

Affordable Treasure in the Flatfiles at Goldfinch

CGN chicagogallerynews.com/news/2023/4/affordable-treasure-in-the-flatfiles-at-goldfinch

Features • Apr 05, 2023



BONX CHAN, 2020

JORDAN MARTINS

\$ 500.00

Collage and paint on paper

17 x 14 inches

43.2 x 35.6 cm



HAR LUMOD, 2020

JORDAN MARTINS

\$ 500.00

Collage and paint on paper

17 x 14 inches

43.2 x 35.6 cm



MULD FEGG, 2020

JORDAN MARTINS

\$ 500.00

Collage and paint on paper

17 x 14 inches

43.2 x 35.6 cm

By BIANCA BOVA

Flatfiles have an inherent allure. There is a certain kind of person (often, unsurprisingly, art collectors) that tend to own them, that treat them as pieces of domestic furniture. Expensive, heavy, and sporting an industrial appearance incompatible with a substantial array of interior design aesthetics, their presence signals that their utility is so necessary, so practical to their owner, as to be worth the trouble. To own a flatfile is to be envied, at least in certain circles.

The archivists, the registrars, and the simply nosy among us know the thrill of sliding open their drawers. Their pristine steel exterior, evocative of the golden age of downtown offices and high-heeled secretaries, just as often gives way to perfect organization as it does belie something far more exhilarating and chaotic. This is, after all, where the things loved sufficiently to be preserved, but which, for reasons of taste, vanity, or simply capacity, haven't received the honor of being put on display are housed. To dig in the flatfiles is to peer into the psyche of their owner.

Flatfiles are never merely storage. When a gallery maintains them, art dealers make their own equally telling promises: *I just had to have this in my inventory. This is a great work, I just haven't had the right exhibition for it. Come and see this, I've been saving it to show to*

the right collector. Being granted access to them becomes a quietly coveted marker of status, a nod to the deserving nature of those being led into the back room.

So when a gallery builds a not insubstantial part of their program around keeping well-stocked flatfiles, it's worth taking note; and when they mount an exhibition that frees the work from the drawers and lets it live (at least for a little while) on the walls, as the Chicago gallery Goldfinch has done with their recently mounted and simply titled exhibition *A Flatfiles Show*, it's certainly worth having a look.



FEATHER KNIFE I, 2022

JENNY KENDLER

\$ 650.00

Ethically-sourced Great Argus (*Argusianus argus*) feather, paperclay, vintage knife handle



FEATHER KNIFE II, 2022

JENNY KENDLER

\$ 500.00

Ethically-sourced Lady Amherst's pheasant (*Chrysolophus amherstiae*) feather, paperclay, vintage knife handle



FEATHER KNIFE IV, 2022

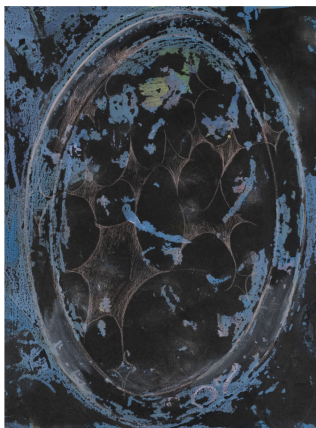
JENNY KENDLER

\$ 350.00

Ethically-sourced Yellow-naped Parrot (*Amazona auropalliata*) feather, paperclay, vintage knife handle

Goldfinch's Flatfiles Program began in 2017, the year following the gallery's opening. The program stocks work across painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, photography, mixed media, and (rather unconventionally) also includes modestly sized sculpture. The available works on paper range in scale, with dimensions varying from 4.3 x 6.8 inches to 40 x 38 inches. Pricing comes in at no less than \$200 and no more than \$1,500, a deliberate scale that gallerist Claudine Isé notes is, "geared towards beginning collectors, art consultants, and anyone looking to find contemporary artworks that are accessibly priced."

Unfortunately, the flatfiles are not open for perusal during gallery hours. Rather, interested viewers must browse an online database on Goldfinch's website, and prearrange for works to be pulled for viewing at a private appointment. This makes the current exhibition, which is hung salon-style with new works rotated in each week, all the more pleasurable to stroll through. Nearly every artist included in the Flatfiles Program has work on view in the show, from the more established (Cameron Harvey, Kuras & MacKenzie) to the emerging (Madeline Galluci, Mara Baker).



MIRROR STUDY 11, 2022

MADLINE GALLUCCI

\$ 575.00

Acrylic, oil, ink and colored pencil on gessoed paper

10 3/4 x 15 inches

27.3 x 38.1 cm



MIRROR STUDY 2, 2022

MADLINE GALLUCCI

\$ 575.00

Watercolor, acrylic and ink on paper

12 x 16 inches

30.5 x 40.6 cm



MIRROR STUDY 3, 2022

MADLINE GALLUCCI

\$ 575.00

Acrylic, oil and colored pencil on gessoed paper

12 3/4 x 18 inches

32.4 x 45.7 cm

By taking this broad approach, the show offers not just an opportunity to browse works viewers might not otherwise see in person, but provides a capsule version of what the gallery is about. The hand of the artist is almost always visible in the works in *A Flatfiles Show*; the works themselves often come across as cerebral or abject, delicate without crossing into decorative. Taken as a whole, it's a keener, more condensed version of Ise's vision for the gallery's overall program.

To that end, it's worth making your way to the space not just for the *Flatfiles* show, but to see two additional exhibitions currently on view, that exemplify the tenets of the gallery just as well: Irene Wa's survey of ceramic sculptures and drawings that spring from the Mexican artist's recent study of diphonic singing, *Crisálida de sal* and Sarah Leuchtner's striking installation of three new sculptural drawings, *Sequential Escapes*. All three exhibitions promise great rewards for time devoted to close looking, and a worthwhile way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

View Goldfinch's CGN listing [here](#)

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