

David Kordansky Gallery is pleased to announce Skunk Grove, its first exhibition of new paintings by Lucy Bull. The show opens on March 20 and will be on view through May 1, 2021.

Lucy Bull's paintings are visceral works that appeal directly to the senses. Synesthetic fields of shape and color, they are described in sonic, tactile, or even emotional terms that evade rational logic and are unique to each viewer. This tension between the paintings' bracing, unexpected materiality and the subjective responses it elicits engenders something akin to transformation: as their formal attributes function as visual bait, the eye is drawn into the atmospheric spaces of each composition before encountering a limitless number of associative openings. Worlds take shape across their varied surfaces and just as quickly fall away again; similarly, just when the act of looking generates optical overload or disruptive dissonance, Bull's accumulations of marks reveal discernible traces of planning and hard-fought negotiations with her materials, leading the viewer back toward the concrete realities of pigment, medium, and surface.

The gestures that animate the works in Skunk Grove gravitate toward several overlapping categories. They include daubed, gauzy veils; illusionistic swirls and stratifications; and networks of scratched marks that give way to underlying areas of paint. But even these are mere generalizations, as any attempt to fix Bull's abstract language within the constraints of descriptive analysis falls short. In this respect, the paintings seem to depict the process of grasping for solid interpretive ground while simultaneously acknowledging that there are times when the ground must fall away. Between these extremes, worlds are created and destroyed; thoughts give way to feelings, and vice versa; and life's constant fluctuations are given symbolic expression as passages between discrete sections of a composition give way to those that surround and engulf it. Every element of the picture communicates—sometimes harmoniously, sometimes sharply—as part of an immersive, atmospheric whole.

The relative familiarity generated by Bull's broad categories of mark-making serves as a guide into the unknown territories that crystallize on each canvas, especially as the viewer follows them from one painting to the next. At the same time, this approach allows her to break down the temporal experiences of producing—and seeing—painting. Unable to discern what came

first or last, time and space appear for artist and viewer alike as elliptical, self-generating feedback loops. The effect is a kind of rapturous disorientation, one made more intense by Bull's color combinations, which reach toward the ethereal, border on the grotesque, and expose the tender, vulnerable places where conscious and unconscious collide.

Though she is guided by experiential interactions with the paintings as they progress in real time, Bull makes room for several lineages of aesthetic exploration to coalesce in her work. These include phantasmagorical tendencies in both art and literature, as well as the surrealist willingness to confront—and harness—forces that animate the subterranean depths of the psyche. Also important are the many shadings of the romantic sublime that have fascinated artists throughout the centuries, both inside and outside of canonical trajectories, and aided in the conjuring of landscapes of the mind.

In each of these cases, however, Bull roots viewers in the here and now, connecting the visionary facets of her project to strains of non-objective painting, modernist and otherwise, that require no recourse to outside references but instead generate meaning by way of form, hue, texture, and scale alone. As she engages in these open-ended experiments, she makes room for both precision and abandon, inviting viewers to participate in ever-unfinished processes of creation that she choreographs but never fully controls.

Lucy Bull (b. 1990, New York) has been the subject of solo exhibitions at High Art (Arles, 2020; Paris, 2019); Human Resources, Los Angeles (2019); Smart Objects, Los Angeles (2019); and RMS Queen Mary, Mother Culture, Long Beach, California (2017). Recent group exhibitions include Life Still, CLEARING, New York (2020); I Want to Eat the Sunset. We're Talking About the Cosmos. Even. And Love, I Guess, Almine Rech, New York (2020); and El oro de los tigres, Air de Paris, Romainville, France (2020). Her work is in the collection of the ICA Miami. Bull lives and works in Los Angeles.