

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: SCOTT LYALL
Talents

Location: 88 Eldridge Street, New York

Dates: Saturday, May 13 – Friday, June 30, 2023

Reception: Friday, May 19, 6 – 8PM

In a waking dream I saw an altarpiece, composed of infinite gilded panels. These could appear in recursive series, as a set, in a sequence, or a Klee-like diagram. The atmosphere was gold, like a Turner painting; and the gold, which was crushed into sub-dust particles, was durable — impassive like a Cimabue. The Altarpiece was tasked with becoming what it certainly was NOT. It was tasked with becoming Art.

When I turned, I saw only smithereens—pixelated shards from a Mirror of Eros that had fallen like rain on a vast debris field. This second view, I called an altarpiece (an annihilated altarpiece, so to speak).

Miguel Abreu Gallery is pleased to announce the opening, on Saturday, May 13th, of Scott Lyall's *Talents*, his sixth one-person exhibition at the gallery. The show, which is comprised of new large scale and multi-panel works, will be held at our 88 Eldridge Street space. The opening reception is on Friday, May 19 from 6 to 8PM.

The above citation sets up the terms of the dialectic that emerged to structure the current show, and to offer us a kind of cosmic bracket through which to consider Scott Lyall's work. This is the bracket of One and many, or a unified gaze and smithereens. Within its setting, the apeiron is summoned through effects that arise at the Nanoscale. We are told that such unbounded imagery can be modelled and embodied in scenic diagrams.

The show is composed of 13 *Talents*, plus a coda that Lyall has called an ordinal. Each of the works is made by compressing panels of Starphire glass and mirror. The former is imprinted on its inside surface with a unique and potentially infinite sequence of colors, all mixed to the analog range of golds. Then, these colors are infused with glue by the heat required in the laminating process. We obtain an immanent, melted, polychrome object masquerading as a monochrome. Finally, in order to complete each work, a mixture of gel and gold Nanoparticles is added to the outside surface by the artist's hand, a gesture of symbolic vernissage. This is both to seal the interface, and to open the work to a kind of surfacing that presses to alight on the viewers' world.

Each of the *Talents*, when we view them one by one, is a fourfold locus of devices we recall from the time of the avant-gardes: readymades, mirror, lens, and monochrome. However, when these are superposed, they convoke a new quadriptych surface that escapes and exceeds its antecedents. Instead, a spectral glow appears both on and under—or within—the glass. Space is bathed by light and color as a slivered section of suspended value. Here, there is very little need to direct the viewer to a theory-based review of painting, sculpture or photography's expanded fields. The object has become a compact volume that refracts a limitless institution (or at least, a becoming that is not yet settled in the stance of the visitors who come before it). This, Lyall calls a clientless design. But perhaps the client of these works is solitude.

So, what are *Talents*? After all, this word (in the plural) circulates throughout the show. Talent was once a word that defined the measure of the metal in an issued coin. In that example, it referred to truthfulness, indisputability, and authenticity—the stuff not only of a sovereign order, but of durable and credible social substance: a quantitative, rational form of Mana. Closer to the present, a talent was an aptitude: practical

intelligence, creative knowhow. Thus, it came to proclaim the matter of a technical acuity that grounded labor (as poetics or production, whether cliented or not). Talent was the glue that bound an image to material decisions in a course of action, and to technical economies of good results. It became the augur of critical judgment. But in this, it could be enslaved, consumed—enframed—and replaced by AGI. There remain indications of resilience, too. Thus, in a currently enlivened idiom, talent is a cosmotechnical material. In Yuk Hui's triptych on Cosmotechnics, worldly labor enfolds an aisthesis that is charged with tracing paths and intervals that unify celestial and moral orders. In this, Lyall's *Talent* would entail the recursive resonance implied by Barnett Newman's *Onement*. Certainly, both in their different ways are titles that signify the groundless motion of a subject on the path of 'becoming-Art'.

What are Talents in the time of digitized enframing and cyber-autonomous imaging? They are finite things, concrete but fragile. They conform to the order of time itself, and are thus historical, transindividual, politically unstable, performable, mortal. They are here as a response to no-one's call, but only as such, their penumbral sparkle endeavours to illuminate a shared sensorium.

Scott Lyall lives and works in Toronto and New York. Solo and two-person exhibitions include SculptureCenter, New York (2007); The Power Plant, Toronto (2008); Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2023, 2019, 2015, 2013, 2010, 2006); Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto (2022, 2018, 2014, 2010, 2006, 2004, 2001), Greene Naftali, New York (2011, 1997–98, 1996); and Campoli Presti, London and Paris (2017, 2014, 2011, 2008). Notable group exhibitions include The Painter's New Tools, Nahmad Contemporary, New York (2022); The Poet-Engineers, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2022); Ballistic Poetry, Hermès Foundation, Brussels (2016); Anti-Establishment, CCS Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2012); The Montreal Biennial (2011); New York to London and Back: The Medium of Contingency, Thomas Dane Gallery, London (2011); Collatéral, Le Confort Moderne, Poitiers (2009); The Lining of Forgetting, Austin Museum of Art, TX, Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC (2008); and SITE Santa Fe, 7th International Biennial (2008). Lyall's work is held in the collections of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Pinault Collection, Paris; the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery.