

PRESS RELEASE

Flotsam and Jetsam

July 19 – August 30, 2025



Diana Taylor, *As Idle as a Painted Ship*, 2024

DON'T LOOK Projects, in association with SLQS Gallery, is pleased to present *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Diana Taylor's first solo exhibition in the US. At a moment when all images are flowing into an AI algorithm, the canons of painting, photography, and film are converging into an undifferentiated field of digital "slop". Diana Taylor's practice makes legible the imminent threat of cultural blindness by splicing together different forms of visual grammar into a state of alluring aporia. Layering the graphical matrix of Gustave Doré's woodblock prints for Dante's *Divine Comedy* together with a surfeit of other patterns over a pixel grid, the artist's works for *Flotsam and Jetsam* make legible the collapse of analog and digital organizing principles that AI obscures.

This is painting as gerund: a process of ceaseless resolution and obfuscation that highlights the blind spots in a world of superabundant imagery. By deploying pattern as visual friction, Taylor slows the gaze over her chosen source materials—from astrological inquiries in medieval prints to the sample books of William Morris—juxtaposing different idioms in order to isolate the moments when meaning breaks down, and where history is rewritten.

Like a number of contemporary artists coming to terms with a state of postdigital experience, where all sense perception is preloaded with digital artifacts, Taylor's hybrid approach confronts a reality where more images are produced by machines for machines than any other. As art enters its nonhuman age, the artist is fortifying painting against datafication and easy prompting, preserving painting as a strict domain of the human.

For *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Taylor used selected details of the choppy sea, rolling waves, and billowing mast from illustrations by Doré, for Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, written in 1797-1798 and illustrated in 1875. The traditional woodblock, carved by hand in the late 19th century, was reproduced in the 1970s for Dover Publications before being scanned, cropped, resized, and repeatedly screen-printed onto canvas. Cut-outs from nature reference books intersect grids as well as the craftwork of crochet tablecloths, beadwork patterns, and other printed ephemera from the artist's own archive. Themes of nature and culture, craft and technology, traditional and digital media, old and new are collapsed to highlight interconnections and uncouple apparent binaries. Decisions in the painting process are also reversed and

“unpainted,” swinging between yes and no, fast and slow. The marine theme was significant to the time Taylor herself spent by the ocean during her residency at 18th St Arts Center, Santa Monica, where these works were produced.

Taylor is a recipient of the Andrew. W Mellon Fellowship at the Huntington, which she is undertaking in July and August 2025. Last year Taylor was an artist in residence at 18th St. Arts Centre, Santa Monica, from September to December 2024. She completed a practice-based PhD with the William Morris Gallery, London, through Sheffield Hallam University, 2023. Taylor graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, London with an M.F.A in Painting, in 2010.

Recent solo shows include *Borrowed Time*, Bobinska Brownlee, London (2024); *A Ghost for Today*, William Morris Gallery, London (2022); *Phantom Yarns*, Artseen Contemporary, Nicosia, Cyprus (2021) and Cyprus High Commission Gallery, London (2022); *Can we Hold on?*, CCA, Mallorca (2018-2019).

Recent, selected, group shows include *A Landscape of Chance*, SLQS Gallery, London (2024); *Stable*, Bobinska Brownlee New River (2023-2024); *A Painting Show*, Benjamin Parsons Gallery, Oxford; *Montage*, Fabrik, Baterswil, Switzerland.

Residencies include 18th St Arts Centre, L.A. (September-December 2024); CCA Andratx, Mallorca (April and September 2018); Factory floor residency, in response to ‘Love is Enough’, William Morris & Andy Warhol, curated by Jeremy Deller, Modern Art Oxford (2015); CCA Andratx, Mallorca (2012); East London Printmakers (2011); Abbey Scholarship in Painting, British School at Rome & Rosa Lee Travel Award (2011); Graduate Printmaking Prize Winner, Jealous Print Studios (2010).

Diana Taylor (b. UK, 1977) lives and works in London.

- Alex Estorick with Diana Taylor

DON'T LOOK Projects is a contemporary art gallery in Los Angeles, CA. SLQS Gallery is a contemporary art gallery in London (UK).

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