



A DYNAMIC DEBUT

Lucy Bull's first solo U.S. museum show comes to life at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami.

BY ANDREA CARNEIRO

Boldly abstract, visceral and, yes, exciting, artist Lucy Bull's paintings have been drawing attention since she arrived on the art scene a decade ago and have had collectors "stampeding," according to a 2024 piece in *The Art Newspaper*. From her Los Angeles home/studio, Bull employs techniques that include frottage (rubbing on top of various materials), paint layering and what the artist calls "excavation" in her journey to a final product: often large-scale canvases that stretch more than 10 feet across.

This December, Bull brings her dynamic works to the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), Miami for her first solo U.S. museum exhibition with *Lucy Bull: The Garden of Forking Paths*, a look at 20 paintings produced between 2019 and 2024. In addition to expansive works that are brought together for the first time at ICA, the show includes a number of vertical paintings that continue the artist's pictorial research over the last decade.

"What I find so exciting about Lucy Bull's paintings is that they sit at the edge of language," says Gean Moreno, curator of programs at ICA Miami. "What I mean is that it is hard to translate into words what they are doing — and what they are doing to us when we stand in front of them. It's as if they are built

to address our bodies directly. They grip us as things start to take shape in them and then dissolve, as patterns dilute and the things we thought we recognized become a kind of pictorial magma again."

In addition to the exhibition, ICA Miami will debut a new work by Bull, commissioned to live in the museum's three-story main staircase, a spot that has held previous site-specific works by Anne Collier, Anthea Hamilton and Odili Donald Odita. While *The Garden of Forking Paths* will be on view at ICA Miami through March 2025, the staircase commission will remain through September. The exhibition (and commission) is a full-circle moment of sorts for the artist; ICA Miami was the first museum to acquire Bull's work back in 2020.

"We cannot help but always try to look harder at them; our very perception kicks into high gear," says Moreno of the artist's pieces. "There is something quite compelling, maybe even political, in works that demand that we be really present in front of them, that we look at them with deep intention, that we block out a world of endless but often empty images and reside in the moment, aware of the details of the experience that we are going through."

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