

Gathering What's Tangible

Friday, May 6 – Sunday, May 22, 2022

Opening Reception: Friday, May 6, 6:00-8:00 PM

(Houston, TX) – Open MFA is excited to present *Gathering What's Tangible*, a group exhibition curated by Erica Reed Lee, at Flatland Gallery, 1709 Westheimer Rd, Houston, TX 77098.

Gathering What's Tangible brings together Open MFA's collective response to the pandemic in the form of craft. In March 2020, the pandemic caused Open MFA's meetings to come to an abrupt stop. Zoom and virtual meetings were a poor substitute for the participatory and energetic events held prior to the pandemic. By fall 2020, Open MFA artists had quietly dispersed. During this time of isolation and anxiety, artists turned towards materiality—many incorporating craft for the first time—as a means of connection and comfort. Open MFA's inaugural exhibition draws connections between these works and rekindles a community founded on tactile and playful discourse.

Exhibiting artists include Jen Bootwala, Dana Caldera, Cynthia Giron, Hillaree Hamblin, Mayra Huerta, Alexandra Lechin, Lorena Mitchell, Hugo Perez, Amanda Powers, Helen Sharpless, and Rachel Toombs. Megan Olivia Ebel and Ryan Hollaway will be performing a collaborative work in conjunction with the exhibition at the opening reception.

In addition to works created by Open MFA artists, the exhibition will feature *Open Library*, a collaborative project featuring individual responses and expressions in the form of artists' books made by the Open MFA community. This “library”, housed within the exhibition, creates a shared history and foundation for Open MFA.

Open MFA is an artist collective that provides community, dialogue, and cross-disciplinary collaboration for artists based in the Houston area. Free and inclusive, membership is participatory. Throughout the year, Open MFA organizes monthly meet-ups, group exhibitions, and artist talks. Their most recent exhibition, featuring work by 14 Houston artists, was curated by Megan Olivia Ebel and shown at Raven Tower. Open MFA is led by four organizers: Hillaree Hamblin, Ryan Hollaway, Erica Reed Lee, and Amanda Powers.

For media inquiries, please email Open MFA at openmfahouston@gmail.com.



Graphic design by Amanda Powers.