

SEPTEMBER 8 - OCTOBER 30, 2020

**THIRD COAST DISRUPTED:  
ARTISTS + SCIENTISTS  
ON CLIMATE**

**N. MASANI LANDFAIR**

**DEPS ARTIST PROFILE**

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Glass Curtain Gallery - Columbia College Chicago  
1104 S Wabash Ave, 1st Floor, Chicago, IL 60605  
Gallery Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
*Capacity of gallery is 10 visitors and masks are required.*

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# THIRD COAST DISRUPTED:

## Artists + Scientists on Climate

*Third Coast Disrupted: Artists + Scientists on Climate* is an exhibition of newly commissioned artworks culminating a yearlong conversation between artists and scientists centered on climate change impacts and solutions in the Chicago region.

Through science-inspired sculpture, painting, collage and more, the artworks examine local impacts -- happening here and now -- ranging from extreme heat to flooding to habitat loss, and beyond. They also shine light on local solutions underway, like "cool roofs," nature-based approaches to slowing stormwater, and backyard habitat restoration. Some imagine future possibilities.

*Third Coast Disrupted* is based on the notion that art can connect and engage with people on an emotional level. It can pique curiosity, be unexpected, tactile, interactive, evocative, and memorable. It can slow people down, inspire them to reflect, move them to talk to each other -- and spur them to act.

**Curatorial Team:** Project Director & Lead Curator, Christine Esposito; Science Curator, Liam Heneghan; Art Curator, Lisa Roberts; Senior Consultant, Meg Duguid

**Participating artists:** Jeremy Bolen, Barbara Cooper, Hector Duarte, Rosemary Holliday Hall, N. Masani Landfair, Meredith Leich, Andrew S. Yang

**Participating scientists:** Elena Grossman, MPH; Daniel Horton, Ph.D.; Abigail Derby Lewis, Ph.D.; Aaron Packman, Ph.D.; Katherine Moore Powell, Ph.D.; Desi Robertson-Thompson, Ph.D.; Philip Willink, Ph.D.

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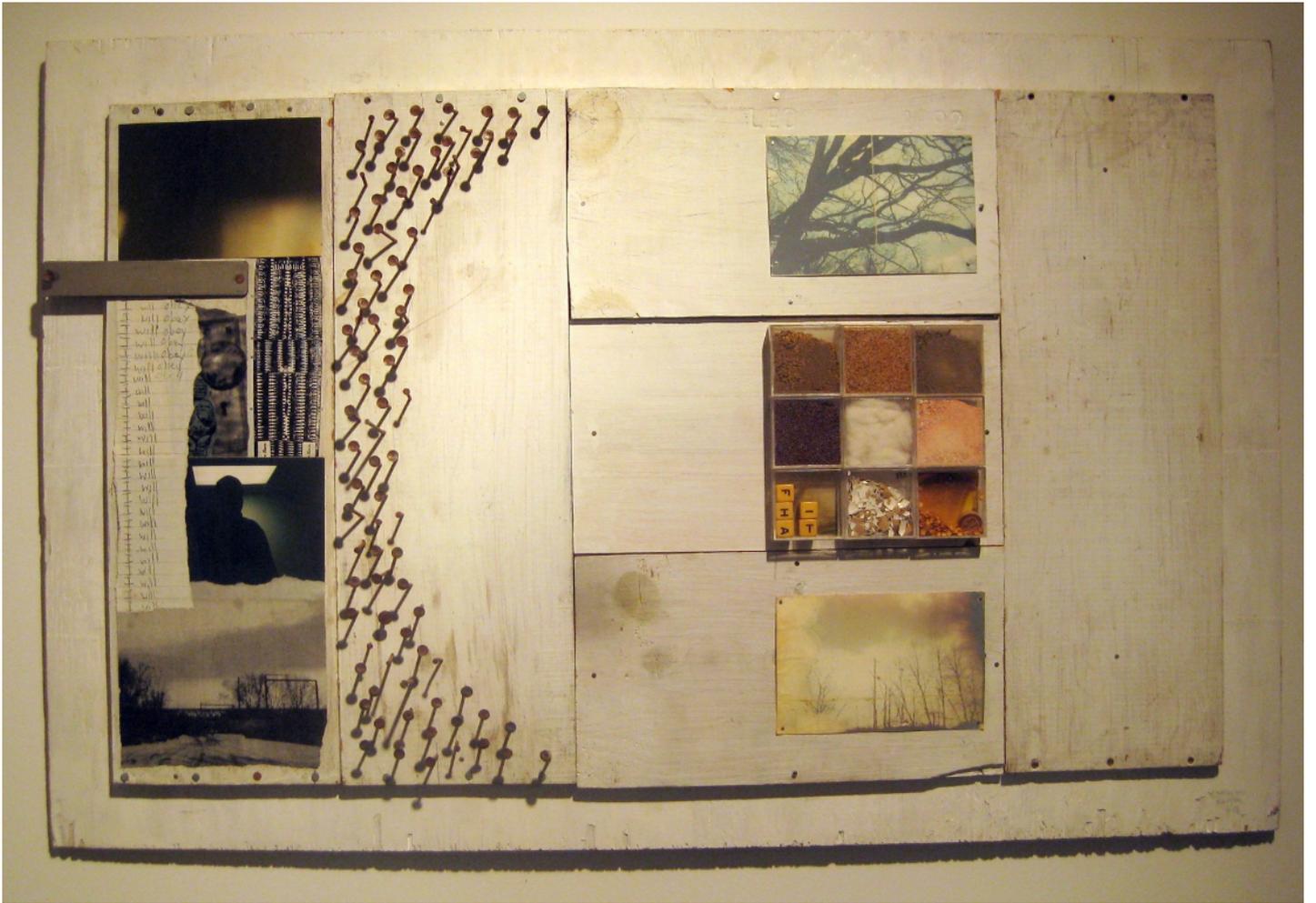
# N. MASANI LANDFAIR

**N. Masani Landfair** looks to take materials considered undesirable and redefine their worth and the meaning already contained within them. She uses traditional collage and assemblage to create abstract social commentary, dream landscapes and spaces she consciously and subconsciously deals with every day.

**N. Masani Landfair** has shown at Museum of Science Industry's Black Creativity (first-place winner), South Side Community Art Center, Zhou B. Art Center, 33 Contemporary Gallery, all in Chicago, Global Artist Project in Italy, Mexico, and Senegal, the San Francisco International Arts Festival, and Prizm Art Fair in Miami. She works and lives between Chicago and Northern Georgia.

[www.nmasanilandfair.com](http://www.nmasanilandfair.com)

[www.instagram.com/n.masani.landfair/](https://www.instagram.com/n.masani.landfair/)



*NO LONGER*, 2003, mixed media on wood, 24" x 36" x 3"



*No Away to Throw To I*, 2013, mixed media on wood

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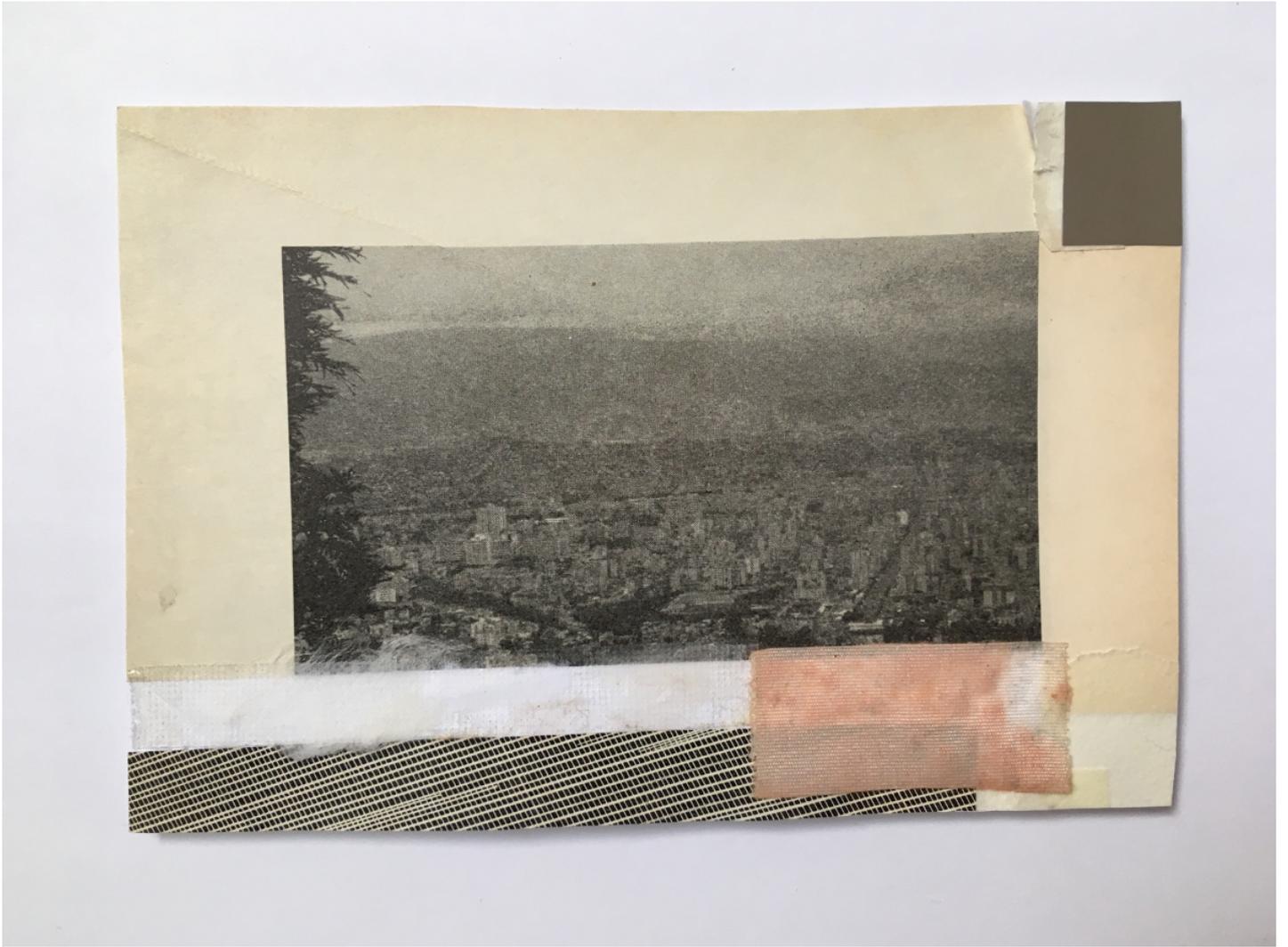


*Inkind Conveyance*, 2018, installation

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*Human Resources*, 2020, collage on wood, 24" x 24"



*Holding Space in Isolation*, 2020, collage on paper, 6.5" x 4.5"

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# ARTIST INTERVIEW

Conducted by Kaylee Fowler

**Kaylee Fowler:** How do you source the materials for your works?

**N. Masani Landfair:** I use found materials, repurposed books and objects from thrift stores, recycling, alley finds, etc. Ninety percent of my materials are repurposed.

**KF:** What does your process of creating a collage or mixed media piece usually look like? How does the subject matter or meaning you are trying to convey affect the visual aspects of a piece?

**NML:** I have a few approaches. Some works form from a subject matter I wish to convey, so I purposely look for material and images to create the piece or series. Most works are created through a process where the material forms itself in abstract thought and meditative placement.

**KF:** You have an interest in using undesirable and repurposed materials in your work; is this a practice informed by environmental sustainability, or does it stem from other interests?

**NML:** I grew up in South Chicago, which

is an industrial area by Lake Michigan. I saw the contrast of how man-made structures and objects pale in comparison to nature, and that has always fascinated me. I see value in the decay of manmade materials, they do not lose value to me because they were once natural materials that have been over processed. From an environmental stance, much of the material in my work is about giving these objects new or prolonged purpose versus being buried in a landfill. I was primarily raised by my grandparents, as my mother was finishing her schooling to become a nurse. They were from the South and taught me my connection to nature. We repurposed things, grew much of our own food, and recycled a lot. My grandmother taught me to collage at a young age. I was also influenced by many pop and modern artists of the 40s and 50s that I learned about as I got older. Overall, environmental sustainability and giving voice to social issues drive my work.

**KF:** Your work for this exhibition deals with the health impacts of climate change, and how much the current environmental infrastructure

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# ARTIST INTERVIEW

## Continued

personally affects people's lives. Can you speak to the importance of including this perspective in conversations around climate change?

**NML:** The Industrial Age created fast consumerism at the cost of the health and well-being of the poor. A majority of communities with large industrial parks, shipyards, power plants, and factories tend to be in disadvantaged areas populated by Black, Brown, and Indigenous people. The general quality of life in these areas is poor, and life expectancy is much shorter. The voice of this segment of the population is cut off and though the hardships they face are rapid, it is usually ignored. Flint, Michigan, has struggled publicly for over five years to get clean water, so imagine how many other areas are affected. Many people are trapped in toxic environments that they are slowly dying in, but the consumer need/want is more important. We are currently seeing this with the reopening of business and schools during a pandemic. I need for my work to create a dialogue of how our misuse of the environment creates discord, health issues, poverty, and climate change.

**KF:** The work in the exhibition deals with economic factors of climate change as well. Can you also speak about the importance of including this perspective in conversations around climate change?

**NML:** When my family experienced constant flooding of our basement, the long-term effects did not occur to us at the time. Our concern was to get it cleaned up, fix the problem, and remodel. The idea of the eventual loss of the use of our basement, the loss of value in our home, and the health issues that come from the black mold that grew in walls, created a great financial downfall for not only my family, but many in our community. At that time, we had no clue that climate change was a major part of the issue. That the loss of green lands meant that the rainwater had no natural retention. The idea never occurred to me that the constant building in areas that really are not stable to hold city blocks would cause so many problems. Our science colleague Aaron Packman explained it to us during one of our salons, that some areas in Chicago needed to remain prairie lands due to instability,

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# ARTIST INTERVIEW

## Continued

yet homes were built over them. The drive of greed has done a lot of damage to our local environments and also put those that purchase homes and started businesses in these areas in a position where they may lose everything they worked for.

Another economic factor in climate change is that many people are living day-to-day struggles. The “Green” consumerism of \$30.00 water bottles and specialized eco-minimalist home items are unrealistic for everyday people living in food deserts and can only afford foods from the very companies that are wrecking the environment. There is a form of elitism in the environmental movement that creates barriers that need to be torn down and allow all the information to come forward and paths to a better quality of life for all.

**KF:** What has been the most memorable part of working with *Third Coast Disrupted*?

**NML:** Our salons. We have had to shift much of our connections and salons due to COVID-19, but the online salons have been great beacons for us to talk and learn from each other.

I have gained a lot of knowledge and new understandings of climate change through my peers.

# DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES

The DEPS Artist Profile Series, presented by Columbia College Chicago's Department of Exhibitions, Performance, and Student Spaces (DEPS), is a virtual publication on select artists involved with the DEPS Galleries and the Columbia College Chicago community. Our goal with this series is to connect artist and viewer on a deeper level, and to highlight the amazing works and thoughts of our featured artists through interviews, artist biographies, and catalogs of work. Art has always been a way to connect with others, no matter where one may physically be. We hope by presenting the creativity and insights of the people involved in the DEPS Artist Profile Series that viewers may have one more way to stay in touch with and support the arts community.

The DEPS Artist Profile Series is managed by Fine Arts major and DEPS Exhibitions Assistant Kaylee Fowler. Design, animation and illustration by Graphic Design major and DEPS Exhibitions Assistant Gianella Goan.

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Learn more at <https://students/colum.edu/deps> and [www.ThirdCoastDisrupted.org](http://www.ThirdCoastDisrupted.org).

Contact Information: Mark Porter, [mporter@colum.edu](mailto:mporter@colum.edu) / 312.369.6643

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