

DAVID KORDANSKY GALLERY

David Kordansky Gallery is pleased to present Ash Tree, an exhibition of new paintings by Lucy Bull. The exhibition will be on view in Los Angeles, where it will occupy three of the gallery's spaces at 5130 W. Edgewood Pl., from May 11 through June 15, 2024. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, May 11 from 6 to 8 PM. Bull will also curate and present a 24-hour marathon film screening in conjunction with the exhibition at Lumiere Cinema, beginning at 11 AM on June 1 and ending at 11 AM on June 2.

In recent years, Bull has emerged as an inquisitive, open-eyed, and critically minded voice in contemporary painting. Her dedication to courting the unknown, as well as her ability to cultivate a personal and flexible vocabulary with broad metaphorical resonance, make her a notable representative of artistic legacies in which abstraction and visionary states play foundational roles. Her paintings take shape in a varied field of impressions, material experiments, and color-based meditations, their formalism balanced by the implied presence of phenomena that are difficult to capture using visual means alone. While ephemeral and even invisible phenomena have long been the subjects of abstract art, Bull registers them as avenues of possibility, encouraging immersive acts of looking in which viewers find their way by losing themselves again and again.

Ash Tree features some of Bull's largest canvases to date, including both vertical and horizontal diptychs whose expansive proportions invite comparisons to cinematic narratives or spatial journeys from one landscape into another. The proposition of landscape, which has been one of several through lines for the artist over the last few years, remains an interpretive touchstone for these new paintings. However, Bull has conceptualized the exhibition so that seeming vistas function in new and numerous ways. In one of the galleries, for instance, vertical paintings are installed so that their areas of color and gesture appear to reveal views into a forested world on the other side of the walls. This emphasizes the means by which Bull sees through her work: painting enables a kind of seeing that in turn allows those who participate in it to look through what appears before them into other spaces or states of mind. Painting, in other words, becomes not just the thing seen, but the thing that sees.

The advances of Bull's new paintings lie in the commitment with which the artist approaches this process. On purely visual terms, meanwhile, the compositions have become more layered and chromatically complex, and seem to channel an accordingly diverse range of emotional temperatures, from grave, searching patterns that echo like the open spaces of the sublime to upbeat, major-keyed passages notable for their ethereal lightness and transparency. Working with a delimited selection of hues at any given time, she has developed a methodology that is adjacent to the intentional, layer-by-layer movement of the printmaker; in contrast with the planned and relatively predictable unfolding of the printmaker's task, however, Bull incorporates procedural layers of unknowing, trance-like symbiosis in which the painting can be in control of its materialization as much as—or even more than—the artist herself.

Bull's work prompts acts of viewing perhaps best described with terms like relinquishment, release, and stimulation, that imply physical engagement. The scope of the newest paintings requires an analogous level of embodied commitment and faith from the artist, who, in the attempt to manipulate broad sections of pigment and medium, must also reconcile herself to allowing certain passages to remain out of reach. Such passages hinge on a mode of composition in which forms come into being through strategic acts of letting go as much as they do through intentional instances of mark-making. The characteristic gestures that make up Bull's language, including the frottage she uses to delineate spaces and indicate movement, are accordingly porous when it comes to their ability to allow for surprise and transparency of layering.

Participating in the alternating flux of coherence and generative disorder requires a kind of attention that also alternates, shuttling between active perception and open, receptive ways of being. Bull has made reference to her interest in other forms of aesthetic production, including music and film, in which awareness of ambient information becomes an important facet of the experience of the work. This includes an interest in the changes in perception that take place when visual and sound experiences are layered upon each other. Such

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changes are a focus of the 24-hour film screening Bull has organized as part of Ash Tree, which extends to the marquee outside Lumiere Cinema where the event will be held: Bull has made a three-part painting designed to fit the theater's marquee lightbox and whose existence will be limited to the duration of the event itself. The heterogeneous nature of the film programming, meanwhile—which includes works by Pedro Almodóvar, Hideaki Anno, Jean Cocteau, David Cronenberg, Jon Rafman, and Tsai Ming-liang, among others—speaks to the artist's curiosity about the many ways in which visual and non-visual stimuli can be registered, communicated, and felt. It also demonstrates how her paintings, though static in their final forms, are parts of a world that moves, changes, and knows itself through the perceptions of the beings, human and otherwise, who encounter it.

Bull has been the subject of solo and two-person exhibitions at the Warehouse, Dallas (2023); Long Museum West Bund, Shanghai (2023); Pond Society (with Guo Fengyi, 2021); High Art (Arles, 2020; Paris, 2019); Human Resources, Los Angeles (2019); Smart Objects, Los Angeles (2019); and RMS Queen Mary, Mother Culture, Long Beach, California (2017). Current and recent group exhibitions include Abstraction (re)creation – 20 under 40, Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2024); NGV Triennial, Melbourne, Australia (2023); He Said/She Said: Contemporary Women Artists Interject, Dallas Museum of Art (2023); 13 Women: Variation I, Orange County Museum of Art, Costa Mesa, California (2022); ABSTRACT VOCABULARIES: Selections from the Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (2021); and Present Generations: Creating the Scantland Collection of the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio (2021). Her work is in the permanent collections of Baltimore Museum of Art; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; MAMCO Geneva; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; Long Museum West Bund, Shanghai; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, among other institutions. Bull lives and works in Los Angeles.