

Eleanor Harwood Gallery presents:
Carissa Potter
Making Being Here Enough



Exhibit & Event Dates:

July 24th, 2020, 11am, Google Meet Reception with tea and music

July 21st Panel Discussion: Longing for Places We Cannot Be, panel discussion with Eleanor Harwood Gallery, Carissa Potter, Andy Rappaport of Minnesota Street Project, and Josh Keller of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson Architecture firm

August virtual gallery walk-throughs to be scheduled

Go ahead, take in the gentle comfort of morning time. That stillness and silence, or perhaps the rhythm of trains passing or a birdsong.

My body is standing firmly in the kitchen with my mind laying in a field of California poppies.

Laying here, alone with you in my mind, our bodies intertwine, your fingers circle the contours of my earlobe, while you whisper, "We were meant together, however that might be." - Carissa Potter

July 20th, 2020 (San Francisco, CA) — Eleanor Harwood Gallery is pleased to present *Making Being Here Enough*, our first solo show with Carissa Potter.

"Making Being Here Enough" is the title of the show. For Carissa Potter, the title is about being in our homes, sheltered in place, about our limited experience "being enough". Carissa's fan base -- she has many followers on Instagram and has published two books with Chronicle Press -- will recognize her graphic clarity and heartfelt openness tinged with longing and loss. The exhibit is also about entering into the virtual space and engaging with the artist, various panelists and curators about these experiences being "enough" as we attend her virtual events scheduled throughout the run of the show. As we save each other's lives by staying where we are, let's make "being here enough".

This show materialized out of a need during the Covid-19 pandemic. Potter created a series of paintings intended for her first solo show in the gallery. As the pandemic intensified, she changed course and designed a virtual exhibit with an exact rendering of the gallery made possible by the architectural team at Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, the firm best known for designing Apple stores around the world. In the mirror-site of the gallery, Carissa populated the virtual space with plinths, wallpaper, and wall-paintings that only exist rendered in 3D and in Carissa's imaginings. Why not paint smiling suns all over the HVAC pipes? Why not add murals? Why not? It's not there. But it is there. It is so wonderfully there. We can be in multiple spaces at one time, and eschew binary ideas of place.

The virtual replication of the gallery somehow heightens the poignancy of works about touch, connection and longing. Wide, curving brushstrokes describe women hugging; vases, plant pots and pendant lights; blooming flowers, hanging plants and undulating leaves that interrupt the dullness of and distance of our screens with flashes of domestic intimacy. We are in the moments that have spread to months of global loneliness and separation. We are all manifesting some version of anxiety. The wide brush strokes feel solid, sure and comforting,.

Potter's committed, forceful, strong lines are like a weighted blanket, softening our doubts and anxiety with their clear, intentional comfort.

These works were made during a huge transition in Potter's life. She has recently become a mother to a child who needs extra care. Many of her works in previous shows felt like they were asking questions and perhaps offering comfort but also asking for comfort. These paintings are made by a woman who has learned how to comfort herself. There's a reason the arms are so large and hugs are so pervasive. Sometimes we are asked to do more than we think we are capable of, or have the strength to face. More often than not, we seem able to summon the strength to meet the challenge. The scale of the bodies describe an outsized ability to care. Carissa has grown exponentially in her ability to mother and comfort. She has a huge heart and she is offering a gift for all of us. This series of paintings and the virtual exhibit extend outward to our sheltering places.

These works were produced at a time of profound upheaval and challenge for the artist. Carissa is not the same painter and, after months of social isolation, social upheaval, health and economic crises and hundreds of thousands dead, neither are we.

Potter's exhibit title comes from Roni Horn's writing:

"I don't want to read. I don't want to write. I don't want to do anything but be here. Doing something will take me away from being here. I want to make being here enough. Maybe it's already enough. I won't have to invent enough. I'll be here and I won't do anything and this place will be here, but I won't do anything to it. I'll just let it be here. And maybe because I'm here and because the me in what's here makes what's here different, maybe that will be enough, maybe that will be what I'm after. But I'm not sure. I'm not sure I'll be able to perceive the difference. How will I perceive it? I need to find a way to make myself absolutely not here but still be able to be here to know the difference. I need to experience the difference between being here and not changing here, and being here and changing here..." - Roni Horn

About the Artist

Carissa Potter lives and works in Oakland, California. Her prints and small-scale objects reflect her hopeless romanticism through their investigations into public and private intimacy. Speaking both humorously and poignantly to the human condition, Carissa's work touches chords we all can relate to - exploring situations we've all experienced at some point in our lives and conveying messages we simply long to hear. Carissa received her MFA in Printmaking from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2010.

[Carissa Potter](#) is an artist who lives and works in Oakland, California. She received her MFA in Printmaking from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2010, is a founding member of [Colpa Press](#),

and is the founder of People I've Loved. Carissa has worked with the ICA in Boston, BAM/PFA, SFMOMA, and the De Young Museum, to name a few, and has also served as a mentor in Southern Exposure's One-on-One Mentorship Program. I like you, I love you, Carissa's first book, was published with Chronicle Books in 2015, and her second book, It's Ok to Feel Things Deeply, was published in 2018. Currently, Carissa is working on If You Were Here Now, a project presenting guided videos by artists that can help people navigate life during the COVID-19 pandemic.

About Eleanor Harwood Gallery

The Eleanor Harwood Gallery opened September 2006. The programming of the gallery focuses on emerging to mid-career artists exhibiting nationally and internationally. The roster includes artists that are represented in major American and European collections. The gallery actively promotes and encourages career growth for represented artists.

Location:

1275 Minnesota Street, Suite 206
San Francisco, CA 94107

Hours:

by appointment

Contact:

(p) 415.867.7770

(e) eleanor@eleanorharwood.com