

THE RESIDENCE GALLERY

ETHER

Marc-Aurèle Debut | Gusty Ferro | Natalia Januła | Léa Porré

27/01/24 – 3/03/24

Ether permeates from the elegant alchemy of nothing and everything at the same time. It's like a silent stream of consciousness filtering through a crashing cosmic wave. It's stillness, yet it's the very thing that makes all movement and life possible. The Latin root is *aether*, which means "the upper pure, bright air." *Ether* was originally a scientific term for what 19th century physicists called "the fifth element" - a substance that was said to fill all space and make up all bodies. In this exhibition we bring together the works of 4 artists who were invited to engage with 'ether' as a shared point of reference. The works span light, sculpture, texture, printmaking, and digital worldbuilding.

In the latex-veiled works of **Marc Aurèle Debut**, '04.11.22' and '12.05.23' are the respective dates Marc-Aurèle started the discolouration process on these black latex sheets. Latex can discolour, and eventually perish, if exposed to heat, sunlight, and light with a high UV. The works arose from an experimental process of theoretical and psychological research on failure and shame. These black latex sheets represent a visualisation of time recording, marking the passing time and its effect on us. They reveal the structural and environmental influences impacting our lives and emotions. Marc-Aurèle describes, "By repeatedly and meticulously folding the material, I intentionally forced the discolouration to heat and long light exposure creating these permanent marks on black latex." Exhibited as floating wall-based works, the ethereal ghost-like traces on thin black latex sheets depict the veils between the spirit world and the physical world.

Léa Porré's research-led practice investigates cyclical time through the interrelations of memory, history, and myth. Specifically, re-imagining historical and sacred sites through 3D worldbuilding to create videos, installations, sculptures, and frames. In this exhibition Léa presents 2 custom framed works inspired by alchemical symbols and drawings she has collected over the years, as well as those of the esoteric painter JA Knapp. These physical works evolved from a 3D digital world Léa built to research the notion of ether. She engages ether with the idea of the Fifth Element, an impossible force/plane/body that is at once microscopic and macroscopic. Léa's works reference the Renaissance practice of alchemy, and its ultimate symbolic quest to isolate aether, as their philosopher's stone.

In **Natalia Januła's** wall sculptures, her luminous works reference a dichotomy between the contained and un-contained, *Ether* containing various plasmic entities on the edge of taking recognisable form. As Januła explains, "Pieces act like 'containers' - either tightly shrink wrapped, frozen in resin, immobilised in silicone, sandwiched between panes of plastic - and how maybe the container is at odds with the 'ether'. 'Into the ether' meaning to disappear or become lost, often without a trace - whereas I think containers/units seek to capture, freeze, hold, invite viewers to study more intensely."

Through a process of experimentation with materials, **Gusty Ferro** develops drawings, soundscapes, sculptures, and site responsive installations. In this exhibition, Gusty has produced a unique silkscreen monoprint and 2 relief ink monotypes. These framed works feature together on a graphic, printed wallscape, drawing together the transformative relationship through the printmaking process. Gusty's works reflect an interest in the materiality of mundane objects, urban infrastructure, and displacement. Their work evokes an experimental, rhythmic sense of becoming and unbecoming, connecting to the alchemical current running through the Ether exhibition.

