

ARTIST STATEMENT

I pursue interaction and perception from my role as observer, occupied by the unremarkable and the relationships that exist within our everyday exchanges. My interests lie in what painter and writer Mira Schor has identified as “modest painting,” what she describes as “the small, unimportant, the anonymous, the private and personal.” Reflecting direct encounters with objects in my environment, I draw from still life, portraiture, and landscape, the pillars of perceptual painting. Drawing from the quotidian and familiar, I navigate the space between seeing and describing, interpretation and invention.

My current studio practice involves two ongoing bodies of work, intimate paintings of verdant landscapes and sparse interiors, and still life paintings of houseplants arranged in my studio. The landscapes are made en plein air, both anachronistic and romantic in our contemporary time. In this work, I grapple with the problem of squaring my occupation with the mundane against the heroic landscape, seeking to strike a balance between humble interiors and complex spectacular terrains. Working this way feels deeply connected to the act of painting, experiential in the purest of terms, and I find the challenge of chasing the light and the pressing need to respond to a shifting situation to be invigorating. I have aimed to hold onto that energy and bring that sense of urgency to inform my ongoing work in the studio.

In other paintings, houseplants are surrogates for figures, plant portraits that entangle with vivid backdrops or sit unadorned on studio furniture. Sweet or ostentatious motifs speak to the allover patterning found in nature and ground these tableaux; the patterns recall bed sheets, wallpaper, or couch cushions, the stuff of home. I want these paintings to feel lush and verdant, offering tactility steeped in pure visual pleasure. This work engages my interest in the ordinary and the staged, while I consider the potential for theatricality that I seek within the banality of the everyday.

BIO

Christina Renfer Vogel holds a MFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and a BFA from Tyler School of Art, Temple University. Recent shows include solo exhibitions at Augsburg College (Minneapolis, Minn.) and the Julia Martin Gallery (Nashville, Tenn.). Vogel has participated in artist residencies at the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts (Rabun Gap, Ga.), the Virginia Center for Creative Arts (Amherst, Va.), the Vermont Studio Center (Johnson, Vt.), and the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts (Nebraska City, Neb.). Most recently, she attended an artist residency at JSS in Civita (Civita Castellana, Italy), supported by a Lighton International Artists Exchange Program grant. Vogel is a recipient of an Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grant among other awards. She currently serves as an assistant professor of painting and drawing at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.