

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Invincible Summer

Theodora Allen, Jonathan Baldock, Sophie Becker, Angela China, Margaret Curtis, Kirsten Deirup, Dalton Gata, Hydeon, Ryan Johnson, Tamara Kostianovsky, Gina Litherland, Mickey Lee, Sarah Theresa Lee, Joshua Petker, Clare Rojas, Alice Tippit, Robert Zehnder

June 25–August 14, 2026

Opening Reception: June 25, 2026 | 6pm–8pm

Performance by Sophie Becker: July 16, 2026 | 6:30pm

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Invincible Summer*, a group exhibition exploring the contemporary resurgence of surrealist tendencies. Titled after Albert Camus' oft-cited reflection, "In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer," the exhibition investigates the renewed prominence of surrealism as a means of grappling with the instability of our increasingly complex psychological and political landscape.

The contemporary experience is shaped by forces that often remain difficult to visualize—truth itself feels contested and shaky. Political polarization, ecological crisis, technological acceleration, algorithmic systems, economic precarity, and the proliferation of mediated realities have fundamentally altered our relationship to the world and to one another. Faced with conditions that frequently exceed the limits of rational explanation, many artists have turned toward forms of image-making that embrace ambiguity, intuition, dream logic, fragmentation, and associative thinking. In these works, reality is neither abandoned nor escaped. Instead, it is refracted, distorted, and reassembled into new configurations capable of expressing experiences that conventional representation struggles to contain.

Invincible Summer draws historical parallels to the emergence of Dada and Surrealism in the aftermath of the First World War. Confronted with the collapse of political, social, and philosophical certainties, artists sought alternative modes of understanding that privileged the unconscious, chance, irrationality, automatism. Today, a different but equally profound crisis of meaning has emerged, generating a sense that inherited frameworks for understanding the world are no longer sufficient.

Within this context, surrealism reemerges not as a historical style but as a persistent methodology. The exhibition examines how contemporary artists have adapted surrealist strategies to address conditions unique to the twenty-first century—digital life, the collapse of consensus reality, the proliferation of synthetic images, and the increasingly confused boundaries between private consciousness and networked experience. Aesthetic sensibilities and methods associated with surrealism become mechanisms through which artists navigate realities that are themselves fractured and often contradictory.

Theodora Allen (b. 1985, Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles, California. She graduated from the Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, UK, in 2004, received her BFA from the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA, in 2009, and her MFA from the University of California in 2014. Recent exhibitions include Kasmin Gallery, New York (2025); Stance Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden (2025); Gallery 12.26, Dallas (2023); Huset for Kunst & Design, Denmark (2022); Kunsthall Aarhus, Denmark (2021); the Driehaus Museum, Chicago (2022), among others. Allen has completed residencies at 100W Artist & Writer Residency, Corsicana, TX (2021) and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Madison, ME (2011). Her work is held by the Dallas Museum of Art, among other collections.

Jonathan Baldock (b. 1980, Pembury, UK) lives and works in London. Recent, selected solo exhibitions include Jupiter Artland, Edinburgh, UK (2025); London Mithraeum Bloomberg Space, London, UK (2025); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, UK (2023); Charleston, Lewes, UK (2023); Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, UK (2023); and Kunstverein Göttingen, Germany (2023). Baldock's work also featured in group exhibitions at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2018); Fondazione Memmo, Rome, Italy (2016); and Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2013), among others. His works are included in collections including Aïshti Foundation, Beirut; Arts Council Collection, London; The Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool; The Roberts Institute of Art, London and Saatchi Gallery, London.

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Sophie Becker (b. 1993, San Francisco, CA) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She studied performance art at Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT in 2016. Becker works at the intersection of ventriloquism, theater, and experimental comedy. Using recurring characters and her trusty dummy named Ronnie, Becker explores tensions between control and submission of voice, action, and the emotional dynamics of relationships. She has performed at MoMA PS1, New York (2026); RECESS: Chez Bushwick, New York (2025); De Studio in Antwerp, Belgium (2025); NADA Miami, Florida (2024); Art Omi, New York (2024); Rockaway Film Festival, New York (2023), among other venues.

Angela China (b. 1985, Baltimore, MD) lives and works in New York. She graduated from the Art Students League of New York City in 2015 and earned her MFA from the New York Academy of Art in 2019. China's abstract paintings explore the emotional resonance of the feminine experience. Working intuitively, she uses gesture, texture, and color to evoke vulnerability, strength, and transformation. Recent exhibitions include Half Gallery, New York, NY (2025); Montauk Beach House, Montauk, NY (2024); Malin Gallery, New York, NY (2023); IV Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2023); Colm Rowan Gallery, East Hampton, NY (2022); Norwood Arts Club, New York, NY (2021); among others.

Margaret Curtis (b. 1965, Bermuda, BOT) lives and works in Tryon, North Carolina. She graduated from Duke University in 1987, attended the Yale/Norfolk Summer School of Music and Art in 1989, and received her BFA from The Atlanta College of Art in 1990. Recent exhibitions include Alexandre Hogue Gallery, Tulsa, OK (2025), Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City, UT (2024); Tracey Morgan Gallery, Asheville, NC (2023, 2020); The Florence Museum of Art, Florence, SC (2022); and The Hickory Museum of Art, Hickory, NC (2014), among others. Curtis is an inaugural recipient of the 2021-2016 Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship, and a finalist for the Catherine Doctorow Prize for Contemporary Painting in 2025. Her work can be found in the public collections of the Asheville Art Museum in North Carolina and the Tang Teaching Museum in Sarasota Springs, New York.

Kirsten Deirup (b. 1980), Berkeley, CA) attended The Cooper Union, New York, NY. She has had solo exhibitions at Hesse Flatow, New York, NY; Nichelle Beauchene Gallery, New York, NY; Guild and Greyschul, New York, NY; Rare, New York, NY and de boer, Los Angeles, CA. Group exhibitions include; Morgan Lehman Gallery, New York, NY; Jeff Bailey Gallery, New York, NY; Marc Wolf Contemporary Art, San Francisco, CA; Geoffrey Young Gallery, Great Barrington, MA; and Roberts and Tilton, Los Angeles, CA.

Dalton Gata (b. 1977, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba) lives and works in Coamo, Puerto Rico. He graduated in 2005 from the Escuela de Diseño Altos del Chavón in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, with a BFA in Fashion Design. Recent exhibitions include Newchild, Antwerp, Belgium (2026); BODEGA x OMR, Mexico City, Mexico (2025); Peres Projects, Milan, Italy (2024); Galería Agustina Ferreyra, San Juan and Mexico City (2022); Chapter NY, New York (2022); Peres Projects, Berlin (2022), among others. His work is held in the public collections of the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, The Jorge M. Pérez Collection, Miami, Florida, and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Hydeon (Ian Ferguson, b. 1985, National City, California) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, and earned his BS in Graphic Design from the Art Institute of California. Recent exhibitions include *Adrift in the Corner of Time*, Ricco/Maresca Gallery, New York (2024); *Bimbamerica*, Bim Bam Gallery, Paris, France (2024); *Burners*, Mortal Machine Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana (2023); *Au-Delà*, Bim Bam Gallery, Paris, France (2023); *La Casa dei Vampiri*, Spazio Contemporanea, Brescia, Italy (2022); *En Forme De Cône*, Bim Bam Gallery, Paris, France (2021); *The Herms Opera*, Palazzo Monti, Brescia, Italy (2021); *Zum Helles*, Studio 10-4, Berlin, Germany (2019).

Ryan Johnson (b. 1978, Karachi, Pakistan) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He received his BFA from Columbia University, New York, in 2000 and his MFA from Pratt Institute, New York, in 2003. Johnson's sculptures have been described as having "strange spatial compressions, surreal displacements and quasi-Futurist illusions of movement." Recent exhibitions include Marinaro, New York, NY (2023); Nemeth Art Center, Park Rapids, MN (2022); Nina Johnson, Miami, FL (2020); Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York, NY (2017); The Suzanne Geiss Company, New York, NY (2012); Sikkema Jenkins and Co., New York, NY (2010), among others.

Tamara Kostianovsky (b. 1974, Buenos Aires, Argentina) is an Argentinean-American artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her BFA from the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes "Prilidiano Pueyrredón", Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1998 and her MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA, in 2004. Recent exhibitions include SLAG&RX Gallery, NY (2025); RX/SLAG Gallery, Paris, France (2025); Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris, France (2024); The Baker Museum, Naples, FL (2023); the Denver

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Botanic Gardens, CO (2023); among others. In 2025 Kostianovsky took part in the Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant program and in 2024 she was an artist in residency for L'AiR Arts.

Gina Litherland (b. 1955, Gary, IN) lives and works in Cedarburg, Wisconsin. She graduated from Indiana University, Bloomington, in 1975 and received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1984. Litherland extends a tradition of Midwest surrealism and magic realism dating back to the 1930s and 40s. She is also a published essayist, her work "Imagination & Wilderness," appears in *Surrealist Women: An International Anthology* (University of Texas Press). Recent exhibitions include Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago, IL (2022, 2016, 2013, 2009, 2007); Haggerty Museum of Art, Milwaukee, WI (2007); Wriston Art Gallery, Lawrence University, Appleton, WI (2006), among others.

Mickey Lee (b. 1996, Banks, OR) lives and works in New York. She received a BFA and an MFA from the University of California in Berkeley, California, in 2006. Lee creates oblique allegorical narratives populated by fantastical animal-human hybrids, mythical beasts, and figures whose anatomy and behavior resist logic. Drawing from the alluring strangeness of folklore, mythology, and dream imagery, her paintings occupy a space between Modernist, Outsider, and faux-naïf traditions. Recent exhibitions include Tennis Elbow in New York City, NY (2024); The Journal Gallery, New York, NY (2024); One Trick Pony in Los Angeles, CA (2022); Half Gallery in New York City, NY (2022), among others.

Sarah Theresa Lee (b. 1980, Ireland) lives and works in London, United Kingdom. A self-taught artist, Lee began painting seriously during the COVID-19 pandemic while working as a psychiatric nurse. Lee's painting process is intuitive and unscripted—she paints without preparatory sketches, guided by a mental archive she describes as a "cabinet" of images and scenes waiting to be retrieved. Centered predominantly on female subjects set within domestic interiors, Lee's paintings draw on myth, pulp imagery, and the vivid theatricality of horror cinema from the 1960s through the 1980s. In recent years, her work has gained wide attention, appearing in galleries such as Ricco/Maresca Gallery, New York, NY to other exhibitions throughout the UK, Europe, and the U.S.

Joshua Petker (b. 1979, Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles, California. He received his BFA at Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA, in 2002 and his MFA at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), Santa Clarita, CA, in 2015. Petker upends formal painting conventions, plunging viewers into a dreamlike world saturated with color and shaped by a hazy, fragmented memory of history. Recent exhibitions include Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles, CA (2025, 2023, 2021); Rachel Uffner, New York, NY (2025, 2022); Monte Vista Projects, Highland Park, CA (2017), among others. His works are in the permanent collection of the K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong, China and X Museum, Beijing, China.

Clare Rojas (b. 1976, Columbus, OH) lives and works in Upper Arlington, Ohio. She received her BFA in printmaking from Rhode Island School of Design in 1998 and her MFA in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2002. Recent exhibitions include Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, NY (2025, 2023); SOCO Gallery, Charlotte, NC (2024); The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Charlotte, NC (2024); Jessica Silverman, San Francisco, CA (2024, 2021); San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA (2021), among others. She has been awarded grants and residencies from Artadia, Eureka Fellowship, Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, and the Headlands Center for the Arts. Rojas' work is held in the permanent collections of MoMA, New York, NY; SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, León, Spain, among others.

Alice Tippit (b. 1975, Independence, KS) graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago and lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. Solo exhibitions include Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels (2023); Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York (2021, 2018, 2016); Patron Gallery, Chicago (2020); Grice Bench, Los Angeles (2020); Kimmerich Gallery, Berlin (2019, 2017); Paris London Hong Kong, Chicago (2017); and KRETS, Malmö, Sweden (2017), among others. Select group exhibitions include Office Baroque, Antwerp (2023); The Regional, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati and Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City (2022); Mrs. Gallery, Maspeth (2022); Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York (2020); and Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago (2019) among others. Tippit was a Finalist for the 2019 Artadia Award in Chicago. In 2026, Tippit had her first solo museum exhibition, *Rose Obselte*, at the DePaul University Art Museum.

Robert Zehnder (b. 1992, Summit, New Jersey) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Zehnder earned a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2015. Zehnder's work has been included in exhibitions at White Cube and Josh Lilley, London UK; Rachel Uffner Gallery, New York, NY; C L E A R I N G, New York, NY and Los

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Angeles, CA; Jessica Silverman, San Francisco, CA; Mrs., Maspeth, NY; DOCUMENT, Chicago, IL; Spider Gallery, Wichita, KS; The Warehouse, Dallas, TX; and the Ox-Bow School of Art, Saugatuck, MI, among others. The artist's first solo exhibition with Mrs. was held September 2022 followed by a solo presentation of the artist's work at Independent in May of 2023. Zehnder's work has been placed in the permanent collection of the ICA Miami, Miami, FL, The Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC; the Aïshti Foundation, Jal El Dib, Lebanon; The X Museum, Beijing, China; as well as the Warehouse, Dallas, TX. The artist currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.