

# HESSE FLATOW

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VISUAL ARTS

## Visual Arts Alumna Annette Hur In Third Solo Show at Hesse Flatow Gallery

By Mădălina Telea Borteş  
March 17, 2023



Until April 1, 2023, nine pieces by Visual Arts alumna Annette Hur '19 are on view at Hesse Flatow gallery in New York City. *Act of Wings*, Hur's third solo show at the gallery, represents the most recent development in the artist's

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oeuvre. Among the many kinds of brushstrokes, lines, drips, and color combinations, one cannot help but note the highly controlled and equally free-flowing expressions of acute psychological states.

Known for her commitment to working from an "inner-directed and hypnagogic state," often leading to a complex, brightly-hued lexicon of abstract expressionism, in these works Hur has expanded her focus to include narrative.

In one of the gallery's rooms, just besides *Stare in the Blindness* (44 in. x 44 in., oil on canvas, 2023), a figurative painting that evokes a prehistoric moth on fire, poster-sized sheets of paper bearing the repeated note, "take one, take one," are piled in a tall stack. The first line one reads on the 18 in. x 23 in. poster is this: "I never felt sorry, at least never admitted to it." The second sentence, this: "The great guilt oozing from my body that weighed me down had become second nature." The sentences continue in an accordion of sorts until the very bottom, where two sentences punctuate what is, in essence, a poetic rendering of the paintings on the walls: "The act of wings in these paintings are not random erratic wanderings. / It is a depiction of the deliberate will to survive, the will to use the act of wings to make waves, and to fly away without guilt."

This decision to include prose alongside a series of paintings that already stand in their own right—full of technique and subtle textures—signals that Hur wishes to express herself on her own terms, using whatever medium she sees fit, without guilt and without rejection of pain, fragility, or sorrow. It is a rare experience of indelible coherence between the work's content and the form Hur has given it.

Individually, the paintings in *Act of Wings* offer a glimpse into each step of a bittersweet process—"the will to use the act of wings" which leads one into an earned freedom. In one of the larger-scaled paintings, *Leave without Guilt* (78 in. x 82 in., oil on canvas, 2022), a brightly feathered bird flies away from its environment with a force so immense the air around it blurs, feathers fall

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about, and the paint at the bottom of the canvas streams down, disabusing a viewer of any notions that flight is simply beautiful or free.

Considered together, these paintings serve as testaments to the choice, consequence, and time involved in the stages of departure through flight. One can see the artist thinking and employing immense technical tact alongside a willful surrender to paint's own mark-making. For example, in *Look Away, Sky Is On The Other Side* (60 in. x 51 in., oil on canvas, 2022), the multi-layered streaks of paint in the center of the canvas, where an insect has generously opened its wings, form a ravine, evoking the sensation of standing before a time capsule of the micro-moments involved in Hur's process. It is captivating and naturally draws the viewer's body in. However, when one stands further back, releasing oneself from the enchantment of those deeply ingrained rivulets, the surprise is almost shocking: that section of streaked paint sediment is contained, exclusively, within the delicate contours of the insect's wings. Like Hur's other acts, this moment on the canvas evinces an artist in control of her craft—each choice, each layer of pigment, and each act of collaboration with the medium of paint, a deliberate choice.

*Act of Wings will be on view until April 1, 2023. Hesse Flatow gallery is open on Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.*

Annette Hur received her MFA in Visual Arts from Columbia University in 2019. She is the recipient of a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2015) and a BA from Ewha Womans University in Seoul, Korea (2008).