present Tense: The Art of Memphis from 2001–Now*, Dixon Museum of Art, Memphis, TN  
*55th Annual Delta Exhibition*, Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR
- 2012 *Architectural Deinfocement: Constructing Disaster and Decay*, Cerritos College Art Gallery, Norwalk, CA
- 2011 *On a Wire*, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX  
*Pulse L.A.*, with David Lusk Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*Art Miami*, with David Lusk Gallery, Miami, FL
- 2010 *Don't call me pretty: Women in Art*, Pan American Art Projects, Miami, FL  
*Quinceanera*, Koelsch Gallery, Houston, TX  
*January Exhibition*, Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, WA
- 2009 *Contemporary Abstraction*, Amanda Schedler Fine Art, Birmingham, AL  
*It Came from Memphis*, Muhlenberg College Gallery, Allentown, PA
- 2008 *Three*, Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, Mississippi  
*Sculpture Exhibition 2008*, Dixon Museum of Art, Memphis, TN  
*Southern Gothic*, Gallery 301, Mobile, AL  
*Tree is Nice*, Julie Baker Fine Art, Nevada City, CA
- 2006 *Berliner Kunst Salon*, Berlin, Germany  
*Weihnachtsausstellung*, Kunstverein Aschau, Aschau, Germany  
*Con(text)*, Franny Koelsch Gallery, Houston, TX
- 2005 *Art Chicago*, *Art in the Park*, with David Lusk Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*The San Francisco International Arts Exhibition*, with David Lusk Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*Works on Paper*, with David Lusk Gallery, The Armory, New York, NY
- 2004 *Domicile: A Sense of Place*, Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle, WA  
*Works on Paper*, with David Lusk Gallery, The Armory, New York, NY
- 2003 *Remains*, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire
- 2002 *Small Works*, Karen Mitchell Frank Gallery, Dallas, TX
- 2001 *Spectrum 2001*, Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, TN  
*The Word in Art: The Use of Text in Contemporary Southern Art*, Swan Coach House Gallery, Atlanta  
*The Price is Right 3*, David Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 2000 *Spectrum 2000*, Hunter Museum of Art, Chattanooga, TN  
*Light and Life*, Levy Gallery, Buckman Performing Arts Center, Memphis, TN
- 1999 *17th Annual September Competition*, Alexandria Museum of Art, Alexandria, LA
- 1999 *Works on Paper at the Armory*, with David Lusk Gallery, New York, NY

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- Memphis College of Art Biennial II*, Memphis College of Art, Memphis, TN  
*42nd Annual Delta Exhibition*, Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR
- 1998 *Art for Art's Sake*, Mermaid Lounge, New Orleans, LA
- 1998 *Biennial Exhibition*, Montgomery Museum of Art, Montgomery, AL  
*Spectrum '98*, Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga, TN  
*LaGrange XX Biennial*, Chatahoochee Valley Art Museum, LaGrange, GA  
*Director's Council Exhibit*, Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN  
*Works on Paper at the Armory*, with David Lusk Gallery, New York, NY
- 1998 *Memphis Arts Council Exhibition*, Memphis College of Art, Memphis, TN  
*Southern Sculpture Conference Exhibition*, Newcomb Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 1997 *1997 Works on Paper*, LSU Union Art Gallery, Baton Rouge, LA  
*Art for Art's Sake Group Sculpture Show*, Mermaid Lounge, New Orleans, LA  
*40th Annual Delta Exhibition*, Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR  
*Memphis College of Art Biennial*, Memphis College of Art, Memphis, TN
- 1996 *Works on Paper*, Ledbetter Lusk Gallery, Memphis, TN  
*39th Annual Delta Exhibition*, Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR  
*Assembled Tales*, Cone 10 Gallery, New Orleans, LA

### PUBLICATIONS

- Memphis: 200 Years Together*, cover art, edited by Karen B. Golightly and Jonathan Judaken, Susan Schadt Press, 2019
- Stucki, Cynthia, *southXeast: Southeastern Contemporary Art Exhibition*, Exhibition Catalog, University Galleries, Florida Atlantic University, March 2018
- Knirnschild, Jacqueline, "Returning to Ruin: Maysey Craddock at the University of Mississippi Museum," *Burnaway*, May 2, 2018
- Baker, Melinda, "Memphis Artist Maysey Craddock captures vanishing coastlines and wetlands," *The Tennessean*, February 11, 2018
- Koepfel, Fredric, "Maysey Craddock and William Christenberry: Permanence and Change," Stellar Catalog, David Lusk Gallery, December 2017
- New American Paintings*, No. 130, Southern Issue, Spring 2017
- Koepfel, Fredric, "2016: Best Art Exhibits in Memphis," *The Commercial Appeal*, December 29, 2016
- Koepfel, Fredric, "Sublime Beauty pervades Maysey Craddock's 'unfolding shores,'" *The Commercial Appeal*, December 6, 2016
- Dykstra, Jean, "In Poetic Works, Maysey Craddock transports Gulf Coast to New York," *Burnaway*, October 1, 2015

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- Koepfel, Fredric, "Maysey Craddock's 'Strand' an earthy yet sublime meditation on transience," *The Commercial Appeal*, December 5, 2014
- Koepfel, Fredric, "2014 In Review: The most vital, transcendent art exhibitions in Memphis," *The Commercial Appeal*, December 23, 2014
- Jones, Michelle, "Artist Weaves 'Strand' from Nashville to Memphis," *The Tennessean*, November 24, 2014
- Kedmy, Karen, "Art on the Edge: In New Works at David Lusk Gallery, Maysey Craddock Explores the Shoreline," *Artsy Editorial*, November 2014
- Shirley, Sara P., "Artist Spotlight: Maysey Craddock," *Fix Magazine*, September – October 2014
- Koepfel, Fredric, "'A Different Kind of Landscape' at Brooks Museum," *The Commercial Appeal*, September 26, 2013
- Pacini, Marina, "A Different Kind of Landscape," Exhibition Catalog, Brooks Museum of Art, August 2013
- Townsend, Eileen, "Lay of the Land," *Memphis Flyer*, September 26, 2013
- Hilder, Casey, "Creative Collective," *Click Magazine*, June 2013
- Forest for the Trees*, Artist Monograph, David Lusk Gallery, December 2012
- Koepfel, Fredric, "Forces of Nature Play Out in Exhibition," *The Commercial Appeal*, December 13, 2012
- MacDevitt, James, "Architectural Deinfocement: Constructing Disaster and Decay," Exhibition Catalog, Cerritos College Art Gallery, Norwalk, CA, September 2012
- The Pinch Journal*, University of Memphis Press, Vol. 32, no. 2, Fall 2012
- Precipitate: Journal of the New Environmental Imagination*, Volume 3, Issue 2, Spring 2012
- "The Oxford American, 100 Under 100 – The New Superstars of Southern Art," *The Visual South* Issue Spring 2012
- Haeusslein, Allie, "Fan Mail: Maysey Craddock," *The Daily Serving*, October 8, 2011
- Koepfel, Fredric, "Artist Depicts Beauty Through Natural Destruction," *The Commercial Appeal*, December 14, 2010
- Rieth, Herb, *Water Rites, Number, an Independent Journal of the Arts*, Volume 58, Winter 2007
- Lisle, Andria, "Evolution of Style, Imagination," *The Commercial Appeal*, December 19, 2008
- Koepfel, Fredric, "The Beauty of Destruction," *The Commercial Appeal*, September 5, 2006
- New American Paintings*, Summer 2005
- Knowles, Carol, "With Bits of Cloth and Clay: Looking at the Edge of Art," *Number, an independent journal of the arts*, Spring 2005
- Koepfel, Fredric, "Craddock emphasizes forlorn impression with 'undercurrent,'" *The Commercial Appeal*, May 28, 2004
- Hicks, Ed, "Home At Last," *The Memphis Business Journal*, May 2004
- The New Orleans Review*, Volume 28, Number 1, 2002, Cover Illustration

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"Southwest Art," *21 Under 31*, September 2000

*CALYX, A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, Vol. 19, no.2, Summer 2000

MacCash, Douglas, "Five Modest Shows Create Rich Total Experience at CAC," *The Times Picayune*, February 2000

Bookhardt, D. Eric, "Of Ant Farms and Sky Charts," *The New Orleans Gambit Weekly*, March 7, 2000

Wall, Donna Dorian, "More Than Words," *Southern Accents*, September–October 1998, Vol.21, No. 5

Leedy, Lorna, "Maysey Craddock's Object-Lesson," *Northlake*, Oct. 1998, Vol.2, Issue 10  
*Commercial Appeal*, "Mixing Styles Like a Pro," May 10, 1997

Moore, Ashley, "Diversity 'On Paper' Strengthens Exhibition," August 10, 1996

Weeden, John, "'Soundings' proffers dialog with the surreal," April 10, 1998  
*New American Paintings*, Number 9, Spring 1997

### COLLECTIONS

Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN

The Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, Arkansas

Music City Center, Nashville, TN

Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN

Charles Hotel, Rocco Forte Hotel Group, Munich, Germany

UT Southwestern Medical School, Dallas, TX

Federal Express, Memphis, TN

First Bank, Nashville, TN

Mercer Capital, Memphis, TN

NexAir, Memphis, TN

Nordstrom's, Nashville, TN

Pfizer Corporation, Memphis, TN

PROMUS Hotel Corporation Headquarters, Las Vegas, NV

SSM Ventures, Memphis, TN

St. Mary's Episcopal School, Memphis, TN

The Assisi Foundation, Memphis, TN

The Hyde Foundation, Memphis, TN

### AWARDS AND HONORS

2015 *Tennessee Artist Fellowship*, Austin Peay State University

2013 *Individual Artist Fellowship Award*, Tennessee Arts Commission

2012 *Artist in Residence*, Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, Schwandorf, Germany

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- Visual Artist Grant – Professional Development Support*, Tennessee Arts Commission  
*Artist in Residence*, St. Mary's School, Memphis, TN
- 2011 *Artist in Residence*, Maine College of Art, Portland, Maine
- 2010 *Artist Residency Award*, Virginia Center for Creative Arts, Mt. San Angelo, VA
- 2004 *Artist's Grant Award*, the Louisiana Division of the Arts
- 1999 *Artist's Grant*, Vermont Studio Center, Sculpture Residency
- 1998 *Artist's Grant*, Vermont Studio Center, Painting Residency
- 1997 *Artist's Grant Award*, the Louisiana Division of the Arts  
*Honorable Mention for Circus Anvil*, 1997 Works on Paper, LSU Union Art Gallery, Baton Rouge, LA  
*Honorable Mention for Field Anvil*, 40th Delta Exhibition, Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR
- 1993 *The Rusty Collier Memorial Award for Excellence in Studio Art*, Newcomb College  
*Class of 1915 Award for Excellence in Studio Art*, Newcomb College

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2020 MFA Studio Advisor, Maine College of Art, Portland, ME
- 2019 Visiting Artist, Juror and Public Lecture, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR
- 2018 Public Lecture in conjunction with solo exhibition, Museum of the University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS
- 2015 Public Lecture, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN  
Professional Practices Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN  
The Art of Being an Artist Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN  
Thinking, Making, Doing Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN
- 2014 Visiting Artist and Public Lecture, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA
- 2013 Visiting Artist and Public Lecture, University of Central Arkansas, Conway, AR  
Public Lecture, Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN  
Visiting Artist, Tulane School of Architecture, New Orleans, LA
- 2012 Found Object Sculpture Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN  
Tiny Sculpture Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN
- 2011 Image and Story Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN  
Miniature Painting Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN
- 2010 Wire Sculpture Workshop, Flicker Street Studio, Memphis, TN

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### **Maysey Craddock**

#### **Artist Statement**

Maysey Craddock has long been fascinated by ruin. The ephemeral quality so richly sewn into her current body of work, began with her childhood interest in searching for fossils at the edge of rivers or uncovering contents of forgotten drawers, always intent on discovering what came before, what once was. Craddock's large-scale gouache paintings reference spaces in similar states; a landscape left to its own devices, crumbling structures, transformation, and natural entropy. Working from photographs, Craddock intricately transfers her imagery onto found materials and carefully builds the surface with layers of paint, eventually revealing the bigger picture. She compares her process to a familiar expression; "There is a chunk of time where I am only seeing the trees, and then towards the end I begin to stand back more, and try to see the forest. It becomes a balance between light and dark, the contrast of tight color and washy strokes, all weaving together until I feel, instinctually, that the painting has achieved the perfect harmony and tension. The built paper and the unbuilt image merge."

Maysey Craddock (b. 1971) has a BA in Sculpture and Anthropology from Tulane University, Newcomb College, New Orleans, LA and an MFA from the Maine College of Art, Portland, ME. She has received numerous honors and awards, including the Louisiana Division of the Arts Artist Grant, Tennessee Arts Commission Visual Artist Grant, Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, Schwandorf, Germany Residency Grant, St. Mary's School, Memphis TN Residence Grant, LSU Union Art Gallery Honorable Mention for Circus Anvil, Arkansas Arts Center Honorable Mention for Field Anvil, as well as the Newcomb College Class of 1915 Award for Excellence in Studio Art and the Rusty Collier Memorial Award for Excellence in Studio Art. Her work is included in numerous permanent collections including: The Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN, Music City Center, Nashville, TN, St. Mary's Episcopal School, The Assisi Foundation, Pfizer Corporation, Federal Express, Nordstrom Inc., First Bank, and The Arkansas Art Center, Little Rock, AR.





## UM Museum Opens 'Ruin is a Secret Oasis' Exhibit: Artist Maysey Craddock draws inspiration from structures throughout the South

By Christina Steube

The University of Mississippi Museum

April 13, 2018

A new exhibit featuring artist-transformed images of ruined structures throughout the South is open at the University of Mississippi Museum.

"Ruin is a Secret Oasis," by artist Maysey Craddock, references images of objects and places throughout the region. Craddock said she is drawn to mysterious traces of memories, and her pieces seek the sense of place inspired by these sites and work to reflect a story of change.

"I believe ruin, in the sense that it is a place and moment where the traces of human action are falling into the inevitable, is a constant progress that is nature," Craddock said. "There is a lineage of this in art history and the idea that ruin presents a space for contemplation and collapses time.

"It is, to me, stillness, haunted, history, memory, nature, reclamation, collapse, re-forming, ghost, possibility. In ruin, I find an oasis, a world within our world that is a hush of layers of time and experience."

Craddock's work uses opaque pigments in water that are thickened with a binding substance, known as gouache. These intricate works, based on her own photographs of ruined structures near Memphis, Oxford and the Gulf Coast, allow her to explore the fleeting and transitory nature of each landscape.

"In the studio, the photographs are a way for me to continue to be intimate with the landscape, to dive into the wild spaces, find the magic of small moments or openings in the vegetation," she said. "When I translate the images into drawing, I am re-forming the image to my own hand, distancing it from the photograph and therefore from any kind of literal recording of the original scene."

The photograph is just a starting point for Craddock, as she also takes time to think about the hues and atmosphere during her physical experience at the site. A line drawing is made from each

photograph and then transferred via carbon paper onto a handmade substrate of sewn-together paper bags.

“The use of found paper provides a terrain for the image, retains an object-ness that underscores the image itself,” she said. “In a way, this constructing of the material from found or discarded fragments mirrors the content of the work.

“I paint ruins, on materials that are pieced together from other tiny ruins.

Craddock said one of the most satisfying experiences she has as an artist is when someone sees something out in his or her daily experience in a different way, which in turn affects the way he or she encounters the natural world.

“They would not have noticed it in such a thoughtful way before, but something about seeing my work went with them out into the world, and they slowed down and paid attention to something that was invisible before,” she said. “My work does the same thing for me. It teaches me to be observant, to be awake and aware when I am moving through the world.

“I think the best art continues on with the viewer afterwards. It re-contextualizes how we experience what we see, literally broadening our horizons.”

Craddock earned degrees from Tulane University and the Maine College of Art, and most of her time is divided between two studios – one in Memphis, Tennessee and one on the Alabama Gulf Coast. Her work has been exhibited across the United States and in Germany and is featured in permanent collections at the Brooks Museum of Art in Memphis and the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock.

Besides artwork, Craddock has worked with other artists and the regional nonprofit grant organization ArtsMemphis to create its inaugural program of grants for individual artists.

“The University of Mississippi Museum is exceptionally honored to be exhibiting the work of Memphis artist Maysey Craddock, a painter we have long admired and whose works in the show ‘Ruin is a Secret Oasis’ have a particularly compelling and evocative power,” said Robert Saarnio, museum director.

“Ms. Craddock has assembled for this show a group of paintings dealing with the idea of architectural ruins and their reclamation in the landscape. She is an artist of great skill, unique creative process and extraordinary conceptual depth – bringing works here to Oxford that we are certain our audiences will find fascinating to view and reflect upon.”

# Wall Street International

## Maysey Craddock, Riverine

*Wall Street International* Art Section

September 14, 2017

As politicians and pundits debate the virtues and vices of securing national borders, the works in Maysey Craddock's fourth New York solo exhibition consider instead the fragility of less contrived boundaries—the wild natural shores between land and sea. Coastlines, rivers, and deltas, shaped and reshaped by the sea, by storms, and by humankind, are the abstracted subject and conceptual ballast of Craddock's recent works. In these paintings, delicately traced tree limbs and ragged alluvial trailings overspread pieced paper surfaces stitched together with silk thread. As the national conversation on border security devolves into the simplistic rigidity epitomized by “the wall,” Craddock offers instead a view of natural borders as radically provisional and delicate—spaces alive with ceaseless adaptation and regeneration.

Craddock's 2017 painting *The Book of Sand* is titled for the Jorge Luis Borges short story about a mystical book that perpetually rewrites itself. In Craddock's work, a white tree line painted in gouache divides the painting diagonally into thirds, the slender branches splintering into a deep blue sky above and dissolving into golden waters below. The trees and lapping tides filter in and out of legibility in the abstracted scene—a shoreline in perpetual flux—echoing Borges' conceit of ceaseless rewriting.

Based in Memphis and on the Alabama Gulf Coast, Craddock engineers works that trace the edges she finds in nature as they flicker between resilience and vulnerability. As the artist writes, “We think of land as solid and immutable, heavy and dense with proscribed edges and borders (geological, political, cultural, personal), but it shifts as drastically and permanently as anything in our natural world. Coastlines are especially vulnerable to change [...]. We shore up, close in, confine and try to tame this ribbon of tenuous border between land and sea, and any remaining patches of wild and verdant coast diminish steadily.”

Craddock's creative process rhymes with the concept of making—and-unmaking in her work. She photographs riverbanks and shorelines before fracturing the photos into abstracted motifs she adapts into her paintings. She presses brown paper bags, de-acidifies them, and stitches them together with silk thread, eventually painting over them with gouache—the matte, densely-pigmented water-based medium she has long preferred. Craddock calls her stitched paper surfaces “palimpsests” for the way their history as throwaway surfaces remains part of their physicality, even as they become grounds for new creations. Craddock's process disintegrates form only to recreate it, like waters erode the shore they rebuild—a living boundary suited to the complex currents of our time.

## Southern Artist Spotlight: Maysey Craddock

by Anna Marchetti

*StyleBlueprint*

April 13, 2015

Broken branches, scrapped wood, tangled wires and knotted roots—these are the forms that speak to Memphis artist Maysey Craddock. Having spent the majority of her adolescence on the Alabama Gulf Coast and in New Orleans, Maysey developed a reverence for places where the land meets the sea. From an early age, she began documenting this type of landscape, keeping countless sketches that loosely outlined the marshy horizon. Beautiful, but also frightening and complex, these habitats appeared to Maysey to be a point of both life and destruction.

Maysey attended Tulane University in New Orleans, where she studied sculpture and anthropology. Rivers and swampy landscapes continued to be of particular interest to her at this time. After Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana in 2005, these subjects became even more of a focus, driving Maysey to collect hundreds of images of abandoned homes and dilapidated buildings. Her method of gathering data is layered, and so, too, is her process of completing a painting. After carefully patching together pieces of found paper bags with thread, she then delicately applies gouache, a thin, water-based paint. As Maysey paints and draws, she references the photographs she has taken, but does not adhere to them strictly, allowing a complex and often abstract network of marks to unfurl.

Sourced from collected photographs and created in part from found objects, Maysey's paintings and sculptures possess an inherent material connection to the land that inspired them. With wrinkles left unpressed and edges left unrefined, Maysey's work appears precarious, capable of being washed or blown away from our grasp. Her paintings do not depict a specific place, but rather illustrate environments that seem altogether familiar and strange. She has constructed settings that are ephemeral and transient, providing us only a fading impression of a place we cannot locate.

As Maysey's paintings have evolved over the past several years, architectural elements have fallen out of focus. Her newest work heavily emphasizes symmetry, often as a line of trees mirrored in what appears to be a river beneath. Sometimes her compositions are more abstract, culminating in a complex system of lines that bend and wind across the page like gnarled twigs. Several of her paintings seem to reference a topographical view of a coast or river. But again, the forms have been manipulated just enough to thwart our sense of groundedness.

Maysey's newest paintings literally reference reflection, but more importantly, they allude to a metaphorical space of contemplation. She situates us between land and sea; between body and spirit; between here and there. We are encouraged to let our imagination wander through these landscapes and get lost. By framing these ephemeral places, Maysey has asked us to engage the land, to witness its beauty and to acknowledge its pervasive depth. Gazing into these liminal territories, we begin to wonder, "Where do I stand?"

# BURNAWAY

The Voice of Art in the South

## In Poetic Works, Maysey Craddock Transports Gulf Coast to New York

By Jean Dykstra

*Burnaway*

October 1, 2015

Maysey Craddock took the title of her show, “Langsam Sea,” from a poem by Anne Michaels, which reads, in part: “In time, night after night, we’ll begin to dream of a langsam sea, waves in slow motion, thickening to sand.” A German term, often used in musical notation to direct the musicians to play slowly, “langsam” also describes the gradual but inexorable pace of change along the Gulf coastline.

Craddock is from Memphis and New Orleans, and spends time in Perdido Bay, Alabama, where her family has visited for generations. Her atmospheric paintings are based on photographs she took of the dense, tangled vegetation along the water in Perdido Bay. The coast was hard hit by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, not to mention the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010, and these events are a kind of undercurrent in this exhibition. The gouaches—watery scenes of trees or a welter of roots and branches in muted tans, golds, blues, and sometimes black and white—are painted on pressed brown paper bags that Craddock stitches together with silk thread. The bags give the paintings a sculptural, tactile feel—the blue company logo is visible, the edges are ragged and serrated, the paper is wrinkled, the canvases are unevenly shaped.

Craddock is influenced by the practices of self-taught artists like Bill Traylor, who drew on pieces of cardboard, and she gently exploits the contrast between the everyday, lowbrow material of the paper bags and the delicate skein of branches and waterways that she paints. Her images are impressionistic, summoning the idea of reflection, literally and figuratively. *Quiet in the dusk*, 2015, and *Saltlines*, 2015, the former black gouache on paper, the latter white gouache on paper, are Rorschach-like shapes in which each side is a mirror image of the other. In *slipping through a coral sea*, 2015, we seem to be gazing down through glimmers of light on the surface of the water to the roots underneath. The paintings’ delicacy contrasts with the durability and ordinariness of the paper-bag canvases, a fitting way to conceptualize the landscape of the Gulf Coast—equal parts robust and fragile.