

NEWS RELEASE

BRUNO DAVID GALLERY
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EXHIBITIONS FOR MARCH | APRIL 2026

March 6 – April 11, 2026
Reception: Friday, March 6, 2026
6 - 8 pm

JILL DOWNEN
Emplacement

JUDITH SHAW
Off the Wall

JACOB BLICKENSTAFF
Show of Hands

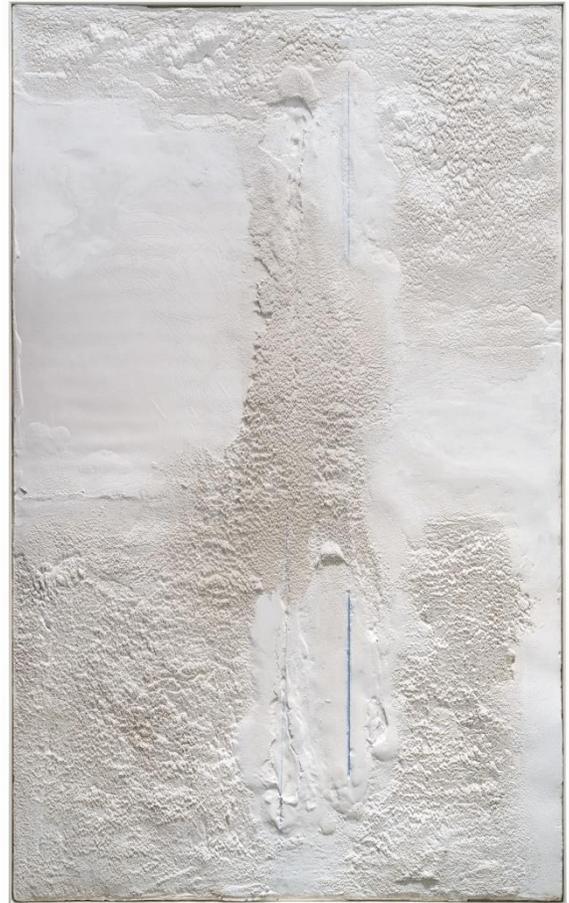
WILLIAM MORRIS
Compendium
New Media Room

Bruno David Gallery is excited to present four solo exhibitions: new large drawings by **Jill Downen** photographs by **Jacob Blickenstaff**, a new series of layered paint fragments by **Judith Shaw**, and a new video-work by **William Morris**. These exhibitions underscore the vibrant and diverse contemporary art scene in St. Louis and beyond.

Bruno David Gallery is pleased to announce *Emplacement*, an exhibition of 3 new large drawings by Kansas City-based Artist **Jill Downen**. This is Downen's seventh solo exhibition at Bruno David Gallery. In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work featuring an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

About the *Emplacement* exhibition, Jill Downen states: "Drawing is the first form of expressivity, before verbal acquisition, to reach out and touch a surface in a way that leaves a mark. Drawing is the main artery that runs through my life's work: the immediacy of thought, to make sensations and ideas visible. Drawing with plaster fits my sensibilities and physicality. After years of drawing with plaster on various grounds, including paper, I arrived at the conclusion that the plaster needed an architectural substrate. Wood lath brings the skeletal support and conceptual framework in a unified form. These materials allow me to erase with chisels and grinders, building up the surface and then taking it back down to the bones cyclically until the piece is resolved."

Jill Downen is an artist who works in sculpture, installation, and drawing. A critical event in their formative years, a lightning strike to the family home, imprinted a heightened awareness of the body, architecture, and temporality that would, in time, inform the core of their artistic practice. Their most recent work, a body of drawings made with plaster on plaster grounds, evolved from previous installations to embrace the potential of an empty wall as a site for contemplation. "My artwork makes a place for silence, subtlety, and sensitivity to perceptions. When one wonders, "Where am I?" symbolically or philosophically, my work offers a respite before returning to the speed of life with measured focus.



Jill Downen is the recipient of numerous awards including the *John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship*, the *Stone and DeGuire Contemporary Art Award*, the *Charlotte Street Foundation Visual Artists Award*, and a *Santo Foundation Grant*. Jill Downen has created installations at *The Momentary/Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art*, *Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis*, *The Oklahoma City Museum of Art*, and for *Open Spaces: The Exhibition*. Their residencies include the *MacDowell Colony National Endowment for the Arts residency*, and *Cité Internationale des Arts residency in Paris*, *MASS MoCA*, and *Art Omi*, among others. Their art has been reviewed in publications including *Whitehot*, *INES Magazine*, *Art in America*, *Sculpture Magazine*, *Art Papers*, *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *The New York Times* and *Bad at Sports*. They hold a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA from the Sam Fox School at Washington University in St. Louis. Jill Downen is the chair of sculpture at the Kansas City Art Institute.

Image: Jill Downen. *Emplacement*, 2018-2025. Plaster and pigment on lath, 72 x 48 inches (183 x 122 cm), framed. Learn more about the artist at <https://www.brunodavidgallery.com/artists/jill-downen>

Bruno David is pleased to present *Show of Hands*, an exhibition by New York-based photographer/musician and St. Louis native **Jacob Blickenstaff**. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery. In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work featuring an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

Show of Hands offers a new perspective on the emotional, spiritual and physiological transmission of music through the hands of remarkable musicians. The emphasis in most contemporary music photography is often on full-body, "peak moment" gestures and the effortful contortions that speak more to fandom than understanding of the music. But on closer inspection, hands are just as active, if not more-so, in the transmission of music from the creative inner-soul



into the instrument and through to the listener. The miraculous dexterity and fine-tuned athleticism involved with playing a guitar, bass, piano—or even a vocalist using their hands to make subtle changes in the position of a microphone or to gesture to the audience—shape our connection to the artist and their music. Hands can also express compassion, excitement, and an effort of an artist to give themselves to the audience. By focusing on the hands, I've discovered that every artist has unique gestures and mannerisms that provide subtle clues to their inner-identity. With *Show of Hands*, I hope to reorient our connection to music and to the artist. The hands that appear in this show are all connected to gifted and influential musicians including Joan Baez, Linda Ronstadt, Blake Mills, Pino Palladino and Daniel Lanois among others."

Blickenstaff (b. 1979) grew up in St. Louis and moved to New York in 1997 initially to pursue a career in music but transitioned into photography, where he (unsurprisingly) gravitated back towards music as a central point of interest and inspiration. He's contributed images to over 50 album projects including notable covers for Natalie Merchant, Makaya McCraven, Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings, The Cactus Blossoms, Joe Jackson and John Pizzarelli. In the 2010s, he photographed numerous culture assignments for *The New York Times*, visually complimenting the writing of leading cultural critics. His photo essays have been published in *The New York Times*, *NPR*, *Rolling Stone* and *Mother Jones*, and in 2009 the Stax Museum of American Soul Music presented a solo exhibition *Still Life In Soul* that explored the culture and history of soul music. He is currently working on a book that surveys his seven years of intimate documentary images of soul singer Sharon Jones.

In 2024, Jacob launched [*That Million Dollar Bash*](#), an intimate photo essay-driven Substack that chronicles his encounters with a broad spectrum of today's musical luminaries. He lives in Brooklyn Heights with his wife, June, and maintains a photo studio in the Vinegar Hill neighborhood.

Image: Jacob Blickenstaff. *Big Ears*, 2025. Learn more about the artist at <https://www.brunodavidgallery.com/artists/jacob-blickenstaff>

Bruno David is pleased to present *Off the Wall* by New York–born, St. Louis–based multimedia artist **Judith Shaw**. This marks Shaw’s second exhibition with the gallery. In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artists’ work, featuring an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

Off the Wall is built from layered paint fragments collected from the flood wall in downtown St. Louis during Paint Louis, the city’s annual graffiti mural event. Each year, as artists prepare their assigned sections, many scrape away encrusted layers of paint left behind from prior iterations. These discarded remnants—compressed histories of gesture, color, and narrative—become the primary material of Shaw’s work.

Shaw was drawn to the fragments scattered across the ground, their surfaces distorted by heat and sun. Misshapen yet resilient, fragile yet dense, the pieces carry visible traces of accumulated energy and emotion. Gritty and grimy, some embedded with stones and debris, they reveal unexpected moments of raw beauty and organic simplicity. Their layered skins function as both record and residue—evidence of cycles of creation, erasure, and renewal.

As in much of her practice, Shaw gathers what speaks to her intuitively and brings it into the studio, where she looks, waits, and experiments—allowing the material to guide its own becoming. Collected over several years of the Paint Louis event, these paint fragments embody impermanence while resisting disappearance. Once reconfigured, they shift from detritus to form, inhabiting a space between sculpture and painting, artifact and abstraction.

Collectively, the pieces blur the boundary between art and life, challenging traditional notions of what constitutes fine art, as introduced by the Arte Povera movement in Italy in the 1960s.

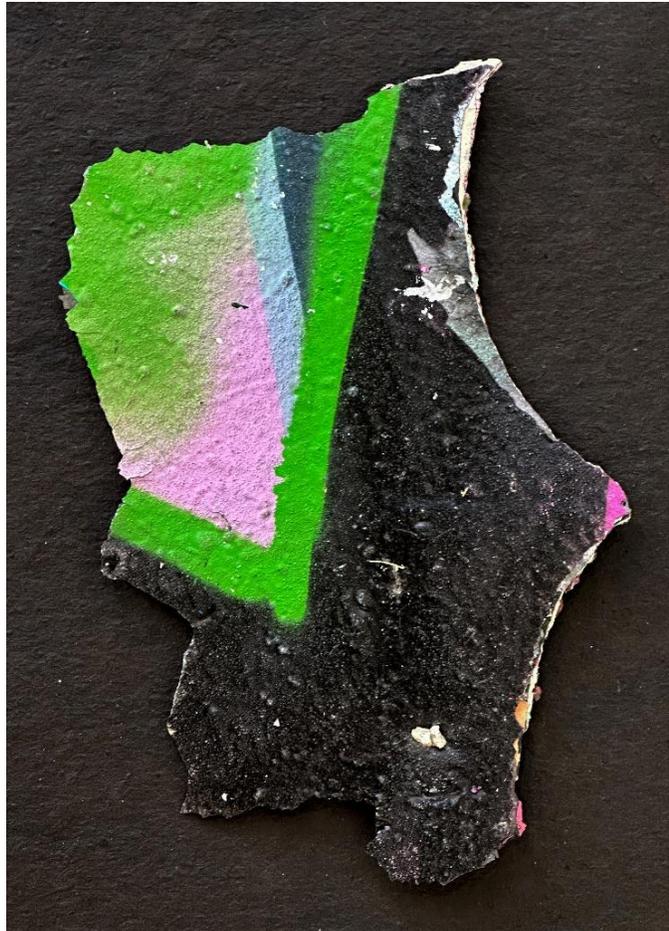


Image: Judith Shaw. *Off The Wall (4)*, 2025, salvaged paint fragment, 10 x 8 inches. Learn more about the artist at <https://www.brunodavidgallery.com/artists/judith-shaw>

Bruno David presents *Compendium*, a video work by St. Louis-based artist **William Morris**. This is artist's seventh solo exhibition with the gallery.

Compendium is a survey of twenty-five videos representing nearly forty years of the artist's work—broad in scope, yet singular in focus—completed works from the period 1988-2025.



Compendium is anti-didactic. In it, emotion seeks inquiry. Lo-fi experimentation is evident throughout, relating to the artist's earliest forays into the medium. Through a scattering of images, a kind of cohesion emerges. Themes concerning media, identity, politics and quality of life are central. Music selection for each work is equally important. These elements combine to create a visceral response in the viewer.

William Morris lives and works in St. Louis, Missouri. He received a M.F.A. in Video Art at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a B.F.A. from Sam Fox School of Arts, Washington University in St. Louis.

Image: William Morris. *Compendium*, 2025 (screen shot). Learn more about the artist at <https://www.brunodavidgallery.com/artists/william-morris>

Jill Downen, Jacob Blickenstaff, Judith Shaw, William Morris and Bruno L. David are available for interviews. For images and additional information, please contact Cleo Kelly at info@brunodavidgallery.com

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Bruno David Gallery

Public Hours: Wednesday - Friday 12 – 6 pm, Saturday 11-4 pm, and by appointment

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ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Bruno David Gallery is a leading venue for contemporary art and alternative visual culture. Established in 1984 in NYC and in St. Louis in 2005, Bruno David represents some of the most innovative artists practicing in Saint Louis, along with artists of international reputation.

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