

LISA BLAS

## Artist Statement 2020

Working in painting and collage, I am interested in the optical and reflective properties of color and light. Every project begins in my watercolor notebook, whereby I paint three or four swatches of transparent and opaque color in vertical adjacent lines to determine the palette of a future work. Often times, the color intersects with my research into artists such as Mary Delany, Corita Kent and Warhol. These tests act as a guide for abstract paintings and collages, on canvas, vellum and Arches paper. I begin each work by using the designated palette in combination with interference paint, which gives the surface a reflective sheen and shifts in tonality from different angles.

In the collage work, I paint sheets of Canson watercolor paper with squeegees and cut the material down to apply onto A4 music paper, Opalux vellum and Arches paper. In the works on canvas and linen, I prepare my surfaces with a background of interference paint and begin painting directly on the surface.

The last several years I have focused on nature as still life, and the fragility of the natural world caused by human intervention, climate change, and meteorological events. The sources for my work are located in art history, newspaper feeds and photography. For example, I made a series of medium-sized collages on vellum pointing to cyanotypes of British Algae by Anna Atkins, in addition to large-scale collages on Arches paper of news headlines referencing environmental catastrophes. This approach folds past and present, where the viewer might experience moments of *déjà vu*: Why do these botanical specimens look familiar? Didn't this flooding occur elsewhere? Have I read a similar headline recently? Here, the repetition of image and language brings us closer to notions of time, and our personal relationship with nature comes into sharper focus.