

Call Mom: Olive Ayhens and Ezra Johnson

September 17 – October 23, 2026

Reception: Thursday, September 17th from 6:00 – 8:00 PMLight: Olive Ayhens, *St. Joseph's Indians and a Swamp*, 2025, Oil on canvas, 41 x 59 inches.Right: Ezra Johnson, *The Mirror*, 2026, Flashe, acrylic and oil on linen, 64 x 52 inches.

Bookstein Projects is pleased to announce a two-person exhibition of paintings and works on paper by mother and son artists Olive Ayhens and Ezra Johnson.

Call Mom will present recent paintings and watercolors by Olive Ayhens alongside new paintings by her son, Ezra Johnson. In Ayhens work she continues to draw inspiration from her travels, including a recent residency in New Orleans. Swamp creatures, antebellum architecture, and even indigenous tribal costumes make their way into invented landscapes saturated with color. Also on view are three new watercolors, each depicting kaleidoscopic views of the city, dense with invented incident. In all her work, color and form are used as a tool to articulate an otherwise Formalist structure, as opposed to direct transcription of the composition. Johnson's paintings too are rich with saturated, dream-like color, although his compositions focus on the artist's studio, home life and his immediate family. In *The Mirror*, the viewer is confronted by a picture in the picture – a reflection of what appears to be the artist painting his son, who is seated in front of a table scattered with paint, tape, and other art materials. Taken in context of this exhibition with his mother, it evokes thoughts about the family's artistic legacy continuing with the next generation.

Olive Ayhens (b. Oakland, CA) received her BFA and MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. In addition to her extensive exhibition history, Ayhens has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants including the Joan Mitchell Grant, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Award and Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Individual Support Grant. Artist residencies include The Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation Space Program, MacDowell Colony, Fundacion Valparaiso, the Salzburg Kunsterhaus, Yaddo Artist Residency, Djerassi Artist Residency, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Roswell Artist Residency, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program and most recently at the Artists-in-Residence program at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. The artist lives and works in New York City.

Ezra Johnson (b. 1975, Wenatchee, WA) received his MFA from Hunter College, New York (2006) and his BFA from California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco (2000). The artist's work has been included in numerous institutional exhibitions including those at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Querétaro / Fundación AMMA, Mexico City; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, KS; Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL; Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL; SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM; and Institute for Contemporary Art, Philadelphia. His work is held in major collections worldwide including the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; the Rubell Museum, Miami; and the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Querétaro / Fundación AMMA, Mexico City. The artist lives and works in Tampa, Florida.

Call Mom: Olive Ayhens and Ezra Johnson will be on view from September 17 – October 23, 2026. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, September 17th from 6:00 – 8:00 PM. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 11:00 am to 6:00 pm. For additional information and/or visual materials, please contact the gallery at (212) 750-0949 or by email at info@booksteinprojects.com.