

Love Letters to the Collection
Guest curator selection #2



Lillian Pitt (Wasco, Yakama, Warm Springs), *Gorge Spirits Floating 2*, monotype, 2019, 22 x 30," MAM Contemporary American Indian Art Collection, gift of MATRIX Press, 2019.16.01, copyright the artist.

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Selected by Martin Leibinger

Martin is a visiting student at the University of Montana. He hails from Ulm, Germany, where he ran contemporary art spaces Griesbadgalerie, Stiege, and Hahn15 with collaborator Petra Schmitt.

Dear beloved blue,

So far I only saw you on a photograph, thus I can just imagine the extent of your real life beauty and your true colors. However what I could see is the relation among those colors which impressed me at the first sight. I especially like the simplicity in their variations and the harmony and tension that your gentle red tone creates in contrast to both your cold and your warm blue. It is especially this relation of colors that makes your floating spirits appear on different layers as if they would be able to shift from background to foreground, like from past to present.

I learned about where you come from when I had the chance to talk to Lillian Pitt who created you. I met Lillian this year through a study that I made at University of Montana. It was a true pleasure to talk to her and I was fascinated about what she had to say. I learned that you tell stories from very long ago. They descend from rock carvings and paintings that reach back almost 12,000 years. They tell the history of the Watlala, Wishxam and Wasco people who lived in the Columbia River Gorge before they were forced into reservations. Thus I deeply admire how you honor the memory of Lillian's ancestors in such a kind and pleasant way and keep their stories alive.

And yet at the same time, you appear to me very much to be from here and now. I even have the impression that I could look at you with any question that I have in mind and you could give me an answer. Thus I am very cheerful that you will have your first exhibition here at MAM and I have the chance to meet you live and experience your true colors.

Yours sincerely,

Martin