

FRIEDMAN BENDA  
515 W 26TH STREET  
NEW YORK NY 10001

SAMUEL ROSS  
COARSE  
MAY 10 – JUN 17 2023



*BIRTH AT DAWN, 2022*



*FIRE OPENS STONE, 2022*

**Opening Reception:** Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 6 – 8 pm

**New York** – Friedman Benda is pleased to present *COARSE*, the gallery's second solo presentation of acclaimed British designer, artist and creative director Samuel Ross, and the first to take place in New York. Known for his conceptually rigorous approach to industrial materials, Ross presents his fourth body of work, and his most layered material exploration to date.

Evolving from his ongoing interest in the historic visual languages of West African furniture, post-industrialized Western culture, modernism, and brutalism, these works point to the links between body, material, meaning, and memory. The six works in this exhibition represent spaces of commune, community, generosity, and tenderness. A notion that, for Ross, is about geography; about the body *and* space, about the body *in* space.

Samuel Ross' understanding of geography exists beyond the concepts of territory and diaspora. It extends to the material connectors between these elements: space, time, location, minerals, residue, erosion. Gestures are marked on the body as they are on stone or steel, and "a material's memory can be re-awoken through process. Process can re-emerge, as though polymers, fibers and cells are awakening, or rebelling." Titles such as *FIRE OPENS STONE* and *ANAESTHESIA* point to this physical association and remind us that both body and material are vessels of memory and meaning. Grounded in W.E.B Du Bois' theory of double consciousness, these objects operate in dualities and embody a 'two-ness': both material and body, both structure and space, both Western and diasporic, both new and passed down, both connected and dissociated. Each of these objects is somehow conflicted; imbued with memory, yet actively trying to remember its history.

Ross' work asserts itself in space through mass, weight, and rawness. Industrialized materials such as fired wood, metal, stone, and marble are lacquered with turmeric, honey, and milk before being fired and re-processed. For him, these organic materials, speak of past hands, processes, gestures, and "carry memory, intentions and philosophies from the heartland in which the originate."

*COARSE* is a study that expands upon the meaning of the object, without sacrificing its function. A rich and layered narrative landscape, this new body of work underlines process as a form of ritual, ritual as a form of making, and process as narrative-giving.

### **About Samuel Ross**

Born in Brixton in 1991, Samuel Ross graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design and Illustration at De Montfort University, Leicester. Upon graduation, Ross embarked on a career as a product designer, working for a number of high-profile brands, advertising agencies and industrial design practices. In 2015, Ross self-funded his label, A-COLD-WALL\* – renowned for its material investigation and innovation, married with incisive explorations of Brutalist and abstract forms and precise execution. During the Hublot Prize exhibition at London’s Serpentine Gallery in 2019, Ross launched his latest venture – SR\_A (Samuel Ross & Associates), an industrial design studio operating within the fields of interior installation, architecture, furniture design, sound design and sculptural/visual communication.

Ross’ accolades include being named the British Fashion Awards’ Emerging Menswear Designer (2018) and receiving the Hublot Design Prize (2019). In 2020, he was named as one of Forbes’ 30 under 30 [Europe] and won both the GQ USA Fashion Award and People of the Year British Fashion Award, the latter specifically for his philanthropic endeavors. He has also been a finalist for both the LVMH Prize and ANDAM Award. He has collaborated with brands, including Converse, Dr Marten’s, Mercedes-Benz, Nike, and Oakley, as well as noteworthy artists Virgil Abloh, Daniel Arsham, Futura and Takashi Murakami. Specific SR\_A partnerships include those with Apple, Beats, Nike, Medicom, Hublot LVMH, Kohler, and Acquer Di Parma.

Ross’ work is in the collections of institutions such as Dallas Museum of Art, TX; the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, TX; and Victoria & Albert Museum, London. He recently had a solo fashion exhibition “Fashion design: Samuel Ross / A-COLD-WALL\*” (2022) at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, and has participated in group exhibition “Mirror Mirror” (2023) at the Chatsworth House, Derbyshire. Ross lives and works in London, UK.

### **About Friedman Benda**

Friedman Benda identifies and advances key narratives that intersect contemporary design, craft, architecture, fine art, and cutting-edge technological research. The gallery promotes synthesis between leading creative thinkers and makers by creating opportunities to advance new connections within the global design community. Friedman Benda is committed to a critical view of design history. We aim to expand the design dialogue from its established sources, exploring perspectives that have previously been marginalized. Spanning five continents and four generations, Friedman Benda represents a roster of seminal established and emerging designers, as well as historically significant estates. With locations in New York and Los Angeles, the gallery’s exhibitions, publications and collaborations with institutions have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and scholarship since 2007. For further information please visit [www.friedmanbenda.com](http://www.friedmanbenda.com) and the gallery’s Instagram [@friedman\\_benda](https://www.instagram.com/friedman_benda) and [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

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