



Taka Ishii

Gallery

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Sterling Ruby “VERT”

Dates: Mar. 23 – Apr. 21, 2018

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery

Opening reception: Friday, Mar. 23, 18:00 - 20:00

Taka Ishii Gallery is pleased to announce our third solo exhibition with Los Angeles based artist Sterling Ruby. For his show at Taka Ishii Gallery the artist is presenting a selection of new oil paintings.

The paintings present evocative and jarring color palettes of red, orange and yellow, cerulean blues, greens and browns, set against frosty whites and charred blacks. Fingerprints and brushstrokes are visible, obsessive gestures and the thick application of oil paint veer into the obsessive, the unbalanced, set against collaged cardboard and fabric bands that are layered onto the works.

The stark yet poetic titles include abbreviations: CRSS for Cross, WIDW. for Window, VERT. for Vertical. These titles address the graphic collage elements that bisect the paintings creating sections or quadrants. They allude at recurrent themes in the artist's work: horizons, grids, flags, prison bars, and in this series especially, windows. They suggest the panes of a window where the vantage point is unclear. Are we looking out or looking in?

The title *CRSS. UMBRA VITAE* makes reference to the apocalyptic poem of celestial visions and dark musings written by George Heym describing the world of 1912 on the brink of a precipice. *WIDW. MAZATEC.* depicts a sky ablaze, while *VERT.BOW.* includes the rainbow that follows the storm. Presenting foreboding visions of an uncertain future, these psychological landscapes, bifurcated between interior and exterior, ultimately seek oneness, wholeness, reintegration.

*The people stand forward in the streets
They stare at the great signs in the heavens
Where comets with their fiery trails
Creep threateningly about the serrated towers.*

*And all the roofs are filled with stargazers
Sticking their great tubes into the skies
And magicians springing up from the earthworks
Tilting in the darkness, conjuring the one star.*

Stanzas 1-2 from Umbra Vitae or Shadow of Life, 1912 George Heym

Born in 1972, Sterling Ruby works with a wide range of aesthetic and material strategies from sculptures made of saturated, glossy, poured polyurethane, bronze and steel, to drawings, collages, richly glazed ceramics, paintings, photography and video, as well as textile works that include quilts, tapestries, garments, and soft sculptures. His work is a balancing act, maintaining a constant tension between a multitude of elements. It deals with issues related to the violence and pressures within society, and art history, even as it also reflects his personal history. In all of his work, he vacillates between the fluid and static, the minimalist and expressionistic, the pristine and the defaced.

Ruby's solo exhibitions include Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2008), FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims (2012), travelling to Centre D'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2012) and to Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome (2013), and recently Winterpalais, Belvedere Museum, Vienna (2016). His works are included in the collections of Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Tate Modern, London; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Moderna Museet, Stockholm among others. Ruby will be the subject of a ceramics survey at the Des Moines Art Center in June 2018, and in 2019 an exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center.

For further information, please contact: Elisa Uematsu (exhibition) / Takayuki Mashiyama (press)

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Tue-Sat 11:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon, and National Holidays



VERT. BUSH DAI DAI., 2018

Acrylic, oil and cardboard on canvas

Painting: 61 x 48.3 x 3.8cm / Framed: 65.1 x 52.4 x 6.7 cm



VERT. PROUN (6606), 2018

Acrylic, oil, elastic and cardboard on canvas

Painting: 144.8 x 110.5 x 5.1 cm / Framed: 149.9 x 115.6 x 8.3 cm

Both images: photo by Robert Wedemeyer. Courtesy Sterling Ruby Studio.