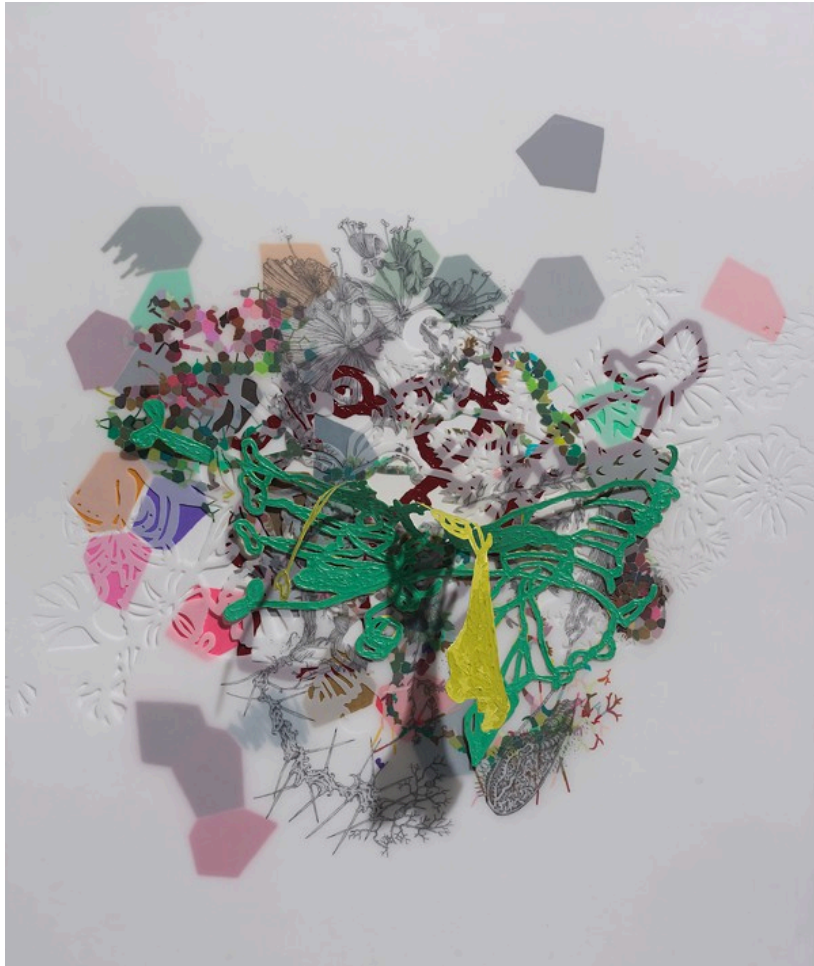


ARTS STORIES & INTERVIEWS

# San Antonio Artist Leigh Anne Lester Investigates an Uncertain Future with Exhibition of ‘Evolutionary Novelties’

By [Bryan Rindfuss](#) on Fri, Mar 15, 2019 at 1:40 pm



*Leigh Anne Lester, Generational Formulate*

Deftly drafted and intricately layered, the fascinating works of accomplished local artist Leigh Anne Lester suggest flora collected from an alien planet. A native of Shreveport who earned a BFA in painting from UTSA and co-directed the small but mighty gallery Cactus Bra Space in the Blue Star Arts Complex for 19 years, Lester has artistically explored diseases as “family heirlooms” and constructed cautionary narratives surrounding recent advances in genetic modification.

Employing a research-heavy creative process that’s equal parts nerdy DJ and full-blown mad scientist, she recreates historical

botanical illustrations in graphite on semi-translucent drafting film and then remixes

her samples in stacked arrangements

interspersed with what she’s described as

“floating cells” and “distorted offspring

plants.” Easily among her greatest hits,

Lester’s 2011 Hunting Prize-winning

drawing *Mutant Spectre* is essentially the

germinating seed for interconnected

projects – including some that venture into

the sculptural realm with colored vinyl or

Plexiglas shapes that conjure maps,

microorganisms or bodies of water beneath swirling layers of hand-cut drafting

film that pull away from the wall and cast undulating shadows. Although partly

informed by her large-scale McNay Art Museum wall installation *A Variety of*

*Forms Recovering from Transubstantiated Clarity* and her Blue Star

Contemporary Berlin Residency at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Lester’s new solo

show “No Necessary Time Axis on Evolutionary Novelties” introduces new

elements to the bodies of work she’s created over the last decade. Nodding with

its title to an uncertain future enabled by gene-editing technology and a

newfound ability to “leap-frog” over evolutionary hurdles, the Contemporary Art

Month exhibition sees the artist returning to tradition with a new large-scale

drawing (her first in quite some time) and also pushing onward with three-

dimensional works involving hand-cut drafting film that’s painted on both sides

and behaves almost like a textile that drapes over wall-mounted pieces. Likening

the collected works to parts of a “recurring visual vocabulary,” Lester explains

that, “If the viewer follows those clues they will find information resurfacing in

different pieces throughout this exhibit. A very slow-motoned animation of

generational manifestations.”



Leigh Anne Lester, *Blind Trajectory*



*Leigh Anne Lester, Adjacent Impression 1*