

Trends to Watch in 2021: Return to Nature



This January, Artsy is launching a series of three features to spotlight the trends we're watching in 2021. Using our internal data, each of these features reflects a theme we saw emerge during the end of 2020 that we expect to take hold across the contemporary art world in the year ahead. This week, we share the first installment, "Return to Nature."

Amid the ceaseless anxieties of 2020, people around the world found solace in nature, escaping the daily barrage of uncertainty to ground themselves in something more evergreen. That impulse, whether yearning for the freedom symbolized by the great outdoors or discovering refuge in the world of flora and fauna, can be seen in new works by contemporary artists. This return to nature is one of the biggest artistic shifts we've witnessed emerge from the tumultuous unpredictability of 2020.

The artists here are making works that range from aquatic tapestries and abstracted landscape paintings to lush drawings and vegetal ceramics. Their works are prime examples of what we expect to be a growing trend in 2021.

Annie Lapin

B. 1978, Washington, D.C. Lives and works in Los Angeles.



Annie Lapin

View in the Wrack, 2020

Shulamit Nazarian

Sold

Annie Lapin's landscapes are elusive, offering only fragments or fleeting moments of representation, resulting in disorienting effects. Shadowy forms are presented like disruptive glitches in otherwise pristine landscapes full of Ed Ruscha-esque skies and verdant treetops. These ambiguous, collage-like dreamscapes perfectly capture the uncertainty of life during COVID-19, where time and space have often felt patchworked and impossible to pin down.