



Boston art review

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Off the Main Drag: Ten Summer Gallery Shows Worth the Visit

On trailheads, in chapels, and at far-flung corners, the ten gallery exhibitions we're excited to catch across New England.

Feature by BAR Editorial



Suzanne Shireson, *Watermelon Static*, 2025. Oil on paper mounted on panel. 22 x 30 inches. Courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects.



"Bright Ground," May 3–August 31, 2025

Cade Tompkins Projects

198 Hope Street, Providence, RI

I'm writing this on a dishwater gray day in May as a Nor'easter stumbles in from the wrong season, and the fluorescent colors of Suzanne Schireson's canvases—hot pink, fuchsia, violet, turquoise—feel downright phantasmagoric, like phosphenes seen with closed eyes after a night of interrupted sleep. Drawing on histories of artist parents like Ruth Asawa and Barbara Hepworth, as well as visits with contemporary ones, the Rhode Island-based Schireson paints a studio of sorts for each of her subjects. But some of these structures are no more stable than the library my three-year-old built from Magna-tiles yesterday. One is just scaffolding, open to the sky and trees. A shed seems too small to stand in; skylights might be holes in the ceiling. In one painting, a woman writes at a desk beneath the bare bulb of the moon. One way or another, the outside world enters these imagined makeshift spaces. The figures in these paintings are working anyway, usually at night and sometimes with a child close at hand, and I am reminded that sanctums are overrated, that caregiving and creating are not antonyms, that our work needs the world and vice versa. —Jacqueline Houton