Overlap
Jennifer Lynn Bates

East Gallery
Aug 1 - Oct 24, 2026
Exhibit Statement:

Overlap is an exhibition of selected work from the last decade. It includes pieces from several series. I use overlap in various ways. There is a literal overlap found in much of my work. My process involves the piecing and overlap of fabrics, papers, and shapes to create works in mixed media. There is thematic overlap in subject matter. I look at people, place, narrative, and time (past, present, and eternity) as starting points for my work. Finally, there is collaborative overlap. I have worked with artist librarian Lindsay Buehler and creative Mary T. Clark to make wall quilts. See below excerpts from artist statements with work represented in this exhibition. Look for the overlap!

Crop Rows is a series based on our rural landscape. It is born out of memories, conversations, and travel. The organic shapes are inspired by American Regionalism, specifically the work of Grant Wood. Paint creates the backdrop for each image. The pieces of fabric, maps, and photographs are carefully pieced together in collage, echoing the process of collage master artist Romare Bearden. Pattern exists in the curving crop rows, swirling clouds, and in the fabrics themselves. This piecing and pattern-making is essential to my creative process. It is time-consuming, layered, and connects me to my mom (a gifted quilter, knitter, and overall creative). These works can be viewed as paintings or wall-quilts.

Parables aims to visually retell biblical parables, such as the parable of The Sower. The work is based on short stories that explain a moral or religious principle. There is no magical wizard or talking horse. Rather, the symbolism is concrete and everyday. Parables using common landscape elements to tell uncommon truths resonate with me. One way I experience Father, Son and Holy Spirit is when in nature. Perhaps a twisting thornbush, a muted sky, or a thriving olive orchard can stir the soul.

FLOOD 08 represents the Cedar River in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The shapes echo those found in the FEMA "2008 Flood Inundation Area" map. The original site-specific piece was composed of over 3000 plastic drinking straws. The various shades of blue symbolize the Cedar River in its natural flowing watercourse. The opaque black describes the footprint of the floodwater during the historic flood of 2008.

Dictators & Dreamers investigates infamy, the ripple effects of power, human rights issues, and dreams of the (seemingly) common person. This body of work contrasts the faces of current or recent absolute rulers of countries around the world with the faces of immigrants, refugees, international students, and asylum seekers now residing in the Cedar Valley. The Dictator is infamous. Dreamers are often anonymous. Now, they hold equal attention.