

DEREK ELLER GALLERY



Julia Bland

Some Love Holds Water

September 7 - October 9, 2021

Opening Reception: Friday, September 10, 2021, 6-8pm

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Julia Bland entitled *Some Love Holds Water*. Existing in the space between painting and tapestry, Bland's geometric compositions are created through an intuitive, and cyclical approach to assembly and dis-assembly. Her process incorporates weaving, cutting, sewing, braiding, dying and painting.

This exhibition includes works which range in scale from intimate to monumental and encompass Bland's lexicon of materials: canvas, linen, wool, dye, ink and oil paint. Canvas is pulled apart to become thread; threads are twisted together to become rope or braided into tassels. Raw wool is felted into blankets; blankets are cut up and quilted back together. Fabrics are woven on a hand loom, then twisted and torn, dyed and painted, washed and ironed, cut and sewn. There is a history behind the making of each artwork, and the materials themselves possess even richer past lives: wool comes from sheep; linen derives from the flax plant; found blankets, clothes, and upholstery all are imbued with personal stories. Even the geometric patterning has an origin. "Making is not really about following a certain process or tradition," Bland writes, "but about the way all things change."

The epic sized *Love in the Endless Night* explores how vast darkness alters one's perception of color and space. A central shape referent to a tree or a body is formed from hand-woven textiles painted and sewn together. Looping line work is created by braided linen embroidered on the surface. The form is bordered by pieces of tie-dyed linen and emblazoned with braided and painted tassels. The palette is mostly black, dark blue and brown, but light seeps through the seams of the sewn parts. A found blanket cut into strips, once brightly patterned, has been dyed to a darker tone, but the colors are still visible, like flowers at night. At the same time, repetitive white rings from the tie-dyed linen illuminate the composition, a galaxy of stars.

In keeping with Bland's interest in connectivity and repetition, the same brightly patterned blanket from *Love in the Endless Night* has been repurposed in another large piece *Canyon*, this time in a vivid incarnation. And through her relationship with this particular found blanket, Bland was inspired to create her own blankets by weaving and felting raw wool, as evidenced in the more modestly scaled series of works like *Blanket for the Heart's Flight*. She explains, "The process is cyclical in that after a certain point of making and combining the materials I start unmaking and dividing them." This rhythm of putting together, de-constructing, and putting together again is the ritual that guides Bland's practice.

Julia Bland (b. 1986) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She will be included in the upcoming *Abstranded: Fiber and Abstraction in Contemporary Art* at the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, NY, and was recently featured in *Even Thread Has a Speech* at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, WI. Bland has had solo exhibition at Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago and Helena Anrather, New York. She holds a BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design and a MFA in Painting and Printmaking from the Yale School of Art. This will be her first solo exhibition at the gallery.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 300 Broome Street between Eldridge Street and Forsyth Street. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday 11am to 6pm, and by appointment. For further information please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit www.derekeller.com.