

For Immediate Release

July 23, 2026

Dana Lynn Harper | Imagined Paradise: *Bridging the Celestial and the Earthbound*

Brandt Gallery is delighted to present “Imagined Paradise: *Bridging the Celestial and the Earthbound*”, an inaugural feature exhibit by multimedia sculptural artist Dana Lynn Harper, marking the artist’s official debut as a part of Brandt Gallery’s dynamic roster. The exhibit will feature a compelling selection of mixed-media sculptures that explore the intersection of memory, ritual, identity, spirituality, labor, and cultural inheritance. Composed of versatile materials such as paper clay, wood, plaster and glass, and often adorned and embedded with found objects, Harper’s works function as both objects of devotion and vessels for preserving family history.

Drawing inspiration from Catholic candelabras, altars, and sacred architecture, Harper’s wall sculptures function as ritualistic votive offerings that merge familial legacy with spiritual traditions. Activated through gestures such as lighting candles, placing flowers, or filling vessels with rice and other materials, the works become living sites of ceremony and collective remembrance. Inspired by the artist's great-grandmother's Buddhist ancestor altar and their mother's Catholic upbringing in Indonesia, the sculptures explore the intersections of Buddhism, Catholicism, colonial history, and diasporic identity. Ornamental forms reminiscent of filigree and wrought iron gates symbolize both protection and social status, while partially obscured portraits of matriarchal figures reflect the fragmented nature of memory, ancestry, immigration, and intergenerational resilience.

Rooted in personal memories, family photographs, and culturally significant materials, the sculptures serve as acts of preservation, honoring ancestral narratives through labor-intensive making. Materials such as rice, dried goods, pearls, shells, and gold beads evoke family traditions and diasporic connections, while repetitive ornamentation reflects the deeply held value of hard work passed through generations. The physical process of kneading clay, placing grains of rice, and assembling intricate forms recalls the gestures of the artist's grandmothers making dumplings and their mother rinsing rice, creating an embodied connection between artistic practice and family ritual. Through these meditative acts, the work becomes a space for reflection, cultural reclamation, and an ongoing dialogue with heritage, belonging, and ancestral memory.

Dana Lynn Harper is a multimedia sculptural artist based in Columbus, Ohio. Harper holds a BFA in Art & Technology from The Ohio State University, and received her MFA from Penn State University. Harper has been the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships including the Bunton Waller Fellowship, The Greater Columbus Arts Council Fellowship 2026, the ArtPrize Artist Seed Grant, Ringholz Foundation Award, OAC Professional Award and Manifest Prize. She has featured in exhibitions and institutions across the US. Harper also works as an educator at the Columbus College of Art and Design.

“Imagined Paradise: *Bridging the Celestial and the Earthbound*” is on view during gallery hours, Wednesday to Friday 11am-5pm, Saturday to Sunday from 1-5pm, and by private appointment. There will be an opportunity to meet the artist from 5-7:30pm on Friday, August 7th. A virtual catalog will also be available. Private appointments and virtual catalogs can be requested by emailing brgalleries@gmail.com or calling 614.223.1655.