

Meliksetian MB Briggs

PATRON

ART / CULTURE / DESIGN

April / May 2026

CULTURAL CURRENCY

MEET THE STANDOUT ARTISTS WHOSE BOUNDARY PUSHING WORK WILL
COMMAND ATTENTION AT THIS MONTH'S DALLAS ART FAIR

By Ian Etter



Petra Cortright's images embody the sublime. From a distance, they suggest a lineage to painters like Thomas Moran and the Rocky Mountain School—the grandiose, atmospheric landscapes of the American West. But as one approaches, they fracture into subtle dissonance. Repeated gestures and duplicated elements begin to surface, disrupting the illusion of a unified landscape and suggesting fragments of reconstructed memory. In *PC folderdust velvetflux "datapool" softreboot*, 2025, a pelican appears repeated side by side, partially hidden and degraded by digital artifacts. The painting operates as a swift digital collage, in which crisp, high-resolution detail and pixelated imagery construct the fantastical landscape. The result is a peculiar spatial tension: a terrain that feels both geographically precise and strangely otherworldly.

In *PC netlock.exe charmfield "twilight input" glowtrace*, 2025, three mountain peaks cascade upward against a pink-and-teal sky scattered with stars. With crests clearly defined, their surfaces are blown out, dissolving into nondescript color that recalls the washed-out glow of old 35mm film. The lowermost peak erupts in a myriad of high-chroma tones, wiped with what appears to be a Photoshop interference layer. Forms are cut and reassembled, their edges revealing their origins as digital collage. The lower third of the painting shifts again, oscillating between painterly gesture and photographic residue. Details resembling foliage linger beneath the surface. Traces of sand emerge alongside silhouettes of birds and another partially hidden pelican. The image feels rapidly assembled, layers of landscape seeping in and out of one another. The terrain unfolds less as a stable geography than a reconstruction—memory pieced together from fragments of image and gesture.

Cortright's landscapes are made in Photoshop, where hundreds of independent layers amass into dense digital paintings. She has accumulated an archive of brushstrokes, image fragments, and her native southern California landscapes, many sourced from the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum. Both visually and in process, time is broken—the artist builds scenes that evolve over hours, months, or even years. The work is then printed onto wood and metal: inks seep into the grain, metal surfaces shimmer and reflect light. Showing with Meliksetian | Briggs, Los Angeles and Dallas, these works situate Cortright's digital landscapes within a lineage of Western landscape painting while also destabilizing it. These layered digital paintings insist on a physical presence—even as the landscapes they picture remain permanently in flux. —Jan Etter



Petra Cortright, *softdrive_flare "angelbit" crush_ribbon modemhalo*, 2025, digital painting on birch wood panel, 40 x 57.25 in. © Petra Cortright, 2026. Courtesy of Meliksetian | Briggs, Dallas and 1301 PE, Los Angeles.

PETRA CORTRIGHT

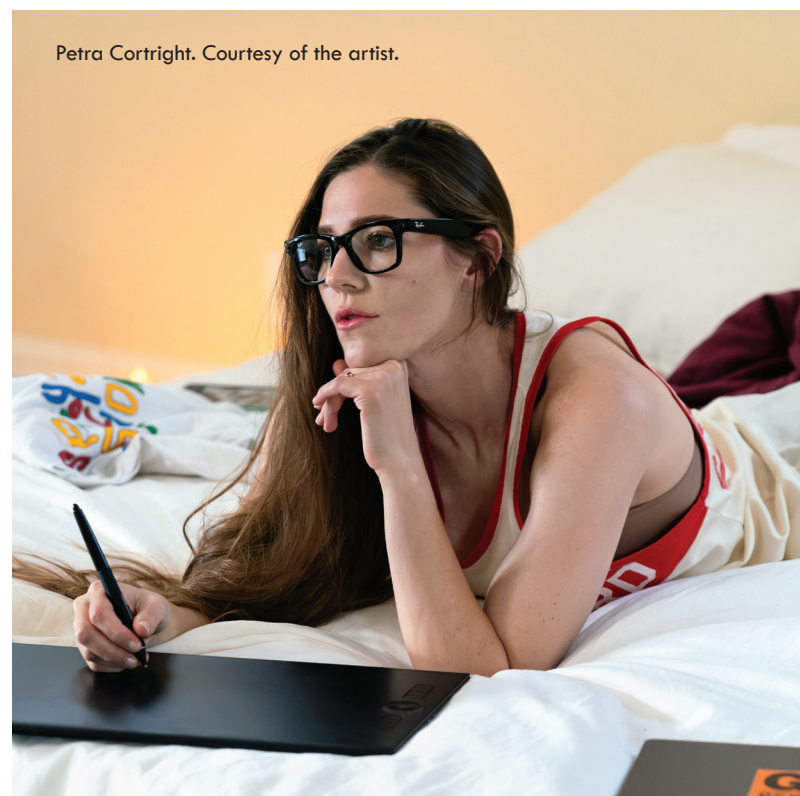
Meliksetian|Briggs



Petra Cortright, *folderdust velvetflux "datapool" softreboot*, 2025, digital painting on canvas, 40 x 30 in. © Petra Cortright, 2026. Courtesy of Meliksetian | Briggs, Dallas and 1301 PE, Los Angeles.



Petra Cortright, *netlock.exe charmfield "twilight input" glowtrace*, 2025, digital painting on canvas 40 x 30 in. © Petra Cortright, 2026. Courtesy of Meliksetian | Briggs, Dallas and 1301 PE, Los Angeles.



Petra Cortright. Courtesy of the artist.