

Bio

Kristen Diederich (b. 1994, Tallahassee, Florida) is painter whose practice encompasses painting, sculpture, and poetry. Her work represents a sustained inquiry into the possibilities of contemporary abstraction through deliberate engagement with nineteenth-century compositional structures. Diederich's bright, layered landscapes demonstrate a distinctly contemporary idiom—one characterized by cinematic depth, chromatic intensity, and carefully orchestrated tensions between surface and recession. Central to her practice is an ongoing textual component: each painting's title is gleaned from a poem Diederich has developed in tandem with her visual work over the past decade. This integration of poetic and painterly languages suggests an expanded field—one in which textual and visual systems operate not as supplementary elements but as mutual modes of meaning-making. The poem evolves as a parallel practice, a durational text inseparable from the paintings.

Diederich's work is internationally collected and has been exhibited across the United States, including a 2025 and 2026 presentations during Frieze Week Los Angeles with Lobster Club and a yearlong artist residency and exhibition at the President's Residence, Oregon State University.

She is the current recipient of the Stumptown Artist Grant and a 2026 candidate at Duplex Air residency in Lisbon, Portugal, with international exhibitions on the horizon. Additional residencies include The Waldoboro Inn, Whitehead Island Lighthouse, South Jetty Cottage, Sou'Wester Arts, and the Cornish Inn. Her work has been featured in *Artforum*, *Dwell*, Oregon State University Press, *Fonograf*, *Buckman Journal*, *Bold Journey LA*, *Travel Portland*, *Camden Famous*, and *Art & About PDX*.

Diederich works from Whitehead Island off the coast of Maine and from her studio in Northeast Portland, Oregon.

Artist Statement

Diederich's practice can be understood as an investigation into what might be termed a "poetics of place" — addressing the convergence of memory, landscape and proximity through material processes that emphasize accumulation and excavation, the body as more than a reaction to air.

Working primarily on paper and canvas, Diederich employs strategies of layering and glazing that activates the surface as a site of temporal and chromatic saturation, their relationships mapping possible paths.

Three concepts which structure the work's methodology:

Nothing is accidental.

Everything is rhetorical.

Repetition does not exist.

“Once I enter a state of flow that is aware of the current, information flows freely. I don’t know what I am making until enough of the landscape is revealed to me. At this point I start directing the material through my personal experiences to create scenes that are as much a part of this world as they are of the ineffable.”
K. Diederich

Through procedures that emphasize spontaneity and what Diederich terms "channeling," the paintings systematically reject symmetry and compositional equilibrium. The work poses questions rather than conclusions: When does rain become a river? How do we metabolize loss and joy through environments? Diederich's practice stages an encounter between viewer and surface that operates in the register of presence—establishing what might be described as a "hovering" relation, suspended between elegy and radiance. she wishes to conceive of worlds that foster networks of care and connection.
