

Marcie Vesel Bronkar: See Enclosed.

Works in wax, paint, and cloth at Prince Street Gallery this September.

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Marcie Vesel Bronkar, *Paraphernalia*, encaustic Assemblage on wood panel, 2026, 24 x 20 inches.

We have mostly letters. The Renaissance poet Vittoria Colonna wrote passionately to her friends and family—Michelangelo was among her closest epistolary companion—and among the struggles they describe was her discomfiture with publication.¹ While poetry, like painting, has an implicit quality of public disclosure, in the day it was a much more private affair. Paintings were for the ceilings of churches, but poetry—the humanist, emotional, mnemosynic verse that Colonna practiced—was for letters, manuscripts, and private recitation. As the printing press—and pirated literature—proliferated, poets like Vittoria feared losing control of their work to the world² while her Michelangelo strained for as grand an audience he could muster.

I first encountered Marcie Vesel Bronkar’s work in a more Michelangesque mode: from textile design to abstract expressionism, her work was color, form, texture, an design—at volume. A contemporary artist from New York and Los Angeles, Bronkar has moved, recently, to the mode of poetry. Possibly quieter: the works are intimately scaled and cleave toward monochrome—but more integrally, they bespeak a closeness than feels unpublishable—a letter just for us.

Some of the works are literally manuscripts—sheets of paper soaked in waxed, and collaged, with an outside-in compositional device: now the edges of the paper are on the inside of the picture, pressurizing that interior activating the outside. The textural ground of the encaustic—gritty, almost industrial, to the semi-transparent and rounding—makes a raw stage for the dance of delicate lines and edges; the occasional dash of muted color resonates profoundly here.



Marcie Bronkar, *Stardust*, gouache and encaustic collage on handmade paper, 2025, 20 x 16 inches.

But beyond this play of abstraction, identifiers appear, and in some of the works, the metallic gray wax has a charcoal-like sheen, and the found bits of substrate begin to announce themselves as found and familiar objects. A span of molding, now blackened under layers of encaustic, stages a swatch of fabric, frozen in silvery black wax. As the mind digs through this ephemera, it’s hard not to feel like we’re combing the rubble of a home burnt in a forest fire—the found objects of Pompei. The work isn’t about loss *per se*; its contemplation is a poignancy, not grief. In broad, gravelly passages, you sense the hand of industrial excavation; in others finely limned gray-blue reveries, the set-aside day-dream of a hand that has moved on to some other worldly emergency. This is what remains—when everything else has gone.

Ephemera, with notes of vanishing-ness and lingering evidence, is the wrong word; these are poems, not for publication, but for correspondence: *see enclosed*. Of course enclosure was different in the days of Vittoria Colonna and Michelangelo—the envelope was still centuries in the future. For matters of profound intimacy, they sealed their stirrings of the heart just as Bronkar does today: in wax, paint, and cloth.

Marcie Vesel Bronkar: *What Remains* opens September 8th at [Prince Street Gallery, 547 W 27th Street](#), on view through October 3rd. There will be an opening reception on Saturday, September 12, from 2-6 PM, and I’ll join the artist for an artist talk on September 19th from 3-5 PM. Space is limited. Thanks for reading!

Jonathan

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