



Abstracted Individualities: Nicole Awai and Monika Zarzeczna

November 5, 2026 - January 2, 2027

Reception: Thursday, November 5

5:30-7pm

Lesley Heller Windowspace

53 Orchard Street

New York, NY 10002

9am-6pm Mon-Sat

Closed Sunday

Lesley Heller's second exhibition in her new Lower East Side venue, *Abstracted Individualities*, brings together the abstract works of artists Nicole Awai and Monika Zarzeczna.

By operating within the realm of abstraction, both artists bypass conventional narrative structures to let the physical properties of their materials tell deeply personal and cultural stories. The exhibition highlights how abstraction can serve as a powerful vehicle for cultural dynamics, emphasizing the raw materiality of the objects while exposing complex histories.

Awai employs the rich framework of Trinidadian folklore to evoke obscured histories. Through layered, three-dimensional compositions, Awai addresses the inextricable connections between the formation of modern cultures and the lasting legacy of colonialism. The work critically examines the historical impact of colonial structures on the people, cultures, and commercial exploitation of natural resources across the Americas.

Zarzeczna utilizes the physical attributes of found materials to construct a tactile, poetic language. Her work masterfully juxtaposes presence with absence, and substance with fragility. By elevating discarded or discovered items into the gallery space, Zarzeczna scrutinizes the dynamics of deterioration, challenging the viewer's perception of value, permanence, and the very object-hood of art.