

TIBOR DE NAGY

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Nell Blaine

Gloucester Harbor and Other Works

March 14 to April 18, 2026



Nell Blaine *Ledge and Sea, Early Morning, 1977* oil on canvas

Tibor de Nagy Gallery is pleased to present Nell Blaine: *Gloucester Harbor and Other Works*, an exhibition of paintings and watercolors. The exhibition focuses on one of Blaine’s most cherished subjects—Gloucester Harbor—captured from various vantage points near her home, alongside her signature floral still lifes and interiors.

Nell Blaine first visited Gloucester in the summer of 1943 at the suggestion of Judith Rothschild. Recalling that period as “magic and productive,” Blaine was so charmed by the maritime life that she eventually purchased a home there. She maintained a dual residence, spending summers and autumns in Gloucester while remaining a fixture of the New York City art world.

The works in this exhibition range from the mid-1950s—when Blaine’s signature style of complex, color-driven painting first emerged—through the 1990s. This survey is particularly notable for spanning the pivotal year of 1959, when Blaine contracted polio during a trip to Greece. After falling gravely ill on the island of Mykonos, she returned to the U.S., where she spent months in an iron lung and years in recovery.

Though the illness left her unable to lift her right arm to an easel, Blaine's tenacity was absolute. She learned to paint with her left hand from a wheelchair and, following surgery, regained the ability to work in watercolor with her right hand on lateral surfaces. Featured in the exhibition is a poignant watercolor of a bouquet of flowers created in the hospital during her recovery—a testament to a passion for painting that never wavered. Ever "the life of the party," Blaine's wide circle of friends supported her through this transition, but it was her own vigor that allowed her to continue traveling and painting as prolifically as she had before.



Nell Blaine *Eudora's Room*, October, 1982 oil on canvas

Nell Blaine arrived in New York City in 1942 to study with Hans Hofmann. She gained early acclaim for her hard-edged abstract paintings at the Jane Street Gallery, the city's first serious artist cooperative. In 1953, she began her long association with Tibor de Nagy Gallery, notably collaborating with Kenneth Koch on one of the gallery's first poet/artist editions. An influential member of the second-generation New York School, Blaine remains a central figure among the group of representational painters that included Larry Rivers, Jane Freilicher, Louisa Matthiasdottir, Leland Bell, Al Kresch, and Robert De Niro, Sr.

Nell Blaine (1922–1996) has been the subject of over seventy-five museum and gallery exhibitions throughout the United States. Her work was recently featured in the group exhibition *(Nothing But) Flowers* at Karma, New York, and is held in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and the Museum of Modern Art. A comprehensive monograph, *Nell Blaine: Her Art and Life*, was published in 1998 with an essay by the artist's longtime friend, critic Martica Sawin.