



ALONE, TOGETHER:

Viewpoints from the Corcoran Legacy Collection

Alone, Together takes the viewer on a journey exploring interiors of all types: physical, mental, and spiritual. Through isolation and introspection, we want the viewer to consider themes of leisure and serenity. This grouping of artworks considers the intimacy of private settings and juxtaposes this interiority with the physical and psychological distance often imposed by public settings. By comparing artworks, we hope the viewer will reflect on contemporary experiences of social connection and disconnection.

We have included representational and abstract paintings made by Washington-area artists from the Corcoran Legacy Collection as we contemplate ideas about the spaces we occupy (including our minds). We invite the viewer to see themselves as an essential part of the exhibition and have provided prompts to encourage sketching, writing, and other creative responses to the artworks in this show.

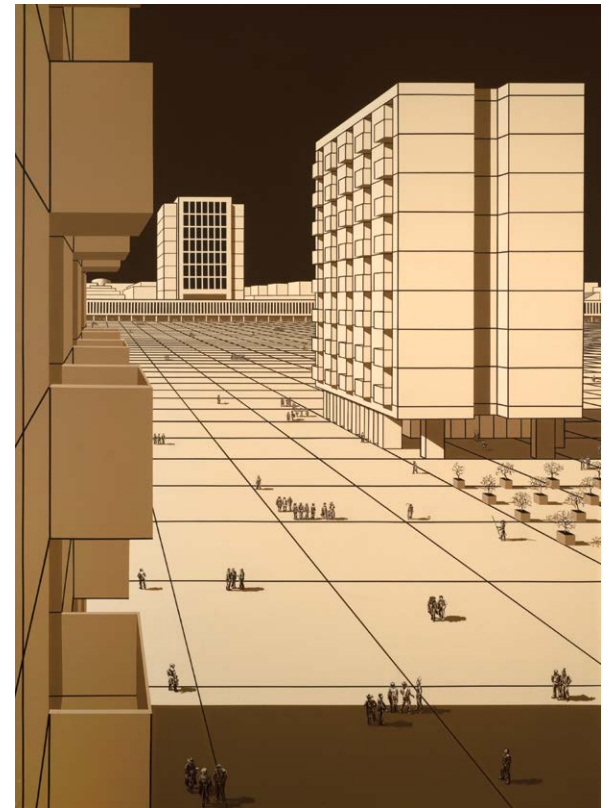
On view April 19 – May 18, 2025

Amy Abraham
Gabriella Alexander
Michelle Avila
Jessica Ban
Jordan Delgado
Diana Soleil Fogel
Ali Frandock
Chase Helein

Hannah Kenn
Terra Muhammad
Jessica Papay
Anna Beatrix Roe
Rachel Sheehan
Alaina Soto
Denisse Zamora

The student curators of *Alone, Together* are part of The American University's Spring 2025 Curatorial Practices course led by Kristen Hileman.

Design: Lloyd Greenberg Design LLC



Nancy Wolf, *View from the Balcony*, 1975. Acrylic on canvas, 60 × 45 in. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of John Thiers Calkins). Cover, from top: Lani Irwin, *Queen of Hearts*, 1997–1998. Oil on canvas, 39.75 × 41.25 in. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of Lani Irwin); William Woodward, *Promenade*, 1971. Oil on canvas, 64 × 68 in. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Anonymous gift in memory of Betsy Parker).

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, one of the first private museums in the United States, was established in 1869 by William Wilson Corcoran and expanded in 1880 to include the Corcoran College of Art and Design with the mission 'dedicated to art and used solely for the purpose of encouraging the American genius.' In 2014, the Corcoran transferred the college to George Washington University and distributed the works from its collection to museums and institutions in Washington, D.C.

In 2018, the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art gifted over 9,000 Corcoran pieces to the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, enabling American University students to collaborate in creating exhibitions that will bridge the community and the collection.



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY MUSEUM
AT THE KATZEN ARTS CENTER
4400 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20016
www.american.edu/cas/museum

CURATORS SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS:



Robert F. Gates, *The Chair*, 1961. Oil on canvas, 66 × 52 in. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Museum Purchase, 15th Area Exhibition Purchase Fund, and exchange).

Amy Abraham: The size of Robert Gates' *The Chair* invites the viewer to relax into the warmth and serenity of the depicted wicker seating. To me, this chair represents the possible comfort that comes from quiet moments of solitude. Alone, our minds are allowed to rest from the exhaustion of our everyday lives.

Gabriella Alexander: The sense of quiet solitude evident in Jane Margaret Dow's *Esse* promotes mindfulness. Rather than merely observing the painting, viewers are invited to look through the abstracted window and engage in personal contemplation. By practicing this self-reflection, each viewer experiences *Esse* in their own unique way.

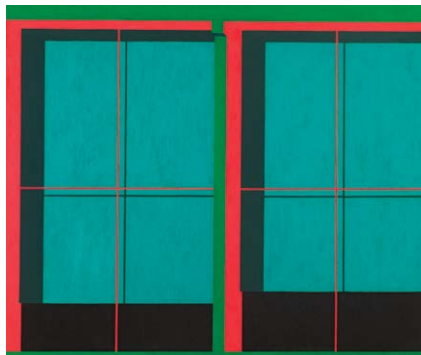
Michelle Avila: I love all the pieces in *Alone, Together* because they brighten the gallery space, but also provide a sense of community between the visitors and the museum space.

Jessica Ban: *Alone, Together* invites reflection on the modern human condition, a key idea in William Woodward's *Promenade*. His portrayal of people physically close yet emotionally distant mirrors the exhibition's themes of connection and separation, encouraging viewers to explore presence and rest as a form of self-care.

Chase Helein: To me, Nancy Wolf's *View from the Balcony* epitomizes the phrase *Alone, Together*. The small figures stranded in a strange and desolate urban landscape make me think of all the strangers in the city I will never know, and yet we occupy this space together.

Terra Muhammad: *Alone, Together* presents postwar works from the Corcoran Legacy Collection alongside creative reinterpretations by students to conceptualize how themes of disconnection can persist across generations. Through shifts in perspectives, the exhibition offers a framing that encourages dialogue on how to navigate the evolving, fragmented quality of the present landscapes of social and spatial relationships.

Alaina Soto: Clark V. Fox's piece *San Francisco Chinatown Window* juxtaposes the interior and exterior spaces that *Alone, Together* portrays through a number of different works. The window motif disconnects the interior and exterior and, in turn, encourages the viewer to participate in their own moment of introspection and consider their place within social and spatial landscapes.



Clark V. Fox, *San Francisco Chinatown Window*, 1976. Oil on linen, 30 × 36 in. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of the Friends of the Corcoran Gallery of Art).



Lowell Nesbitt, *Claes Oldenburg's Studio - '67*, 1967. Oil on canvas, 70 × 90 in. Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Gift of the artist).

CREATIVE PROMPTS

- Using Lowell Nesbitt's painting, picture yourself as artist Claes Oldenburg in his studio. Write a poem or short story from the point of view of Oldenburg making his sculptures and sketches.
- Imagine yourself at the table in Lani Irwin's *Queen of Hearts*. Write out a conversation that might occur between these figures, deciding whether or not to include yourself. Alternately, sketch the next thing that happens at the table.
- Choose three emotions that you feel after viewing the exhibition. Focusing on these emotions, write or sketch a response to *Alone, Together*.
- Choose two paintings between which you sense a connection. Write a poem, script, or short story that develops a conversation between the two artworks or treats the works as two settings in the same text.
- Choose one of the abstract pieces that stands out to you. Observe the formal elements in the artwork (for instance, color, line, shape, and texture). Using these elements, sketch a new composition or write a poem or story that translates this visual imagery into aspects of a character or narrative.