

- **Group exhibition, *Exhale: A Multisensory Art Experience*, Wilson Museum, Manchester, VT**  
(curated by Brian O'Malley)

May 7 – June 12, 2022, Reception June 11, 2 – 4pm  
<https://www.svac.org/class/exhale/>



**EXHIBITION ON VIEW: SATURDAY, MAY 7 – SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 2022**

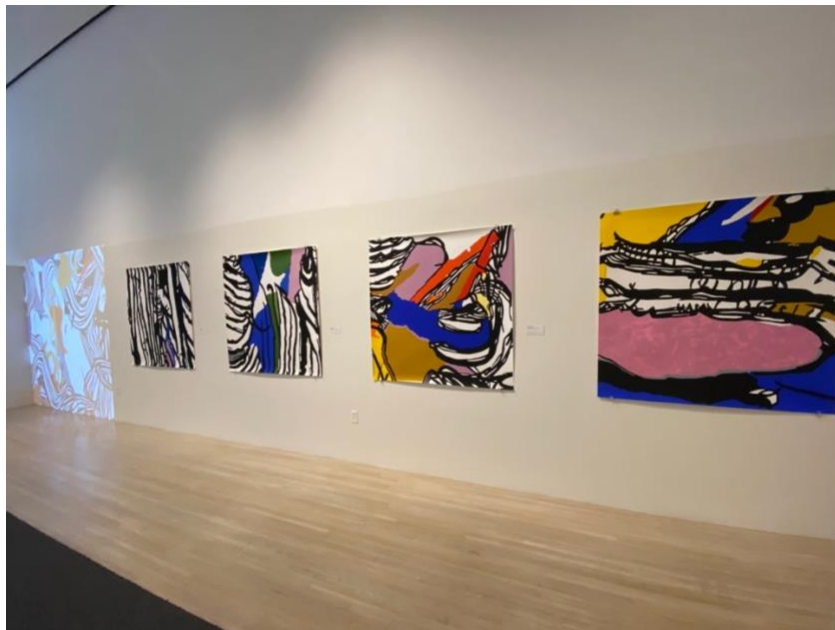
Closing Reception: Saturday, June 11 • 2 – 4 p.m. • More info [HERE!](#)

The last two years have seen a hypervigilance around the simple act of breathing. Our breath is simultaneously a dangerous vehicle through which the virus is passed, a coping strategy to alleviate stress, and a tool for healing lung function for those who've had Covid-19. Given all that we've been through, it's time for a monumental, collective exhale.

*Exhale: A Multisensory Art Experience* brings together seven artists working across a variety of media: audio, sculpture, paintings, drawings, video, animated sequences, and interactive media. This multisensory exhibition builds on the group's 2021 show, *Digital Breath*, at the Newport Art Museum that explored what happens when an unknown variable completely disrupts the patterns of your life and necessitates living more of your existence through the digital realm.

For part two of the exhibition, curator and participating artist Brian C. O'Malley posed the following questions: "A year later we still find ourselves in a global pandemic, with variants arising and receding like ocean tides. Have we been holding our breath, waiting? Are we ready to release this quivering pocket of air?"

He is joined at SVAC by **Sophia Ainslie** (MA), Steven Subotnick (RI), **Lauren Mantecón** (NM), **Daniel O'Neill** (RI), Joseph Fortune (RI), and John DeVault (RI). These artists have created an immersive, multisensory experience in the Wilson Museum that aims to engage the viewer in the present moment. Or, as artist Laurie Anderson once put it: "To live in the gap between the moment that is expiring and the one that is arising."



**Sophia Ainslie**

**Artist Statement**

I was with my mother when she exhaled for the last time. After her death, I began using a single X-ray of her abdomen combined with my surrounding landscape as source material. It proved to be a way to hold onto her memory and absorb the meaning of her passing; the resulting shapes and marks led to the development of a visual language. The process began by projecting the X-ray onto paper and tracing specific shapes of organs or spaces between organs. These were then painted with acrylic and Flashe (vinyl paint) in flat, opaque shapes of color commemorating the body. I would then react to these shapes, making spontaneous marks with black India ink. As the work evolved, I began utilizing the computer as a cutting tool to 'collage' carefully selected shapes and marks. Almost as if performing surgery, areas were fragmented, reconstituted, and ultimately mapped through light projection. In the last three years, my content has shifted away from the content of my mother's body to looking deeply at structure and relationships—of scale, color, application, the manner in which shapes meet and the specificity of the edge they create in their meeting. Often beginning with observation as a starting point, my paintings end with the look of abstraction. They are a translation of what I see and experience.

**Artist Bio**

Sophia Ainslie is a South African American abstract painter represented by Gallery NAGA in Boston, MA. She is Associate Teaching Professor in the Department of Art and Design at Northeastern University and maintains a studio in Somerville. Ainslie has exhibited extensively in museums and galleries nationally and internationally, and she has received multiple grants to pursue her work and attend residencies in the States as well as abroad.

For this exhibition, I made my first video – a moving painting, which was exhibited along with my paintings. My student Alexandra Chenette assisted with the video. Click link to view video: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CeWsIaGFa2V/?hl=en>

