

# 5 Rhode Island Artists to Collect Right Now

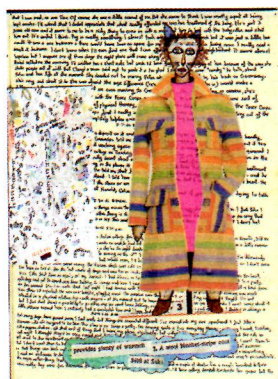
THE STATE'S ART SCENE IS THRIVING — AND AFFORDABLE TO COLLECT. By Alexander Castro

**1** David Barnes's paintings might be the visual equivalent of a whiskey, neat. Heady and direct, they're existentially clean, sparse and slightly spooky. Primarily an oil painter, Barnes depicts postindustrial landscapes of sustained mystery. Lately, he's been riffing on the skate park, crafting concrete wonderlands from opaque grays and blues. Bobbie Lemmons, a veteran art dealer who serves as creative director at Atelier Newport, is certainly a fan: She recommends Barnes as an artist to watch. [davidbarnesart.com](http://davidbarnesart.com)



Equally and amusingly dark is Jessica Deane Rosner's work, which "displays a technical skill and a slightly crabby sense of humor that's really relatable," says Matthew Lawrence, who covers the state's many art happenings for his website, Law and Order Party. Librarian by day, artist by night, Rosner's typical medium is paper, often notebook-sized, onto which she

transcribes numerous graphic litanies that range from silver-tongued to sorrowful. Some involve cartoon-like figures; others are pure geometry. You can find Rosner's art at Yellow Peril Gallery in Providence. [jessicadeanerose.com](http://jessicadeanerose.com)



Less sour and more saccharine (literally) are the whimsical photographs of Mara Trachtenberg. The Wakefield artist molds Rice Krispies into shrubbery, bird people or safari creatures. Fondant, sanding sugar and royal icing complete these scenes of high-fructose fantasy, which Trachtenberg then photographs with a large format camera. The



resulting images are cinematic and dreamlike, "a kind of cross between sculpture and photography," says curator and artist Brooke Erin Goldstein. Hungry for dessert? You can buy prints straight from Trachtenberg's website. [maratrachtenberg.com](http://maratrachtenberg.com)



The sculptures of Saberah Malik are full of aether. "[She] does incredible work with dyed fabric," Lawrence says. The Warwick-based artist's dazzling textiles can often be seen in group shows across Rhode Island. Malik's fabric still lifes are made from translucent silk and polyester, and they glow tranquilly. A 2017 solo show at Middletown's Hunter Gallery found Malik flirting with large-scale installation in the form of a luminous,

fabric-tiled tent that recalls the shamianas of her native Pakistan. [saberahmalik.com](http://saberahmalik.com)

Sculpting more traditionally is John Udvary. According to Judith Tolnick Champa, a curator and founder of the Providence Biennial for Contemporary Art, Udvary is "the dean of Rhode Island sculptors, Rhode Island's own Picasso....Acquiring at least one Udvary should be a residence requirement." Out of his Warren studio, Udvary works with found objects, wood, metal and ceramics, constructing sculptures that occupy tabletops, walls or frames. His efforts are "unpredictable, and frequently casual, even ironic," Champa writes. A professor emeritus at the Rhode Island School of Design, Udvary's career is lengthy enough to have warranted an eponymous monograph, published in 2017. [johnudvary.com](http://johnudvary.com)

