

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JAMES OLIVER GALLERY

Unfurling 250



June 13 - August 22, 2026 | Philadelphia, PA

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James Oliver Gallery in Philadelphia presents **Unfurling 250**.

Opening Saturday, June 13, 2026, the group exhibition features 20 artists: Ted Adams, Paul Bastin, Don Bell, Pete Checchia, Nic D'Amico, Anthony DeMelas, John E. Dowell Jr., Nick Feeley, Claes Gabriel, Glossblack, Lou Haney, Eve Hoyt, James Labold, Caroline Leary, Jon Manteau, Natalie Hope McDonald, Aaron Nemec, James Oliver, John Y. Wind, and Patricia Yáñez. As Philadelphia, the birthplace of American independence, marks the nation's 250th anniversary, these artists unfurl a collective portrait of America as it has been lived, dreamed, built, and questioned. **Unfurling 250** runs through August 22, 2026.

From neon light art to glass sculpture, painting, video installation to couture textile, documentary photography to printmaking rooted in jazz, the artists in Unfurling 250 bring vastly different hands to a shared subject. What emerges is not a celebration or a critique, but something more honest: a record. These are artists who have spent decades inside American cities, American institutions, and American stories. Together, their work asks what it means for a nation to turn 250 and what it means to unfurl a flag and look at it clearly.

Unfurling 250 opens the evening before Flag Day. It is not a coincidence that this reckoning happens in Philadelphia, the city where the nation's founding documents were written and where the work of living up to them has never stopped.

About the Artists

Ted Adams

Ted Adams is a Philadelphia-based photographer contributing two works to Unfurling 250. Adams is interested in photography as a way of stripping the original meaning out of the subject matter while making the image open to interpretation. He has shown regularly at the Robin Rice Gallery in New York City and is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Paul Bastin

Paul Bastin is a Philadelphia-based photographer and senior film/video editor who spent nearly 30 years in New York City before relocating to Philadelphia. His photographic practice documents the rhythms of city life through daily street observation; finding meaning in what gets overlooked, yet that which represents life here on earth.

Don Bell

Don Bell is an Emmy Award-winning CBS Philadelphia journalist and internationally published photographer whose work amplifies the richness and complexity of communities of color. His solo exhibitions across Los Angeles, Miami Beach, and Hartford have earned national recognition. Bell was part of Cool Under Pressure at James Oliver Gallery in 2023.



[image: Glossblack]

Pete Checchia

Pete Checchia is a Philadelphia-based artist, photographer, curator, and the founder of Pete Checchia Photography & Arts, a space dedicated to collaboration in many forms: art installations, mixed media, and performance works. His freelance photo career focuses on classical music; his clients include the Philadelphia Orchestra and Carnegie Hall. He also works extensively with creative art models collaborating on books, exhibitions, and mixed media pieces. His connection with James Oliver Gallery goes back two decades and includes his 2015 solo exhibit *Blindfolded Americans*, an exploration of the flag, culture, and identity.

Nic D'Amico

Nic D'Amico is a Philadelphia-based photographer, director, and experiential creative director with over 25 years of work at D'Amico Studios. Co-founder of Klip Collective, pioneers of video projection mapping; his portrait of Olympic gymnast Jordan Chiles was selected for Lürzer's Archive 200 Best Photographers. He has also shot spreads featuring Drake, Snoop Dogg, and campaigns for Nike.

Anthony DeMelas

Anthony DeMelas is a Philadelphia native and graduate of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts whose mixed media work: wood, oil, wax, paint, photography, has been exhibited in the city since the early 1990s. His work explores overlooked visual reflections that coexist all around us through layering and material exposure.

John E. Dowell Jr.

John E. Dowell Jr. is Professor Emeritus of Printmaking at Tyler School of Art, Temple University, and one of Philadelphia's most historically significant artists. The first African American artist-in-residence at the Venice Biennale (1970), his work is held in over 70 museum collections worldwide including MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dowell most recently held a solo show at James Oliver Gallery titled *I Got Through It*.

Nick Feeley

Nick Feeley is a self-taught Philadelphia-based artist whose painting and sculpture practice explores the threshold between surface and space, the moment a flat work begins to inhabit three dimensions. His work is rooted in color, nature,

architecture, and the energy of materials pushed past their conventional limits. This is Feeley's third time showing with JOG.



[image: Lou Haney]

Claes Gabriel

Claes Gabriel was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and lives and works in West Philadelphia. A graduate of Maryland Institute College of Art, he creates three-dimensional paintings, masks, and sculptures charged with the spiritual energy of Haitian folklore. Recognized as one of the foremost Haitian-American contemporary artists, his work is in the permanent collection of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

Glossblack

Glossblack (Jimmy McMEnamin) is an internationally celebrated typographic muralist and graffiti artist whose work has become part of the fabric of the Philadelphia region. Commissioned by Comcast, Google, the Philadelphia 76ers, and the Philadelphia Eagles, he now also creates sculptural work exploring symbolism, spirituality, and sacred geometry. Glossblack held a solo show with JOG titled Ice Cold in 2023.

Lou Haney

Lou Haney paints domestic spaces using nostalgia as a means of temporary escape from contemporary life. A MacDowell fellow based in Charlottesville, Virginia, his work is influenced by the Pattern and Decoration Movement and has been shown at Spring/Break Art Fair in New York in 2022, 2023, and 2025.

Eve Hoyt

Eve Hoyt is a Philadelphia-area artist who has spent over 35 years bending neon glass; first as a tradesperson, now as a fine artist whose colorful, whimsical sculptures present neon as a form of art. Co-founder of the Neon Makers Guild, her award-winning work has been shown nationally since 2001, including with James Oliver Gallery.

James Labold

James Labold is a Philadelphia glass sculptor whose practice ranges from ancient lost wax casting and glassblowing to contemporary 3D printing and digital manipulation. A graduate of Tyler School of Art and Ball State University, his work explores national identity, consumer culture, and mythology; shaped in part by childhood summers at Philadelphia's museums and colonial sites. Labold is a staple artist with JOG, having shown here numerous times.

Caroline Leary

Caroline Leary is a Philadelphia-based fashion designer and textile artist whose bespoke couture garments are made to order using luxurious and upcycled fabrics. A Drexel University graduate inspired by vintage Balenciaga silhouettes, she brings a rare wearable art voice to Unfurling 250; rooted in craft tradition, women's labor, and sustainable making.

Jon Manteau

Jon Manteau was born and raised in Philadelphia, where as a teenager he was a member of Klub City Decorators, a graffiti crew alongside fellow Unfurling 250

artist Anthony DeMelas. He went on to study at Parsons School of Design, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (Cresson Traveling Scholarship), and the University of Delaware (MFA). Manteau describes his art as “Post Painterly Abstraction,” drawn to history and how context shapes the progress of his work.

Natalie Hope McDonald

Natalie Hope McDonald is a Philadelphia-based painter, illustrator, and muralist whose work draws from urban imagery, popular culture, and memory. Codes and hidden language have long been central to her practice. Her hand-drawn Sharpie portrait of Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson — featuring the Justice’s words, “In my family, it took just one generation to go from segregation to the Supreme Court” now hangs in Justice Jackson’s chambers. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This is her third time showing at JOG.

Aaron Nemec

Aaron Nemec was born in Ohio and raised in Michigan. He earned his BFA in painting and drawing from the University of Michigan (2001) and MFA from Purdue University (2011) in the Electronic and Time-Based Art program. His sculptures, paintings, drawings, performance, audio, and video projects have been shown nationally and internationally. Recent work at Little Lightning Gallery (Brooklyn, NY), mtn space (Lake Worth Beach, FL), Pamplemousse Gallery (Richmond, VA), Hey There Projects (Joshua Tree, CA), Smoke the Moon (Santa Fe, NM), Riso Club (Leipzig, Germany), and MoCAD (Detroit, MI). He lives and works near the northern shores of Lake Michigan.



[image: Aaron Nemeč]

James Oliver

James Oliver is a painter and the founder of James Oliver Gallery, established in Philadelphia in 2006. Born in Upstate New York and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Oliver began his creative life as a songwriter in Austin, Texas before turning to painting. His work has been recognized by NPR, Huffington Post, and the Michelin Guide and pushes the tradition of twentieth-century abstraction into a contemporary context.

John Y. Wind

John Y. Wind was born in Israel, raised in Philadelphia, and studied at the University of Pennsylvania and the Slade School of Fine Art in London. His mixed media narrative portraits and assemblages are in the permanent collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum (London), the Musée des Arts Décoratifs (Paris), and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Named Best Artist by Philadelphia Magazine Best of Philly 2022, Wind has exhibited with JOG for over 14 years.



[image: John Wind]

Patricia Yáñez

Patricia Yáñez is a Chilean-American, Philadelphia-based video installation artist, educator, and founder of Creative Synergy Media. Former studio assistant to the late Leroy Johnson (1937–2022), she collaborated with Johnson on *Jazz City* at Philadelphia City Hall (2019) and brings a bilingual, cross-cultural lens to work at the intersection of art, education, and sustainability. Yáñez has held a studio residency at JOG for over two years and has been a regular collaborator in exhibitions and in the operational life of the gallery.

About James Oliver Gallery

James Oliver Gallery (JOG) is a contemporary art gallery located in the heart of Philadelphia's historic district at 723 Chestnut Street, 2nd Floor, above the world-renowned Morimoto Restaurant. Founded in 2006, JOG has been recognized by NPR, Huffington Post, and the Michelin Guide. The gallery features local, national, and international artists in painting, sculpture, mixed media, photography, and installation. JOG was among the first Philadelphia galleries to prioritize female artists from its inception.

Gallery hours: Thursday – Friday, 5–8pm | Saturday, 1–6pm

Unfurling 250

Opening Reception Saturday June 13, 6 - 9PM
723 Chestnut Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia PA 19106



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