

DAISY PATTON



WITH HANDS CLASPED TIGHTLY

FOTO RELEVANCE HOUSTON TEXAS

SEP 8 - NOV 10, 2023

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Cover Image: Untitled (Five Color Fade Women with Bellflowers), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo from Iran sourced in New York, NY
48 x 61.5 inches

DAISY PATTON: WITH HANDS CLASPED TIGHTLY

DR. XIMENA GÓMEZ

"All I ever wanted was a photograph with a name and to know my family and its history... I am always searching, even when I am not, for some small glimmer that will finally illuminate what has been hidden from me." — Daisy Patton, *Like Two Drops of Water/Like Oil and Vinegar*

Family makes photographers and subjects of us all. We carefully select our favorites and share them with loved ones, telling each other stories of things we never knew (when grandma was a bombshell, when dad had a full head of hair) and things we hope to never forget (how we cared for our younger sibling, the birth of a first child). Daisy Patton's exhibition, *With Hands Clasped Tightly*, is a thoughtful exploration of the generational ties recorded by photographs, as well as the relationships between family members. Patton's elaborate and exuberant painted additions, applied with the tender care befitting a treasured heirloom, literally highlight the relationships between each photograph's subjects, inviting us to imagine their histories and reflect on our own.

The project is a deeply personal one for Patton. As she paints on the photographs abandoned by other families, the artist works through the traumas and joys in her own familial relationships. She illuminates for us what has been denied to her. Patton's maximalist application of painted decoration gives the photographed subjects new life, making people who lived in disparate corners of the world, long forgotten by their families, long ago shuffled from the mortal coil, into her family—into *our* family—in the here and now. Patton takes the responsibility seriously, painting an array of stages in life and types of relationships. Families brand new and deeply rooted: loving sisters, complicated matriarchs, tender relationships with fathers. She welcomes us to read whatever we want or need into them. There is something for everyone.

Patton's paintings are productively overwhelming, demanding a close viewing that ultimately leads us to form relationships with the photographed subjects. Her use of meticulous floral patterns and vibrant colors bring vibrancy to the photographs, resurrecting the families within, bringing them out into the viewer's space. Moreover, by painting photographs from disparate periods and cultures, Patton not only collapses linear time, she also emphasizes the perennial and universal nature of the familial experience. At the same time, no two paintings are the same, underscoring how every family is unique, beautiful and entangled in its own way. Even the frames, a fairly recent development in Patton's practice, are part of this experience. Sometimes thematically related to the photograph they encompass, sometimes not, they are always artworks in their own right. She has painted them on all sides, even on the bottom edge of the largest paintings, which none but the most dedicated viewer will ever see.

This attention to detail underscores that the frames are integral to the works, intended to make visible the idea that each painting is a portal to the sacred. Altars of a sort, the frames are more akin to the intricately carved woodwork of the Baroque period than the sleek metal frames of today.

While Patton preserves a lot of the original images, she very much inserts herself, maintaining certain elements, covering others, and subtly guiding the viewer's attention. Every time you look at a painting, you notice something different. Maybe at first it's something about the artist's choices, like the flowers she selected or the way she applied the paint. But eventually, with the help of Patton's subtle yet brightly colored suggestions, you always come to notice the interactions between family members. And it is those points of contact (or non-contact) that encourage viewers to consider the figures' relationships and come up with stories. Patton gets you invested in these people you will never know, who you were never meant to know. Often, these are moments that would have been overlooked or left unappreciated were it not for the artist's mediation. As such, Patton herself is simultaneously an invisible and omnipresent intermediary, replacing the photographer who first took the image. She gets you so wrapped up in the scene, so busy thinking about the families in the photographs, that you forget about her altogether. All that matters is the relationships among the family members, the bonds you have now formed with them... until you remember that the people in front of you are long, long gone.

Patton introduces viewers to the photographed families and their relationships with each other not through their faces, but through their hands and gestures, which she believes can tell you far more about a person than their face can. She has applied a painted wash to many of the figures' faces, in some cases covering them wholly. These washes function both as a kind of aura or emission of color that calls our attention, and as a means of obscuring the subject, the artist's reminder that our memories are imprecise. We use photographs to help us remember, but what happens when we lose the photograph? What happens when we and those we have loved are gone? Patton's work may bring some peace in the face of such existential dread. The ties that bind families transcend memory and exist outside of time. They are there even when there is no photograph, no name.

Dr. Ximena A. Gómez is Assistant Professor of American Art at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She received her BA from Mount Holyoke College, her MA from Tufts University, and her PhD from the University of Michigan. She specializes in the art and visual culture of colonial Latin America and that of the early modern transatlantic world more broadly.

"I AM DESCENDED FROM MY MOTHER, WHO WAS DESCENDED FROM HER MOTHER, AND ONWARDS. WE CALCULATE BACKWARDS GENERATIONALLY, PLACING THE FORMERLY BELOVED INTO TEMPORAL BOXES, SEPARATE FROM US. COUNT BACKWARDS FAR ENOUGH, PAST LIVING MEMORY, AND WE HAVE FORGOTTEN WHO THEY ARE, WHO THEY WERE." - DAISY PATTON



Untitled (Family in the Garden), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Varna, Bulgaria
91.5 x 130.5 inches



Untitled (Father and Daughter with Tall Daisies), 2023

Oil on archival print on panel
Photo sourced from Norco, CA
116.5 x 78 inches



Untitled (Color Fade Sisters with a Tree Fork and Pink Grass), 2023

Oil on archival print on panel
Photo sourced from Moscow, Russia
91.5 x 61.5 inches



Untitled (Three Generations with Ornate Rugs), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo from Iraq sourced in Herzeliya, Israel
118.5 x 81.5 inches



Untitled (Resibes, este pequeño recuerdo de tu nietesito Gabino Pedro Peñarber para su aguelita Maria de la Pas), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo from Havana, Cuba sourced from Nashville, TN
57.5 x 42 inches



Untitled (Family in the Front Lawn with Flowers and Berries), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Grand Rapids, MI
98 x 66 inches



Untitled (Tony's Photo. Studio 1806 Point Breeze Ave. Phila. PA.), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Hinesville, GA
95.25 x 64 inches



Untitled (Starry Sisters with Trilliums), 2023

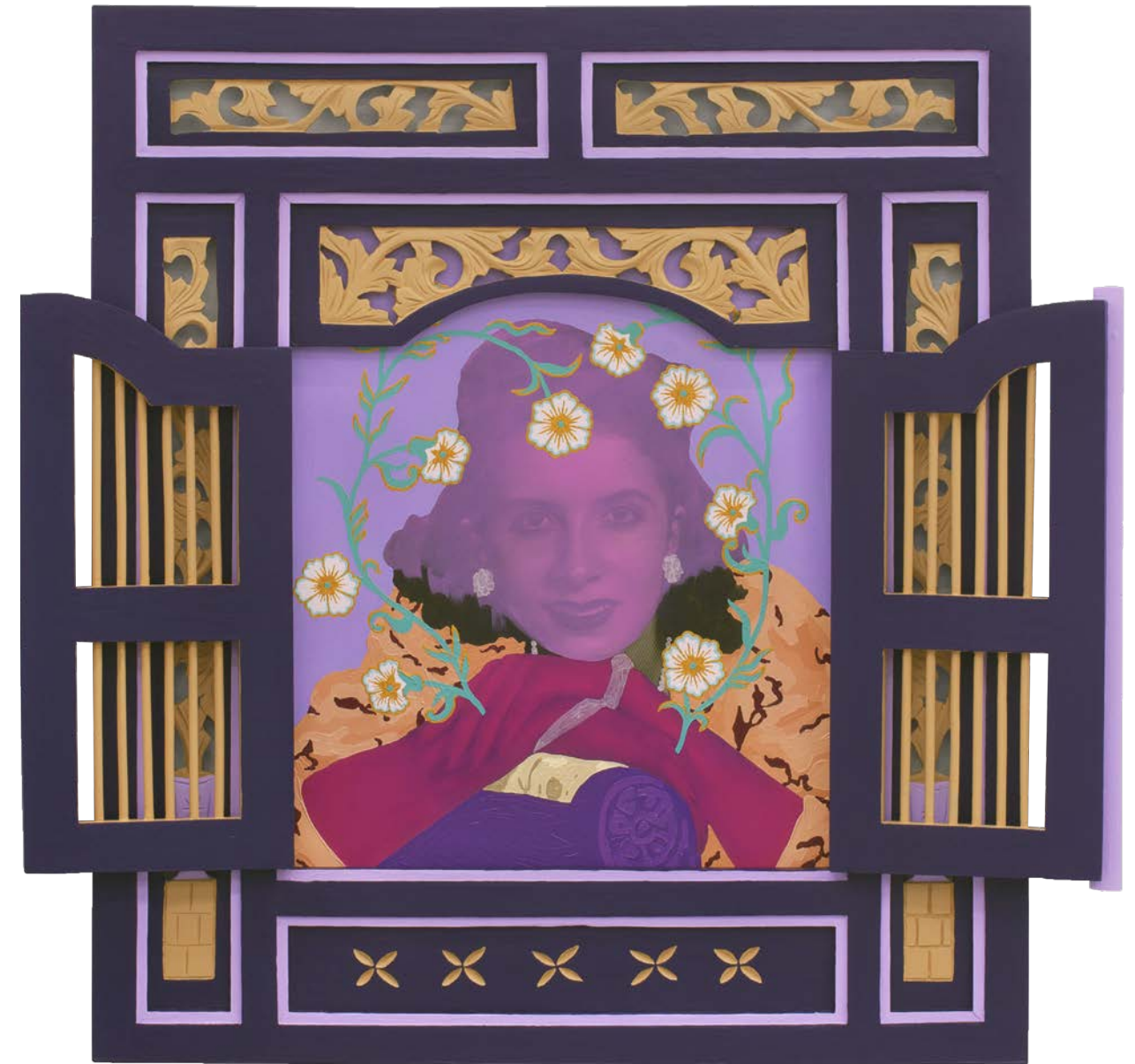
Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Cairo, Egypt
83 x 42 inches



Untitled (Father and Son with Painted Background), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Spata-Artemida, Greece
92.75 x 62.75 inches

ADDITIONAL
WORKS



Untitled (Pink and Magenta Woman with White and Gold Flowers), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo from Iran sourced in NYC, NY
35.25 x 31.5 inches



Untitled (Connie), 2023

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Grand Rapids, MI
46 x 30 inches



Untitled (Two Women and Dog with Potted Garden and Vine with Fruit and Hummingbirds), 2021

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Spata, Greece
81.5 x 65.5 inches



Untitled (Blue Bride with Gold Veil and Green Flowers), 2020

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Cairo, Egypt
90 x 124 inches



Untitled (Pink Woman with Pillow and Blue Pattern), 2022

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Cairo, Egypt
68.5 x 37 inches



Untitled (Color Fade Woman with Gold and Lotus Flowers), 2022

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Cairo, Egypt
80 x 60 inches



Untitled (Cate Wanda Hendricks To Warner bro Played in Confidential August), 2020

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Lapeer, MI
90 x 60 inches



Untitled (Woman with Heart-shaped Flowers and Orange Vine), 2022

Oil on archival print mounted to panel
Photo sourced from Burbank, CA
29 x 18.5 inches

DAISY PATTON



Daisy Patton is a multi-disciplinary artist born in Los Angeles, CA to a white mother from the American South and an Iranian father she never met. She spent her childhood moving between California and Oklahoma, deeply affected by these conflicting cultural landscapes and the ambiguous absences within her family. Influenced by collective and political histories, Patton explores storytelling and story-carrying, the meaning and social conventions of families, and what shapes living memory. Her work also examines in-between spaces and identities, including the fallibility of the body and the complexities of relationship and connection.

Currently residing in western Massachusetts, Patton has exhibited in solo and group shows nationally, including a solo at the CU Art Museum at the University of Colorado, the Chautauqua Institution and the Fulginitti Pavilion at the Center for Bioethics at the Anschutz Medical Campus, as well as group shows with Spring/Break NYC, the Katonah Museum of Art, The Delaware Contemporary, the International Museum of Science and Art, among others. She has paintings held in public and private collections such as the Denver Art Museum, the Tampa Museum of Art, Seattle University, Fidelity Investments Art Collection, and in international airport Hartsfield-Jackson with Delta Airlines, among others. Patton's work has been featured in publications such as Hyperallergic, The Jealous Curator, Transition Magazine, The Denver Post, The Chautauquan Daily, The Seattle Met, and more. Minerva Projects Press has published *Broken Time Machines: Daisy Patton*, a book with essays and poetry on Patton's practice that debuted spring 2021.

Patton has completed artist residencies at Anderson Ranch, the Studios at MASS MoCA, RedLine Denver, Minerva Projects, and Eastside International in Los Angeles. She has been awarded a Massachusetts Cultural Council grant, a Barbara Deming Memorial Fund grant, an Assets for Artists Massachusetts Matched Savings grant, a Montage Travel Award from SMFA for research in Dresden, Germany, as well as longlisted for the Aesthetica Prize 2022. She earned her MFA from The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston/Tufts University, a multi-disciplinary program, and has a BFA in Studio Arts from the University of Oklahoma with minors in History and Art History and an Honors degree.

FOTO RELEVANCE

Since 2016, Foto Relevance cofounders Geoffrey C. Koslov and Bryn Larsen have focused on the exhibition and acquisition of museum quality contemporary fine art photography and photography-based work. Joined by Suzanne Zeller in 2019 who leads the program as Assistant Director, Foto Relevance is dedicated to providing a platform for an innovative selection of American and international photographic artists pushing the boundaries of photography. The gallery has mounted monographic exhibitions as well as group shows to investigate current trends and themes in contemporary art, showcasing a broad range of both darkroom and digital photographic techniques. In addition to promoting the work of artists, Foto Relevance provides guidance, educating individual collectors and corporations in the acquisition and sale of art. Foto Relevance is a member of the Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD) and the Houston Art Gallery Association (HAGA). The gallery is located in the historic Museum District of Houston, Texas.