

Focus Under Forty

Judge's Statement

It is gratifying to see new work by emerging artists. In jurying the Rowayton Arts Center Focus Under Forty exhibition I was pleased to explore work by a roster of artists using a variety of materials and who have diverse styles. I tend to gravitate toward artists who exhibit original thinking and risk taking. Consequently, I prioritized work that felt experimental and showed a unique approach to imagery, technique, or subject. Of course, execution is also important, but that was a secondary consideration when I reviewed the work. The artists I chose have a combined sense of play and studio practice. In other words, they appear to be seriously inquisitive about what their voice as an artist should communicate while also regularly returning to the act of making in order to develop their technical skills.

I am grateful to the Rowayton Arts Center for inviting me to jury this exhibition. In our collectively difficult and troubled times, the voices of artists and other creative folks are essential for critiquing the status quo, creating spaces for discussion, and encouraging community. I am grateful to all of the artists who entered for sharing their work with me.



Judge's Bio

Terri C. Smith has curated more than 80 contemporary art exhibitions, receiving three grants from The Andy Warhol Foundation, among other awards. Smith's exhibitions have been featured in publications such as *Art Papers*, *Artforum*, *Bomb* magazine, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Degree Critical*, and *artcritical*. After 13 years as a contemporary art curator at Cheekwood Museum of Art in Nashville, Smith earned her MA from Bard College's Center for Curatorial Studies (2008). In Connecticut, she curated shows at the Westport Arts Center and the Housatonic Museum before becoming founding Creative Director at Franklin Street Works, a Stamford nonprofit space. In her nine years at FSW, Smith has curated, co-curated or worked with guest curators to create 34 original exhibitions, working with more than 300 artists. She led the vision of the space's programming as well, developing 100 free, educational programs that forged critical connections and dialogue between artists and diverse communities in the region.