

Contact: Annie Wildey  
AiR Studio Gallery 19-B Railroad Avenue  
Phone: (646) 325 7530 Westerly, RI 02891  
Email: hello@anniewildey.com Anniewildey.com/air



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – AiR Studio Gallery, Westerly, RI**

**‘AiR Holiday Show’ Opening November 3, 2023. AiR's 9th Exhibition**

We enter the holiday season with a group show that welcomes two new artists to AiR. Theresa Girard and Sarah Short are exhibiting alongside regulars, Margit Burmeister, Diana Sartor, Tracy Stilwell, Shari Weschler, Annie Wildey and Michael Fanelli. The show is curated to reveal connections or contrasts that excite the eye.

‘Mellow with Yellow,’ one of several pieces by Sarah Short is a mixed media work of discarded book parts reimaged as a collage rich in textural layers. It pairs well with the abstract quality and color palette of ‘Remnant’ and ‘Hole with 2 wires’ two of Michael Fanelli’s photographs.

Sarah is a mixed-media collage artist from the woods of Rhode Island. Her background as an English teacher explains her love of books, which are the primary material for her collages. Her process begins by printing with wooden type on pages rescued from discarded books, using her Nolan Proof Press used for letterpress printing. The prints are then abstracted in collage compositions to make the original letter forms unrecognizable. Her interest lies in the shapes and negative space created with typography.

With recycled wood, vintage typography, combined with a little color, Margit Burmeister’s creative eye for assemblage results in two new sophisticated and compelling wall sculptures ‘\$5 Hats’ and ‘Caswell.’ They are shown alongside Sarah Short’s ‘Under the Trees I & II’ collages – creating a harmony of vintage design, and color but a contrast in scale and form.

Two new abstract paintings from Theresa Girard, fill the main gallery with light. Compliment and contrast are provided with two seascapes, a painting by Annie Wildey and a photograph on aluminum by Michael Fanelli.

Speaking about her process, Theresa explains she isn’t looking to reveal or conceal, to clarify or dissolve, she is searching for a presence of paint and a conflict in color, bold or perhaps subdued. “It takes time to search and allow the painting to dominate the interaction. Quiet frustration seeks a need to describe a moment, a feeling”. In the diptych on view, pale cool blues, and fresh playful marks, may evoke summer or winter vibes, it depends on the viewers perspective, what we can be sure of is the beauty of the pair. A native of Providence RI, Theresa is an accomplished painter, educator, and supporter of women artists.

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The exhibition is rounded out with pieces by Diana Sartor, Shari Weschler, Jack Ramsdell and Tracy Stillwell. Offering high notes and pauses of intense color and figuration. The range of styles, medium and scale of artwork on view, provide the viewer with plenty of opportunity to give the gift of art this season.

**'AiR Holiday Show' runs from November 3 – December 24, with an opening reception on Friday November 3 5-8pm. hours are Thursday – Sunday 1-6pm or by appointment.**

**First Friday Westerly Art Crawl: <https://www.anniewildey.com/westerlyartcrawlmap.html#/>**

### **About Air Studio Gallery - Creating & Curating Contemporary Art for the Community**

Opened in Dec 2023, AiR brings something fresh to the arts community in Westerly, blurring the line between gallery, studio, and something altogether new. AiR, an abbreviation of artists-in-residence, gives a peek into what owners Annie Wildey and Michael Fanelli are aiming to do with the venue. With three rooms and an abundance of space, visitors will find exhibitions that brings together artwork in surprising and inventive ways. Watch this space!