

Keitelman Gallery

LUCILE BERTRAND

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

19.02 – 09.04.2016

opening 18.02.2016

6 pm to 9 pm

Opening 6 Pm – 9 pm thursday 18.02.2016

Tuesday - saturday 12 to 6pm

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To start the year the Keitelman Gallery has the pleasure of presenting a new exhibition by Lucile Bertrand, with whom they have collaborated for several years.

The artist, who has always been deeply interested by the notions of passage, migrations, borders, here unveils a group of new works that further widen her fields of action and of reflection.

Based on a *Meditation* by the English poet and philosopher John Donne (1572-1631) who spoke of the ambivalence of the human condition, inscribed at the crossroads of solitude and community (such as his phrase used here as title to the exhibition – No Man Is an Island – metaphorically underlines), the artist proposes works that all speak of a “point of contact”, where both meeting and interaction are played out, but also rupture, forms of silence, and distance.

The exhibition displays several new series of works that are rich in their intrinsic variations.

Lucile Bertrand, whose artistic practice varies between drawing, sculpture and installation, often makes preliminary sketches allowing her ideas to materialize. It is precisely one of them that is at the source of the majestic series of black islands perched on piles. These islands are created in jesmonite resin; they are hollow, and we here at once see a paradox dear to the artist: we are between material and immaterial, hollow and full, the anchored and the floating. Grouped by threes and fours, these islands immediately introduce the exhibition's concept.

Furthermore they elaborate a far more political intention as with them it is question of the arbitrary separations of territories against which today's migrants are flung. Mankind's geography is nonetheless unknown to nature's, who knows only rivers, seas, gullies and mountains as limits.

A second series is formed of mysterious blown glass sacks of various shapes, filled with pigments of different colors. They bring multiple images to life in one's imagination. A sack is first and foremost a universal object that each and all continually carry. In this sense it is anthropomorphic: it marries our body's forms. And it can, metaphorically and concretely, possess and contain our aspirations as well as our discouragements. But it can also be an evocation of the relationship between Orient and Occident. One might see an evocation of sacks of spices that in other times caravans brought back to Europe. Thus portraying an example of the economic exchanges that have connected peoples in all eras.

The exhibition also presents photographs and drawings. In these there is a sustained preoccupation with traces, no man's lands, buffer zones (fogs, foot prints in the sand, walls signaling limits): those that some go through, those that others cannot cross. A drawing that is particularly poetic and at the same time ironic is based on maps drawn up by ornithologists: where one discovers birds' migratory movements that by

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definition scorn human borders and obey surprising logistics - certain species of modest size are capable of rounding the globe in the space of a year.

We also discover sculptures based on the Middle Age's recumbent statues. They are lying bodies suspended between life and death. Such works powerfully reflect waiting (at frontiers, at check points), and a state of in-betweenness (between hope and resignation).

Finally, a wooden octagon, its inner body covered with mirrors, again multiplies the black jesmonite islands to become a type of symbol of the image that we have of today's world: where we now clearly see who are the different communities that people the planet and where the issue is to see what unites them (a same core, a similar image as reference, here a few black islands) rather than what separates them (reflections, after all, quite illusory).