

PRESS RELEASE

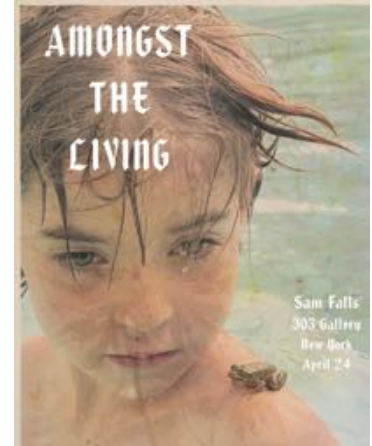
SAM FALLS

Amongst the Living

APRIL 24 - MAY 30, 2026

303 GALLERY, NEW YORK

RECEPTION: FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 6-8PM



303 Gallery is pleased to present our fourth solo exhibition by Sam Falls, bringing together a new body of work incorporating painting, ceramics, and photography.

*“Arranging by chance
To meet as far this morning
From the world as agreeing
With it, you and I
Are suddenly what the trees try*

*To tell us we are:
That their merely being there
Means something; that soon
We may touch, love, explain.”*

- John Ashbery from “Some Trees” (*Some Trees*, 1956)

“Just look at the world around you... actually, no, don't look” - The Mojave desert expanded and swallowed the road in front of me as I dug into a cross country drive in the Spring of 2021 listening to the opening lines of Destroyer's song “The Raven” for the first time. As the lyrics immediately and dramatically compounded with my mental disposition and landscape, the singer Dan Bejar repeated for emphasis, “Just look at the world around you... actually, no, don't look” and the epiphany of the broad application of this sentiment set in and has never left. At some point in civilization we had to be reminded to stop and smell the roses, to look at the world around us, but at what moment in recent times did it become maybe better to not? To avoid chancing the view of the world collapsing before your eyes? Just as *The Little Mermaid*

foreshadowed in "Under the Sea", "The human world, it's a mess, life under the sea is better than anything they've got up there, just look at the world around you, right here on the ocean floor. Such wonderful things surround you, what else are you looking for?" This metaphor now serves as reality: we've taken our environment for granted hunting for progress and our world of natural and urban surroundings are in such a state it's become harder to look than not. Dually, we have provided such an available and demanding virtual world that when we do have time to enjoy the world around us, both people and places, we are distracted and detached from it by screens physically and mentally. By ignoring the problems of society today they continue to grow, we look and look more. Bearing witness to nature and people is the core of existence. Within my expanding conceptual practice, I took on the simple task of looking deeper at the world around me and making art through direct interaction with it, hopefully encouraging a return to stopping and smelling the roses. Looking at the world requires four very important elements - presence, proximity, patience, and participation. Like meditation, the more we do this the easier it becomes to find a way to keep looking at the natural world and the people who surround us in our time here - Mother, Nature, Sister, Brother. - Sam Falls

Originally working with photography, Falls abandoned the medium specific tools such as camera, film, and printing over a decade ago to work more intimately with the conceptual precepts of photography - namely time, exposure, and representation. Known for his site-specific, durational works engaging nature as both medium and subject, Falls creates artworks that are primary sources of prolonged exposure to the atmosphere and environment in order to bridge the gap between artistic production and the viewer of the finished piece, carrying the ecology of a place and the history of its experience. In this new exhibition, Falls returns to traditional photography, incorporating it with his idiosyncratic processes surrounding painting and sculpture developed from working with the environment en plein air, expanding and collapsing the mediums together.

Like the paintings and photographs, time and mortality are the metaphorical undercurrent of his subject matter with ceramics, represented by plants fossilized in clay, analogous to a moment in time frozen on film. In these life size imprints of plants we see a given flower halted at the zenith of its life cycle, aestheticized but real,

reminding us both inwardly of the present moment and reciprocally of the coexistence and participation of every element of ecology. The new works incorporate both freestanding and integrated vases, inspired by Falls' 2025 exhibition at the Sogetsu Plaza in Tokyo where he encountered the more free-form school of Sogetsu Ikebana. "Anytime, anywhere, by anyone" is the creative and democratic philosophy of Sofu Teshigahara, the Sogetsu's school's founder. The vases are arranged with flowers and plants of the given season in collaboration with the people and place exhibited, now becoming not only about the ecosystem and season from which they were created but also a representation of the time and environment they are viewed.

The terrazzo sculptures are composed of healing gemstones and are meant to be touched. Originally conceived and exhibited as monoliths, Falls reoriented the new pieces in landscape format to invite human engagement, wanting them to feel both supportive and familiar rather than intimidating and grand. For millennia across civilizations, gemstones have been believed to hold healing properties. The widespread use of lapis lazuli in ancient Egypt was used for both practical and symbolic protection in life and afterlife. The word "crystal" comes from the Ancient Greek term "krystallos" and originated from the belief that quartz was "eternal ice" gifted from the gods and used for many purposes include cauterizing wounds by channeling sunlight, cooling and calming the body, centering mental energy, and as a talisman for protection from evil. From Hippocrates to Theophrastus the use of gemstones was common in practical and symbolic healing. Theophrastus devoted many years classifying minerals and their healing properties in his treatise *On Stones*, which was preserved and became the guide to the lapidaries of the medieval through the Renaissance. The use of stones and crystals by the Hopi, Navajo, Apache, Zuni, Pima, and Pueblo people among many other native civilizations points to its intrinsic natural value unified by the aesthetics of earth.

Presence, Proximity, Patience, Participation.

Sam Falls (b. 1984 in San Diego, CA) was raised in Vermont and lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his BA from Reed College in 2007 and his MFA from ICP-Bard in 2010. He has had exhibitions at Simose Art Museum, Hiroshima, Japan (2025); Cookie Factory, Denver (2025); Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden (2024); the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (2023); the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018); Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Trento and Rovereto, Italy (2018); The Kitchen, New York (2015); Ballroom Marfa, Texas (2015); Pomona College Museum of Art (2014); Public Art Fund, New York (2014); and LAXART, Los Angeles (2013), among others. His work has been included in group exhibitions at the Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2018); Le Consortium, Dijon (2017); Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio (2017); Mead Gallery, University of Warwick, England (2016); Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland (2015); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015); Menil Collection, Houston (2015); Museo MADRE, Naples (2014); and the International Center of Photography, New York (2013); among others.

CONTACT

For more information on Sam Falls, please contact Katy Erdman,
kathryn@303gallery.com.

For press inquiries, please contact Kevin Hsieh, press@303gallery.com.

Image: Sam Falls, *Heart and Lungs*, 2026. Pigment on archival inkjet print on canvas.