

Ronewa Art Projects presents the beautiful and poignant works of Swiss-American artist Michele Colburn. The online exhibition '*In Plain Sight*' opens on January 20, showcasing Colburn's current gunpowder and watercolor series of abstract works on paper.

"For a long time, I have been interested in working with materials that carry certain associations, weight, and even memory." Colburn's materials often contain an explicit legacy of violence. When manipulated and chemically transformed through her process, Colburn renders the gunpowder inactive. She disarms her materials, leaving them exposed to be quietly examined.

The gunpowder's destructive potential is contrasted by the finely-textured, flowing forms it creates on the paper. Colburn's process is intuitive - pouring, tilting, painting, and layering - allowing the behavior of her materials to guide her. Watercolors accent and animate the monochrome tones of the gunpowder. The resulting abstract imagery captures a sense of movement and dynamism, like a quiet explosion, frozen and pacified on the page.

Colburn's practice contains a biographical influence. Her experience coming of age in Washington, DC, during the Vietnam war left a heavy impression. Her work as a peace activist inevitably intertwines with her art-making. Contemporary conflicts and an escalating gun crisis in America also linger over her works. Colburn's socio-political contextual framework, and the sometimes explicitly political titles of her works, root her art practice in time and place. Yet her work also echoes a global consciousness of anti-violence movements. Colburn views her work as a contemplation of violent histories and living narratives. She hopes it can be a trigger for conversation.

Michele Colburn was born in Washing, DC. Her work has employed materials associated with violence since 2006 and is often presented within curatorial perspectives on war and gun violence. She has held several solo shows, notably at the Arlington Arts Center and Franklin & Marshall College, and participated in group shows across the United States, including the Katzen Museum, Washington DC, George Mason University, Virginia, and Ethan Cohen Gallery and The Painting Center in New York. Colburn has received numerous accolades, including a Vermont Studio Center residency, the Puffin Foundation Grant, the Mu'ong Studio Residency in Hòa Bình, Vietnam, and most recently, the DC Arts and Humanities Artist Grant. Her work is held in collections in the United States and Bangkok. Colburn has spoken on several artist panels and is also an adjunct university instructor.