

Bartley and New Acquisitions Featured at Guild Hall

By Mark Segal | October 25, 2014



"Diebenkorn Blues" from Mary Ellen Bartley's series "Blue Books" is on view at Guild Hall beginning Saturday. Mary Ellen Bartley, Guild Hall photos

Guild Hall will present two new exhibitions, "Mary Ellen Bartley: Leaning Above the Page" and "New Additions to the Guild Hall Museum Permanent Collection, 2010-2014," from Saturday through Jan. 4. An opening reception will be held Saturday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Bartley, who lives and works in Wainscott, will show 19 photographic works selected from five ongoing series: "Paperbacks," "Standing Open," "Blue Books," "Sea Change," and "Push 2 Stops." Marked by a minimalist aesthetic, her work investigates the overlapping of abstraction and representation in straightforward still lifes that use books, photographs, and light as subjects.

"Books have become my muse," said the artist. "I've used them in several different series, each time finding new qualities to highlight and explore." The "Paperbacks" series focuses on paperback books, stacked vertically or aligned horizontally, with only the page edges visible. Ms. Bartley acknowledges that the soft light and muted palette of this series are in part an homage to Morandi's still lifes of bottles.

In "Standing Open," the books are deployed horizontally, page edges facing the viewer, but in many photographs some of them are partially open, so that fragments of image or text are visible. Books with blue

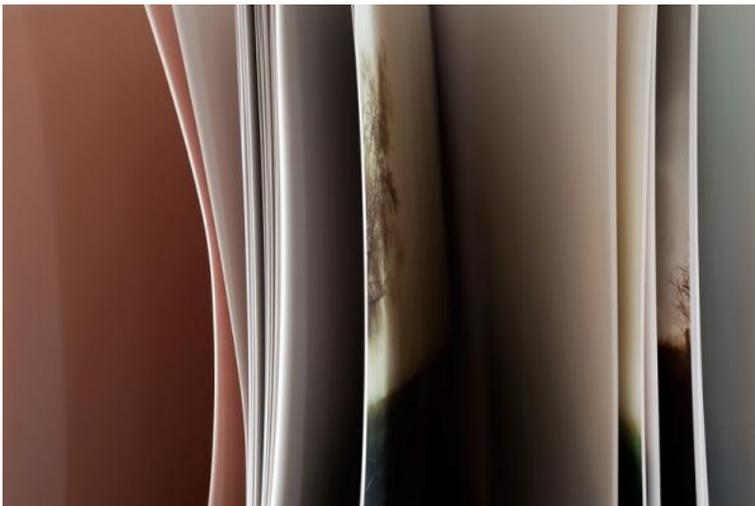
covers figure in the “Blue Books” series, but here they are often positioned in depth, in varying configurations, so that some components are out of focus.

For “Sea Change,” Ms. Bartley re-photographed images taken on her daily walks to the beach, while in “Push 2 Stops” she photographed vacant transparency sleeves from her 20 years of commercial studio work. In each series she sets tight parameters, within which she works variations of color, texture, and form. Ms. Bartley will give a gallery talk on Nov. 1 at 2 p.m.

Fifty works from Guild Hall’s permanent collection, including new acquisitions, reflect the museum’s mission to collect work by artists with ties to the East End. On view will be paintings, sculpture, photography, prints, and mixed media, purchased with the support of Guild Hall’s Collectors Circle.

Among the 50 artists represented in the exhibition are Jennifer Bartlett, Jack Ceglic, Chuck Close, Robert Dash, Raphael Ferrer, Eric Fischl, April Gornik, Mary Heilmann, Bryan Hunt, Joe Pintauro, David Salle, **Drew Shiflett**, and Frank Wimberley.

Christina Strassfield, the museum’s chief curator, will lead a tour of the exhibition on Dec. 6 at 3 p.m.



"A Road Divided" from the series "Standing Open"

"Three Plus a Half" from the new series "Push 2 Stops"

About the Author

[Mark Segal](#)

Arts Assistant/Reporter