

HESSE FLATOW



Juyon Lee, "Bodiless Travels V (his body shrouded by lotus petals in hanji, light entering the studio in Connecticut)", 2026. Decals of hand-woven photographs in fused glass broken in 3 parts, custom brass mount, neon (argon, mercury), Dimensions variable.

Ladder/Chain: Juyon Lee and Emma Safir

July 17 - August 14, 2026

HESSE FLATOW is pleased to announce the opening of **Ladder/Chain**, a two-person exhibition featuring image-based glass works by Juyon Lee and upholstered panels and pewter casts by Emma Safir.

Both artists employ a language of textiles to manipulate lens-based imagery through an iterative toggling between the digital sphere of computers and the physical tangibility of paper and thread.

Focusing on sites of connection, Lee takes her source materials from screenshots and virtual exchanges with her family members in Korea. By splicing and hand-weaving them with photographic scenes from her present reality in New York, she aims to bridge this interstitial divide. Her interlacements are re-documented and compressed once more before being fused with glass via photographic decals, further taking shape inside the kiln as her materials slump around three-dimensional forms. For Lee, glass's hard yet malleable properties embody generative possibilities, serving both as a reference to technological screens and as a staunch counter to the ephemerality of digitally mediated communication.

Safir's plush, wall-mounted panels similarly precipitate image as object, yet her visuals arrest on obstructed thresholds that separate interior and exterior worlds, often capturing reflections bouncing against curtained windows or the obfuscatory patterning of privacy glass. Photographs taken during her travels are layered with scans of fabric and lace casts or analog rubbings of domestic, baroque fixtures before being printed on silk. As part of her ongoing investigations into histories of "women's work" and the decorative, Safir meets this digital collaging or stitching together with a literal stitch. Her upholstered panels are adorned with pewter elements, beaded appliquéés, pleating, smocking, and other forms of fabric manipulation.

Borrowing its title from the names of visible and invisible mending stitches, **Ladder/Chain** brings these artists in conversation around traversing voids and portals, materially explored in either practice through degrees of opacity, transparency, and the passage of light through built surfaces.

HESSE FLATOW

Lee's neon tubes pass through openings within and across her glass planes, shifting its tonal qualities and creating lines that function like drawings in space, analogous to the trajectories of Safir's needlework. In her upholstered panels, ornate light switch covers cast in pewter are superimposed over reproductions of sand dunes, lush ivy, and black-eyed Susans, delineating an interiority as if narrowing one's gaze outward through the aperture of a keyhole.

While Safir leans into a psychological space of memory as her grainy images invoke the dream-like refuge of secret gardens straight out of a children's fairy tale, Lee correspondingly addresses forms of healing by conjuring the physical body. Arising out of the nurturing act of cooking, burn marks on her grandmother's forearm are woven into Lee's imagery as if mimicking the scar tissue it portrays. Within this reparative framework, the duality of thresholds take on new meanings – open and transformative, protective and closed. Whether a ladder stitch removes the trace of a tear altogether or a chain stitch turns it into a decorative design, the resulting mend makes the material all the more valuable.

Juyon Lee (b. 1995, South Korea) holds an MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University and her BA from Wellesley College (summa cum laude). Lee has exhibited widely, including the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Baxter St at the Camera Club of New York, Tufts University Art Galleries, New Bedford Art Museum and NARS Foundation. She is the recipient of notable fellowships and awards, including the Café Royal Foundation Grant for Visual Art, Bronx Museum AIM Fellowship, Pilchuck Fellowship, and St. Botolph's Emerging Artist Award. She participated in artist residencies at LMCC Arts Center, The Studios at MASS MoCA, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Vermont Studio Center, and more. Lee lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Emma Safir (b. 1990, New York, NY) holds a BFA from RISD in Printmaking and an MFA from Yale in Painting & Printmaking. She has had solo exhibitions at HESSE FLATOW, New York; Blade Study, Baxter St at CCNY, New York; SHIN HAUS at Shin Gallery, New York; and Bunker Projects, Pittsburgh. Safir has also participated in group shows at HESSE FLATOW, Galerie Nicolas Robert, Charles Moffett, Jack Barrett, Lyles & King, among others. Looking ahead, the artist will have a solo exhibition at the Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, New York, opening in the spring of 2026. Safir's work is in the permanent collection at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. She lives and works in New York, NY.

SALES

sales@hesseflatow.com

GENERAL

info@hesseflatow.com

PRESS

press@hesseflatow.com

HESSE FLATOW is a gallery and curatorial platform founded by artist Karen Hesse Flatow in 2019. It had its start as "Crush Curatorial", where many artists we work with today had their debut solo show. Hesse Flatow has an MBA and an MFA from Columbia University and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. The program focuses on emerging and mid-career artists with diverse voices, presenting debut solo shows and focused presentations. We are located in an accessible ground floor space in Tribeca, New York City.