

Dana James is an American artist who primarily works in painting. In her practice, James playfully challenges viewers' notions of line and shape by contrasting materials and processes next to one another. She creates a spectrum of pastel-toned colours which she applies to create notes of contradiction in darker, vivid fields of color in fractured multi-panel constructions. Creating multi-dimensional layers, throwing pigments, mark-making, and drawing, her work oscillates between energetic impulsive strokes, which can be at once dark but then combines matt-colored surfaces with a determination of drawing in straight lines and forms.

Dana James' process involves a combination of acrylic, ink, oil, and charcoal; with encaustic painting which involves wax, fabric, and resin. By working with used canvas and bright, garish colours that create a surface that speaks of temporality, James' imagery captures the abstract by deconstructing her materials into discrete elements and reforming them into new compositions. Bringing to light that which is invisible, James is interested in the fallible nature of certainty, distant memories, and imaginations in intermediate worlds. For James, her gestural process refers to imagined places, the anxious scribbling of radical doubt, the poetry of illusion, or the act of delusion; and sometimes, all at once.

"My paintings act as panorama of linear time; they serve as a reminder that we are small and predictable, incessantly creating and shedding beautiful accounts of the earth and its elements. Upon completion, they are visual diaries that speak to contradiction, a latency caromed by intermittent activity."

– Dana James

Dana James (b. 1986 in New York, NY, US) is a contemporary artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Since graduating from the School of Visual Arts in 2008, her work has been exhibited extensively and can be found in private and public collections around the world. James is represented by Hollis Taggart Contemporary in New York, NY, US, and by Bode in Berlin, DE. Most recent solo exhibitions include Hushed Neon (2024, Bode, Berlin, DE), Dana James: Pearls & Potions (2023, Hollis Taggart, New York, NY, US), Something I Meant to Say (2021, Hollis Taggart, New York, NY, US) and Otherwise All Was Silent (2020, Bode, Berlin, DE). The artist has participated at numerous two-person and group shows at Gruin Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US; PM/AM, Miami, FL, US; Gruin Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US; Moberg Gallery, Des Moines, IA, US; Marquee Projects, Bellport, LI, US, among others. James was featured as one of the "Top 20 Artists Shaping the New Decade" by Daily Collector in 2020, in which her work was described as "simultaneously dark and feminine, creating worlds marked by duality."