

Eddie Martinez and Sam Moyer Bring Their Work Together Out East

The married artists have two joint shows on view out east, at the South Etna Montauk Foundation and Landcraft Garden on the North Fork.

By **KRISTEN TAUER**  JULY 8, 2022, 4:30PM



Sam Moyer and Eddie Martinez COURTESY OF SOUTH ETNA MONTAUK FOUNDATION

“It’s pretty rare for two artists to succeed in a relationship together,” says Sam Moyer, in the front seat of her car alongside husband Eddie Martinez on a recent summer morning. The two artists have just dropped their young son off at camp and are sitting side-by-side to discuss their joint show at the South Etna Foundation in Montauk, where they were soon headed for the recent holiday weekend.

The pair have welcomed two dual exhibitions out east: in addition to South Etna, which opened the first weekend of July, a sculpture show at Landcraft Garden in Mattituck, curated by Ugo Rondinone, opened in June. “It’s serendipity that they were the same summer,” says Moyer. “We were laughing about it, that we were gonna have the North Fork and the South Fork covered this summer.”

South Etna marks the third joint exhibition for the married pair. Their first collaborative gallery show, “Arthur,” named for their son, opened in late March 2020 in San Francisco right as the city went into lockdown. “We never got to see it, but the images are cool,” says Moyer.

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Their newest exhibition pairs work from Moyer's geometric stone painting series alongside Martinez's paper-pulp paintings, which he produced in residency at papermaking studio Dieu-Donné in Brooklyn. Two Backgammon sets created by Moyer are situated on the gallery floor, reflecting qualities within her own works displayed on the walls as well as the duality of the personal and professional relationship on display.

"Backgammon is a big part of something we do in our family and the history of both our families," says Moyer. "Bringing our work around this activity sort of felt like bringing family together."



A view of the installation at South Etna Foundation in Montauk. COURTESY

The South Etna exhibition highlights natural synchronicity in their creative practices. Although the work on view wasn't created with the objective of a joint exhibition in mind, Martinez notes that the show offers an opportunity for visitors to notice similarities between their work that isn't otherwise obvious. "And maybe you can pick up on a conversation," says Martinez. For example: the white floral petals in his kinetic paintings resonate in the arrangement of white marble slabs in Moyer's canvases; hints of her cool color palette pop in Martinez's layered compositions by close proximity.

"You can see how our practices are affecting each other a little bit," he adds. "It's such radically different work. But for instance, Sam has started using brushstrokes a lot more in the last couple of years. And also, the way that we use white is kind of similar. So it's interesting – but there are definitely things you would never pick up on if you were Googling us."

"People are always pointing out how different our work is. But a lot of our work ethic and mentality and how we approach our work is similar, even though the style of our studios are very different," adds Moyer, whose work often speaks to light and the interplay of materials. "We have a very deep mutual respect for how we go through

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Eddie Martinez's paper-pulp paintings. COURTESY

our practice and support each other's practices. In some ways, it doesn't matter what we're making because we both have the same beliefs and work ethic."



Eddie Martinez

Martinez and Moyer join a lineage of prominent artist couples drawn to the east end throughout the years, including April Gornik and Eric Fischl and Elaine and Willem de Kooning. The Brooklyn-based couple visited the North Fork in 2011 and have maintained a year-round residence in the area ever since, attracted to the open landscape and quality of light. "We visited someone for four hours in an afternoon, and immediately the next week went to look at rentals," says Moyer. "It's our mental space to take a break from the city and recoup and get quiet around us; a little bit of a nature bath to reenergize ourselves."

Both artists cull inspiration from the natural environment, creating works in response to and from their surroundings. "I started making sculpture [on Long Island] because of finding [objects] on the beach," says Martinez, who has incorporated found objects such as buoys, wood fragments and old lobster traps into his sculptural practice. His collaged pieces on view at Landcraft were cast in bronze and painted. Moyer has three sculptures situated under round wooden arbors on the property. The pieces are part of her "Dependents" series, which links disparate materials into one singular entity using Japanese joinery; the attachment is stabilized by complementary fit versus the force of a fastener. Perhaps a similar metaphor applies to the enduring link between Moyer and Martinez.

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“Sculpture in the Garden” will be open through the end of October, and the exhibition at South Etna through the end of July.



A view of the installation. COURTESY