

KATHRYN  
MARKEL

FINE ARTS  
EST. 1976

KATHRYN MARKEL FINE ARTS PRESENTS *THE ARBOREAL LIFE* AN EXHIBITION OF  
NEW PAINTINGS BY KATIE DEGROOT

April 2 – May 9, 2026  
Artist Reception: April 9, 6-8pm  
179 10th Avenue Gallery

NEW YORK, NY – March 19, 2026 – Kathryn Markel Fine Arts is pleased to announce *The Arboreal Life*, an exhibition of new paintings by Katie DeGroot. DeGroot's work transforms trees into expressive figures, staging them in scenes that reflect human relationships with nuance and humor. This will be her third solo exhibition with the gallery. A reception will be held on April 9th from 6-8 PM.

DeGroot paints trees as individuals. Each is marked with scars, growths, knots, and kinks, revealing their uniqueness and individual histories. In the artist's own words, "Trees grow to survive, they adapt to their given environment, producing oddly shaped limbs as they become contortionists to get to sunlight... They grow in context to each other and their neighbors, adapting as best they can to the situation they find themselves in. In many ways, they are similar to us, part of a larger community." DeGroot anthropomorphizes her muses, imagining them in scenes as families, couples, cocktail parties, and individually as portraits.

The branches, collected on frequent hikes, are arranged to suggest interaction. Each limb is painted from life at scale, giving it a distinct physical presence. Some are intertwined; others lean into one another or stand parallel, as if at attention. DeGroot captures personality while implying narrative. Titles like "*Family Matters*" act as gentle prompts, framing the scene and inviting a human reading, often with a touch of humor.

These portraits are not realistic depictions but instead quirky interpretations that play with color, pattern, and stylization. She immortalizes their colors, textures, and the moss and fungi that adorn them as they begin to decay. One branch will be depicted over and over again and, much like us, its aging can be traced as its colors fade and its shape changes. The verticality of her subjects, combined with their meticulously patterned facades, creates a rhythm that enlivens each composition.

Katie DeGroot, born in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 1955, works and lives in upstate New York and exhibits extensively in the Hudson Valley. She earned her B.A. from New York University in 1977. She has had solo exhibitions at Galerie Gris in Hudson, New York and Kathryn Markel Fine Arts in New York City. Her work is in the collections of Agnes Gund, the Tang Museum at Skidmore College, the State University of New York, and Fidelity Investments.

**IMAGE CAPTION:**

Katie DeGroot, *Opinionated*, 2025, watercolor and opaque watercolor on paper, 40 x 26 in.



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**MEDIA CONTACT**

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**ABOUT KATHRYN MARKEL FINE ARTS**

The gallery was established in 1976 with the belief that significant contemporary art can be beautiful as well as visually and intellectually rigorous. To that end, the gallery exhibits a diverse group of artists unified by excellence in their craft, compelling intellectual framework, and a love of the art-making process. <https://www.markelfinearts.com/>

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