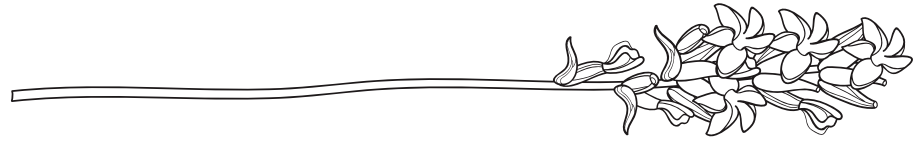
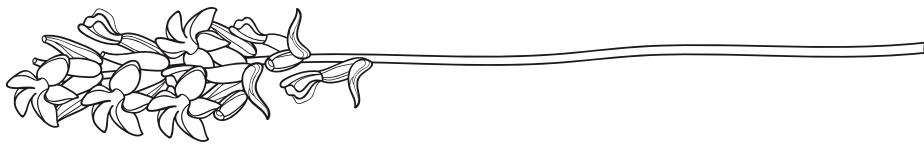


**Virtual**



LAVENDER



**Labels**

**NICOLE EISENMAN**

**(American, b. 1964)**

*Sun in My Eye on the Beach, 2019*

**Oil on Canvas | 58 x 44 in.**

The Alford Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College,  
Gift of Barbara '68 and Theodore '68 Alford.

2019.2.23 © Nicole Eisenman



In this work, *Sun in My Eye on the Beach*, viewers face a saturated portrait, with shapes both strange and familiar, creating a sense of place in abstraction.

Nicole Eisenman is a self-described gender-fluid lesbian, using 'she' pronouns, whose work centers her own image and experience.

She highlights the 'both-and' nature of identity and abstract contemporary art with a sense of humor, vivid primary colors, and a palette of skin tones. In her practice, she has noted the need for untraditional portraiture subjects in cultural significance, citing her own university art history curriculum featuring few women.

Deliberately, she puts herself and marginalized identities onto the canvas, painting a wider canon for figures engaging our contemporary social climate.

The artist pulls inspiration from her summers on Fire Island, on the South Shore of Long Island, New York, which has served as a place of refuge for the queer community since the late 20th-century. It became a popular, though secluded, vacation enclave for LGBTQ+ people to gather freely, creating their own culture and escape amid public rejection through the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Cubist-style deep blues are reminiscent of the ocean contrasting the yellow warmth of the beach shore. An abstract face finds harmony on a similar background with a textured surface. More than anything, this painting catalyzes questions of context.

Is the sun in the eye of the subject?

Is it meant to represent the painter  
or the viewer?

How do our intersections deconstruct  
and re-assemble how we view abstract art?