



### 3 Questions with Nina Tichava

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By [Alex De Vore](#)

Artists who represent landscapes are many. It's almost a default position, though we can't blame anyone in that there are so many ways to go about it. Enter Nina Tichava, an artist born in Vallecitos, New Mexico, who trained in the Bay Area but always felt the call of home. Abstraction tends to be Tichava's focus, though her mother—whom she describes as an artist who doesn't consider herself an artist—instilled a certain crafty (think weaving) style into her ethics and aesthetics. Tichava's work can be seen in galleries and spaces around the country, but for these-here 3Qs, we reached out about the upcoming show *New, New Mexico Abstraction*, opening this Friday evening at Turner Carroll Gallery (5 pm. Free. 725 Canyon Road, 986-9800) in which Tichava shows self-described “borrowed landscapes,” actual postcards of infamous places and monuments made new through Tichava's abstract practices.

*Why landscapes?*

Trying to approach something as traditional as landscapes in a fresh way is challenging. I'm not a landscape painter, and when you get closer [to my landscape], it becomes more abstracted. I was never very interested in them, but now I'm starting to see the nuance and skill.

*What the heck is a “borrowed” landscape anyway?*

It's a term I totally made up. This is a new project and new vein for me. After the last election cycle, I was really freaked out and was trying to think of commonalities—landscapes was such an obvious one. It was something small I could keep myself busy with. I wasn't happy with the results of the last election. I was excited to have the first female president. I was shocked, and the environment was one of the first things I was worried about. Climate change is so important right now, and I felt like it was pushed to the side. It's about shared perspectives; the idea was I didn't want to take pictures and make landscape paintings—I'm an interloper in the world of landscapes. They're beautiful in person. They're cool and magnetic and sexy and there's subtle political commentary. I have an atomic bomb, that's my favorite one I made. I did the White House in gold, the Supreme Court in gold. My goal was to mimic the first 100 days of the presidency and trying to understand, ‘Why did people vote for this person who's a misogynist and has no interest beyond his own ego?’

*Were you on the lookout for specific scenes or ideologies with the postcard imagery?*

Initially it's because I've always collected old stationary and postcards. So when I was like, ‘How can I talk to people through art about politics?’ I thought it was an interesting idea. I'd go on eBay and search for vintage postcards, and a lot of them are just what I happened to find.