

PRESS RELEASE

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Montreal exhibition

Melanie Authier

Architecture of Voids

February 20 to April 4 2020

Opening

Thursday, February 20

6 PM to 8PM

Galerie Division Montréal

2020, rue William

Montréal (Québec) H3J 1R8

Georgia Scherman Projects presents an exhibition of new paintings by Melanie Authier. *Architecture of Voids*, generously hosted at Division Gallery, Montreal.

Toronto, February 6, 2020 – Melanie Authier’s paintings careen between chroma and form, pulling us into an immersive space where nothing is static, and the only constant is contrariety. Treating the canvas as a mnemonic record of movement, Authier stands her perpetual play of painterly oppositions on its head, charging various polarities into action, and illuminating the point of its pivot. *Architecture of Voids* lurches between synthetic and organic form, technological and natural eruption; meanwhile Authier plumbs geological depths and ascends to heavenly atmospheres. Between these various poles, she wields a masterful agitation, especially among her perspectival planes. She stokes our fathomage of where the canvas can take us.

Growing out of her past examinations with the dialectical baroque, Authier shifts into a more subdued approach to color, accentuating the open passages of light-

strewn atmosphere. Forever rooting into the brush, each painting “sets up a problem,” with Authier working through the possibility of irresolution as her response. As such, her work churns up art’s freighted histories, as she shifts her weight between chaos and control.

In accompaniment to Authier’s seven-gallery touring exhibition *Contrarities and Counterpoints* (2016-18), a catalogue essay by Sky Goodden describes the painter’s axle between exterior and interior, as well as her paintings’ roiling sympathies, elasticities, and their “willing loss of form.” Goodden writes, “She produces romantic gesture, unlikely light, allaying cimmerian weight, and then crashing forms, sinking comment into vortex, erupting color from the deep.”

Authier’s canvases bring viewers into a caterwaul of form, but also of competing histories. Citing High Modernist Abstraction in both her hard-edge and gestural painting, she positions herself at the interstices of a visual contradiction. By taking advantage of the possibilities of paint to function both as surface and space, she assigns marks their own degree of legibility as they go discovered along the spectrum between abstraction and representation. “My work references and, at times, wrestles with the after-burn of painting’s past, art history with a capital ‘A,’” she reflects. “So my preoccupying question is, ‘Where do we go from here?’”

Melanie Authier (Canadian, b. Montreal, 1980) received a BFA from Concordia University (2002) and an MFA from University of Guelph (2006). Her work is currently featured in the group exhibition *This Sacred Vessel* at Arsenal Contemporary, New York, NY. Significant solo exhibitions include *Contrarities & Counterpoints*, a seven venue touring exhibition curated by Robert Enright (2016-2018) (publication) and *Grisailles* at Rodman Hall, Brock University, St. Catharines, ON (2013/2014) (catalogue forthcoming 2020). Recent group shows include *Àdisòkàmagan/Nous connaître un peu nous mêmes/We’ll all become stories*, Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, ON (2018) (publication); and, *The Tremendous Elusive: Emily Carr and the Canadian Imaginary*, The Canada Gallery, Canada House, London, UK (2016). Authier’s works were featured in *The Painting Project* at Galerie de l’UQAM (2013) (publication) and *Builders: Canadian Biennial at the National Gallery of Canada* (2012) (publication). Authier’s work is in numerous collections, including the National Gallery of Canada, Carleton University Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Guelph, Canada House, London (UK), and ARBZ-Visual Art Collection-Global Affairs Canada in Madrid and Berlin. Authier currently lives and works in Val-des-Monts, Quebec. She is represented by Georgia Scherman Projects, Toronto.