



PRESS RELEASE

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Exhibition Title: *Distortions*

Exhibition Dates: March 1 – April 12, 2025

Opening reception (artist will be in attendance): Saturday, March 1st, 5 – 7 pm



Shannon Cannings
Distortion 28, 2024
natural watercolor, gun ink
5 x 5 inches

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Cris Worley Fine Arts is proud to present our third solo exhibition of paintings and works by Shannon Cannings. The exhibition entitled, *Distortions*, opens Saturday, March 1st, and will be on view through April 12th. The gallery will hold an Opening Reception for the artist, Saturday, March 1st from 5-7pm. The artist will be in attendance.

Shannon Cannings' work has mainly depicted her own meditation on toy guns. Emerging out of a childhood type of innocence, Cannings' preoccupation with the subject resulted from her own inability to play with them. As Cannings stepped into her own role as a mother, she was excited to purchase them and allow for her own children to play with them. To Cannings, the toy guns were a consumable type of fun. Their color and translucency beckoned the eye of the artist – as their look resembled types of candy – something we easily consume with our eyes.

In today's climate, the toy gun cannot simply be an image of fun, especially as the subject of Cannings' work. Cannings has been required to take a position on the subject and how it is reflected in her own work. As this understanding of the subject evolves, Cannings' own technique has evolved as well.

Now, the gun has become the medium instead of the subject. Using a bespoke dye made from melted down gun metal, Cannings creates new abstract patterns. While not immediately visible, her work's relationship with the gun is intrinsic in its very make-up. The work and its relationship with the gun become more obfuscated – beckoning the viewer to question how the toy gun has evolved into this medium.

Cannings is working in pattern and reflection using mylar, depicting distortions of a pattern called "Razzle Dazzle" from Naval ships in World War I and classic shooting targets. At times, Cannings even drops these references, simply focusing on how the reality is manipulated and changed in the reflection of the mylar. Although not readily discernable, Cannings continues her relationship with the imagery of the gun. Moving from the consumable fun of the toy gun, Cannings enters into the world of the real gun. Yet, by abstracting the gun, Cannings discusses society's own turmoil with the subject – showing just how layered and difficult the subject truly is.

In this show, Cannings has also included the mylar balloon as the subject. The viewer sees the mylar balloon from the worms-eye view, watching as it floats against the upward sky. Her portrayal of these balloons is reminiscent of her past technique when painting the toy gun. In this way, these mylar balloons connect to her past work and her present abstractions of the mylar. This balloon acts as a symbol of hope in the face of Canning's abstracted images made from gun metal. In a show that depicts the complexities of our society, Cannings presents the mylar balloon as a reminder for what can be.

Shannon Cannings was raised in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting from Tyler School of Art, Temple University, and a Master of Fine Arts in Painting from Syracuse University. Cannings has been included in over fifty juried and invitational exhibitions throughout the United States. Cannings has had recent exhibitions at Anya Tish Gallery, Houston, Texas, Museum of the Southwest, Midland, Texas, and the Fine Arts Gallery, Levelland, TX. Cannings' recent exhibitions include a solo exhibition at McCormack Gallery, Midland College, Midland, Texas and a three-person exhibition at the Tyler Museum of Art, Tyler, Texas. Cannings presented a solo show at the Center for Contemporary Arts in Abilene, Texas, and a two-person show with her husband, William Cannings, at the Underwood Center for the Arts in Lubbock, Texas. She is a Hunting Prize Finalist and was shortlisted for an ArtPace San Antonio Summer Residency. She has been included in multiple publications, including "Loaded: Guns in Contemporary Art", "View From My Window", and *New American Paintings*. Shannon Cannings

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lives and works in Lubbock, Texas, where she has taught as an adjunct professor of art at Texas Tech University for nearly two decades.