

SPERONE WESTWATER
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alexis Rockman

Lost Cargo: Watercolors

20 November 2020 – 16 January 2021



Cham Sculpture (2020)

New York, NY: 11 November 2020 – Sperone Westwater is pleased to present new watercolors by New York City-based artist Alexis Rockman, his fourth solo at the gallery since his first, “Evolution,” in 1992. This timely exhibition is inspired by the impending climate disaster and the current human migration crisis, taking place, in part, by waterway.

For over thirty-five years, Rockman has blended science with informed speculation to deliver a prescient and, at times, apocalyptic vision of the ecological state of the planet. Relying on scientific—as well as historic content, Rockman continues his vision of the collision between civilization and nature for these new works on paper. Focusing on the world’s waterways as subject matter, Rockman explores all the ways in which bodies of waters have not only transported people and materials, but also helped to proliferate the spread of language, culture, art, flora and fauna, religion and disease. Serving as “highways” for expansionist and colonial exploitation, the history of seafaring tells of a deliberate and unwittingly disastrous ecological and anthropological exchange, which led to a decline of indigenous populations and ecological collapse often due to pandemics and invasive species.

The forthcoming exhibition, “Alexis Rockman: Shipwrecks,” organized by Guild Hall, will be presented at Peabody Essex Museum and Guild Hall in 2021. The show features this series of watercolors, demonstrating the artist’s darkly surreal vision of the collision between civilization and nature – often dramatic scenarios on a monumental scale. Rockman is fascinated both by celebrated and obscure accounts of lost cargo and is the ideal tour guide to lift up the curtain on stories that blur the boundaries between eyewitness accounts of rumor, tragedy, heroism, humor and mythology.

For a preview of the show, join us for Lower East Side Gallery Night, Thursday 19 November, 4 – 8pm.

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Notable solo museum exhibitions include “Alexis Rockman: Manifest Destiny,” a traveling exhibition organized by the Brooklyn Museum (2004-05), and “Alexis Rockman: A Fable for Tomorrow,” a touring survey organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum (2010-11). “Alexis Rockman: The Great Lakes Cycle,” a major exhibition of large-scale paintings, watercolors and field drawings, toured the Midwest in 2018-20, opening at the Grand Rapids Art Museum and traveling to five institutions in the Great Lakes region. Rockman’s work is represented in many museum collections, including the Baltimore Museum of Art; Brooklyn Museum; Grand Rapids Art Museum; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; New Orleans Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Smithsonian American Art Museum; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; and Whitney Museum of American Art.