

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY
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JAMESHARRISGALLERY.COM

PRESS RELEASE



**“Site Insight”
November 15, 2021 to January 15, 2022
Online Exhibition**

Additional images are available upon request

Left : Julie Mehretu
“The Residual” 2007
Colored Etching
Edition of 25
40 1/4” x 50 1/4”

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present “Site Insight” an exhibition that explores how artists use and interpret site as a position or location especially as to its environment. This show considers how some artists interpret site in a more literal term while others use it allegorically. The disparate works act like instruments in an orchestra pit. Individually, they are decisive works but taken in unison they reveal the emotional power works of art can have on a broad range of subjects and human character. Beauty is seen through ugliness and vice versa. All the works enlighten the viewer to the complexity of the world in which we live. The artists included in the show are: Squeak Carnwath, Claire Cowie, Fay Jones, Julie Mehretu, Jeffry Mitchell, Mary Ann Peters, Luke Kempton Williams, Bing Wright, and Amir Zaki.

Julie Mehretu’s print “The Residual” is composed of intuitive marks inspired by migratory maps, geography, blue prints and other patterns. They are often seen as interpretations into layers of history and how civilizations and communities are often buried under layers of human existence. Mary Ann Peters piece ‘this trembling turf (the hollows)’ shares in the intuitive notion of site and how cultural histories are hidden. Inspired by the sonic pulses of forensic anthropology, Peters’ mark making explores how civilizations are often built over one another during times of conflict. Luke Kempton Williams photograph titled “Earth” is a more direct interpretation of site. The image depicts an abandoned construction site along a hillside. Black and clear vinyl tarps stabilize from erosion. The natural landscape has been erased leaving only the history and preservation of man’s destruction. In Claire Cowie’s watercolor titled “South Beacon Hill No. 3,” two electrical towers monumentally stand in a blank landscape. Painted in brightly hued geometric pattern, the towers become totems of our energy dependence that fuels our consumer culture. But in a compositional element that covers one quarter of the right side from top to bottom of paper, she has filled the rectangular area with washes of chartreuse punctuated with black ink. Has juxtaposed against these beacons of clean energy, could this be an insightful comment on the pollution of fossil fuels? Bing Wright offers us moving skyscape photographs of richly colored sunsets reflected onto broken mirrors. The tranquility and beauty of the setting sun is now compositionally fractured and distorted in “Broken Mirror/Evening Sky(Agfachrome)” The violence of the smashed mirror is transformed into a comment on the fleeting nature of time. “Memento Mori” by Fay Jones is a symbolic and cathartic presentation of loss and grief, hope and joy. This large-scale work on paper is a psychological landscape incorporating symbols the artist has

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repeated throughout her artistic career. Water, a common theme, is presented as tears of grief while also serving as a life force and symbol of growth. A moon rises above hills scattered with images of a life preserver, mountain lion's face and the silhouetted visage of a man with a hat. All personal symbols that give insight into the artist's life story of creativity and family. Amir's Zaki's photograph "Concrete Vessel No. 63" at first appears as a dystopian landscape devoid of human activity. Upon closer inspection, the tread marks of skateboards reveal an active space now empty. Photographed in the early hours of the morning, the empty skate parks become monuments to youth culture. In "Good Luck," the painting becomes the site for an open ended narrative performance by Squeak Carnwath. The artist's handprints punctuate the surface along with symbols representing luck. A rabbit, an iconography in for fecundity, stands on the right side gazing at Rorschach inkblots. The artist has denoted an oval portion a "guilt free zone." A reference to the Iraq War is written on the ruled sheet of paper. Carnwath's compositional elements are clues into a mindscape. Perhaps the "guilt free zone" gives us permission to escape from the horrors and atrocities of war.

The eighteen works in this exhibition explore an interest in site. Each artist intuitive interprets site as a psychological or emotional response to place. Often the image is rooted in reality; alternatively it can also be a fictional composite in which the idea of a location goes beyond the physical aspect a specific place. The artworks allude to the complexities and interconnectedness of human experiences but lets us chart our own journey to discovery.

The gallery will mount virtual exhibitions until the next location of our physical space is announced in the fall of 2021.