

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

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MARTYN CROSS
All Shall Be Well

On View: October 26 – December 22, 2023
Opening Reception: Thursday, October 26, 6–8 PM
507 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011



Martyn Cross, *I Heard a Voice*, 2023. Oil on canvas, 63 x 94 1/2 inches, 160 x 240 cm

"All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."
– Julian of Norwich

NEW YORK, NY – Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *All Shall Be Well*, an exhibition of new work by U.K.-based artist Martyn Cross (b. 1975, Yate, United Kingdom). In the paintings and drawings on view in his first major solo exhibition in New York, Cross populates uncanny mythical lands with earthly forms in the midst of bewildering, transcendent metamorphosis. Transporting viewers to surreal worlds removed from time and place, Cross meditates on the inextricable links between man and nature, between the corporeal and the mystical.

Informed by medieval religious imagery and literature, Cross's work revels in the visionary power of vast, otherworldly landscapes. Working with a distinctive, muted color palette, Cross layers scratched and scrubbed dry-brushed pigment to yield weathered and worn textures that glow with the internal luminosity of medieval manuscripts and frescoes—that seem to hold within them ambiguous, untold histories. From these

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surfaces emerge references to the terrestrial and to the celestial: roots grow into the ground and morph into strange, humanoid creatures, immense hands reach down from the clouds, comets transform into eyeballs as they blaze across the sky. Cross's visual language derives from our world—but operates according to a divine logic and enigmatic physics entirely of the artist's own imagining.

In early 2023, Cross attended the Hogchester Arts Residency in southwestern England, near Charmouth on the Jurassic Coast. The area's remarkable terrain was formed nearly 250 million years ago, during the Mesozoic Era. Inspired by this landscape—cliffs falling into sea, fossils embedded in the rock, beaches melting into water—Cross made the drawings from which many of the works in the exhibition derive. The coastal vistas, the striking horizon lines, the geological strata, all filter through the work on view in this exhibition—in imagery, in texture, and in tone.

The exhibition takes its title, *All Shall Be Well*, from *Revelations of Divine Love*, a medieval account of visions from God written by English anchoress Julian of Norwich. While making this body of work—while absorbing the revealing landforms along the Jurassic Coast—Cross also absorbed the rich spiritual accounts in *Revelations of Divine Love*. For many years in the latter fourteenth century, Julian lived in a small cell off the main sanctuary at the St. Julian's Church in Norwich, where she led a simple life of prayer and solitude. In *All Shall Be Well*, Cross's new paintings—with their rich, glowing surfaces—inhabit the large front gallery space, adorning the gallery walls much like the opulent stained-glass windows of a church. In a smaller side gallery—a room not dissimilar in scale to Julian's cell—Cross presents a monumental installation of drawings on which many of the paintings are based. Within this small, secluded space, Cross conjures visions of his fantastical world—a world removed from time and place, a world where some unknown higher power reigns. And next door, his paintings sing, exalting in their strange and unsettling history, promising, like Julian's writings, that all, in fact, shall be well.

ABOUT MARTYN CROSS

Cross has exhibited at galleries and institutions across the United Kingdom and internationally. *Martyn Cross: My Assembled Selves* is on view through November 5 at Flatland Projects in Bexhill on Sea, United Kingdom. His work has also been the subject of solo exhibitions at Hales London, United Kingdom and Ratio 3, San Francisco, CA. His work has been included in group exhibitions at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK; OSHSH Projects, London; Oceans Apart, Manchester; Bath Spa University; Spike Island, Bristol; LIMBO, Margate; Stroud Museum, UK; and Kettles Yard, Cambridge, among others. In 2023, Cross was shortlisted for the John Moores Painting Prize. *A Thought Sublime*, a 2021 group exhibition at Marianne Boesky Gallery, was Cross's first exhibition in the United States. Cross holds a BA in Fine Art from Bath Spa University; he lives and works in Bristol, United Kingdom.

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For more information about the artist, please contact Director Savannah Downs at savannah@boeskygallery.com or 212-680-9889. For press inquiries, please contact Molly Krause, [krause co.](http://krause.co.), at molly@molly.nyc.

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