

BETWEEN MATTER & ILLUMINATION

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, JANUARY 15 | 6–8 PM

ON VIEW: JANUARY 15 – FEBRUARY 28, 2025

509 WEST 24th STREET, NEW YORK, NY

NEW YORK, NY – Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *Between Matter & Illumination*, a group exhibition organized by Marianne Boesky. Featuring work by fourteen artists—spanning mediums, generations and geographies—*Between Matter & Illumination* explores the inextricable relationships between life and art.

Between Matter & Illumination draws on Italian sculptor Medardo Rosso's famed declaration: "We are nothing but a play of light." Existence, in Rosso's view, was neither monumental nor eternal—but rather small, mutable, and inextricably entangled within the very movement of time and space. "Art," he believed, "must be nothing else than the expression of some sudden sensation given to us by light. There are no such things as painting or sculpture. There exists only but life."

Between Matter & Illumination brings together a group of artists who articulate this dance of form and formlessness—of revelation and dissolution—that, to Rosso, embodied the very heart of expression. Attuned to the alchemy and sensitivity of their materials, these artists mine the blurry edges of consciousness, acknowledging the transience of being through poetic interplays of light, material, and perception. Throughout their work, fleeting figurative details glimmer within abstract surfaces on the brink of transformation. Suspended between emergence and disappearance, perpetually in flux, the substance of these timeless works is suggestion rather than certainty.

Working with oil, acrylic, spray paint, modeling paste, and found objects, **Kwamé Azure Gomez** (b. 1999; Akron, OH) layers thin washes of color with bold, physical gestures and subtle, often ghostly, suggestions of figuration. Into the thick, layered surfaces of his work, **Mike Henderson** (b. 1943; Marshall, MO) embeds hints of histories and experiences, the paint humming with the energy of lives lived. Collaging a canvas with photography, ceramic, and acrylic paint, **Sheree Hovsepian** (b. 1974; Isfahan, Iran) in turns reveals and conceals the female form. In both painting and sculpture, **Leiko Ikemura** (b. 1951; Tsu, Mie, Japan) renders dream-like feminine spirits amidst moments of profound transformation. Layering quotations from old master paintings and street art, **Dora Jeridi** (b. 1988; Paris, France) infuses her melodic abstract paintings with endless narrative potential.

In her intuitive, introspective canvases **Martha Jungwirth** (b. 1940; Vienna Austria) subtly reveals hints of the self by merely activating paint on canvas. In blatant refusal of his training in Soviet monument sculpting, **Leonid Lerman** (b. 1953; Odesa, Ukraine) captures evocative impressions of his subjects in plaster and bronze. Using earthly, elemental forms, **Muna Malik** (b. 1993; Sanaa, Yemen) conjures the energy of bodily movement in water. Within the abstracted surfaces of her paintings, **Julie Mehretu** (b. 1970; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) maps collective histories and contemporary social concerns. Drawing on Slavic shamanism, Jungian psychoanalysis, alchemy, and sacred geometry, the paintings of **Maja Ruznic** (b. 1983; Brčko, Bosnia and Herzegovina) emerge on canvas unplanned.

In the paintings of **Kikuo Saito** (1939–2016), letters and numbers float just beneath color-field inspired surfaces, hinting at the meanings and messages inaccessible to the viewer. With

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his *Pietrasanta Madonnas*, **Alexander Tovborg** (b. 1983; Copenhagen, Denmark) abstracts icon paintings associated, in particular, with Orthodox Christian traditions, allowing for the creation of a new, unknowable mythology. Layering gesture and figuration, the paintings of **Tianyue Zhong** (b. 1994; Chengdu, China) evoke sensations removed from space and time.

Taken together, these works produce a meditation on Rosso's declaration, as, by turns, they reveal and conceal—as light changes, and, so too, does what they offer to the viewer.

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