

AUG 20, 2025 — JUL 26, 2026

FAIRE FOYER:

SARAH
CROWNER
IN
DIALOGUE
WITH
ETEL
ADNAN

ENGLISH



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Sarah Crowner (b. 1974) is an American artist whose work with geometric abstraction blurs the boundaries between painting, sculpture, set design, and ceramics. Exploring the formal language of abstraction with simplicity and intuition, her ongoing experiments in site-responsive installations revisit and reimagine the legacies of modernist art and architecture. Recalling the work of artists like Ellsworth Kelly (1923–2015) and Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889–1943) and even architects such as Lina Bo Bardi (1914–1992), Crowner intertwines the expansive language of abstraction with craft, design, and the built environment.

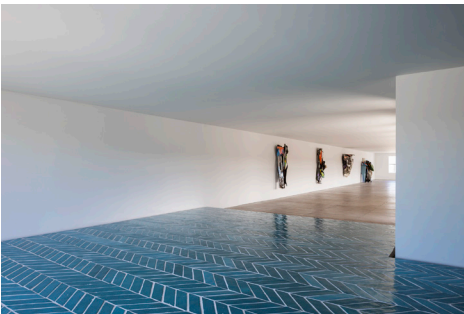
Deeply influenced by architecture, Crowner incorporates the environments surrounding her projects into the logic of her work. This attention to place-based design was especially evident in a 2022 installation for the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas. Working inside a former barracks on artist Donald Judd's converted army base, she recovered an unrealized idea by sculptor John Chamberlain (1927–2011). Crowner translated Chamberlain's proposal for a swimming pool into a raised platform covered with turquoise-blue tiles installed in a pattern that echoes the rhythmic pattern of flowing water. Her use of the chevron pattern and her focus on the characteristics of materials, like the glossy surface of glaze-fired terracotta, disrupted the minimalist architecture inviting viewers into a sensual, spatial experience with abstraction.

Etel Adnan (1925–2021) was a Lebanese-American painter and poet who created radiant landscape paintings and abstract drawings with rich, geometric fields of color. She is among the artists who have similarly expanded abstraction beyond the confines of the canvas. Adnan's work has occasionally been translated into large-scale tapestries and murals, like the monumental ceramic mural in The Bass's collection—the only such example by the artist in the United States. For the exhibition *Faire Foyer: Sarah Crowner in Dialogue with Etel Adnan*, Crowner creates a setting for a formal exchange between her work and Adnan's. Her semicircular carpeted alcove—what she



describes as *faire foyer*, the French term for creating a welcoming transitional space connecting the exterior to a home's interior—brings viewers into an embodied experience with Adnan's art and her own sculptures.

Though hefty in weight, Crowner's highly reflective bronzes—her "stones" cast from enlarged versions of found beach pebbles—have a sense of lightness and rhythm while asserting a definitive, dazzling presence. Their reflective but imperfect surfaces distort the surroundings, including the hues of Adnan's mural. The sculptures are placed on pedestals like precious stones, and arranged in relation to the exhibition's other works, which include rarely exhibited photographs of the rocky California coastline taken by Adnan in the 1960s. Reflecting viewers' movements and physical proximity to the forms, Crowner's bronzes and installation design weave together varying surfaces—glaze, metal, fiber, carpet and color. The interplay of materials furthers the artist's pursuit of visual harmony between abstraction and the spaces where art and viewers intersect.



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Cover image: Sarah Crowner, *Stone 1 (Small)*, 2024. Bronze. $8 \times 5 \frac{1}{4} \times 5 \frac{3}{4}$ in. Photography by Charles Benton. | Interior images: (1) Sarah Crowner, Installation view of *Platform (Blue Green Terracotta for JC)*, 2022. The Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas. Photography by Alex Marks. (2) Sarah Crowner, Installation view of a selection of bronze *Stones*, 2024. Dimensions variable. Photography by Charles Benton.

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Faire Foyer: Sarah Crowner in Dialogue with Etel Adnan is curated by James Voorhies, The Bass Curator at Large. This exhibition is made possible with generous support from Sarah Arison, PHILLIPS, and Pure.

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