



fabienne lasserre  
make room for space

images (front to back): *Aveugle 2*, 2015, linen, vinyl, steel, scrylic polymer, enamel paint, acrylic paint, cardboard 66.5 x 55 x 17.5 in; *No Ghost*, 2015, linen, vinyl, steel, acrylic polymer, enamel paint, acrylic paint, cardboard, 73.5 x 56 x 13 in; *Smoker*, 2015, linen, steel scrylic polymer, enamel paint, scrylic stucco, acrylic paint, corrugated plastic, cardboard, 60.5 x 56.5 x 5.5 in; *L'insomniaque*, 2015, linen, steel, felt, wood, acrylic polymer, acrylic paint, plastic tubing, 72 x 42 x 22 in; *Night Moves*, 2017, steel, transparent vinyl, linen, acrylic polymer, acrylic paint, cardboard, 73 x 51 x 15 in in; *Mute*, 2011, linen, acrylic polymer, felt, mdf, acrylic paint, enamel paint, 25 x 34 x 26 in. All images except *Untitled (Purple)* and *Mute* by Guy L'Heureaux

Fabienne Lasserre • *Make Room For Space* • September 14 to October 26, 2018

Fabienne Lasserre is a visual artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received her BFA from Concordia University, Montreal and her MFA in Visual Arts at Columbia University. Since 1996, her work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group shows including, *Les Larmes* (2018) at Parisian Laundry Gallery, Montreal; *Feed the Meter* (2017) at Ceysson & Bénétière Gallery, Luxembourg; *Here Like a Story Like a Picture and a Mirror* (2013) at Jeff Bailey Gallery, New York; *Outside the Lines* (2013) at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, TX; and *The Us and the It* in (2012) at Gallery Diet, Miami. Currently, Lasserre is an Assistant Professor in the Painting department at Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore.

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The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts



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The work of Brooklyn sculptor Fabienne Lasserre delights in the space between things—both the immaterial openings that punch through a sculpture’s interior and the territories between individual objects, activated by the postures of their physical forms. Lasserre demonstrates an easy and playful shifting between the disciplines of sculpture and painting—while they are emphatically sculptural, they contain an array of painterly gestures that blur the line between two and three-dimensional planes.

Her most recent works—a collection of gradient combines as bright and artificial screens—are a return to a more intimate scale of earlier sculptures. Here, the negative space inside of the various motley, hand-wrought frames is veiled by a gradient painted on vinyl, whose sheen reflects back an image of both viewer and space. The effect creates a duality of looking—both at and through a filtered lens. And though these gradients are lively, saturated hues, their colors feel less painterly than atmospheric. Her sculptures are defined by lines drawn in space while areas of texture or relief on nearly flat planes form rhythmic compositions. Meanwhile, the vivid gradients of color provide a foil for the thingness of her sculptural forms, amplifying the presence of negative space and magnifying the absence of a fully material object. What Lasserre refers to as the “excluded middle” remains an unrelenting presence in her work—the seduction of a semi-reflective surface is only one version of a persistent allusion to the thing that isn’t there.

Several larger works perform quieter iterations of a similar gesture, however the screens obscuring these objects’ middles are completely transparent, pulled taut and warping the view beyond it, almost imperceptibly. *No Ghost* seems to delight in performing some elaborate illusion. Here, color accrues around the edges, thwarting the sculpture’s equilibrium. The painted frame of charcoal and orchid mimic a folded origami form, adding the illusion of weight and depth, only revealing the optical trickery when one moves to discover its whisper-thin silhouette. Much of Lasserre’s work is alluring from a static point of view, or even in a reproduced image, but her droll use of artifice to stage a moment that reveals something previously hidden is the special sauce that compels the body to approach, circle, and weave through the work in the gallery.

This oscillation between front-facing mass and paper-thin profiles—between spaces that are simultaneously openings and obstructions—feeds back into the artist’s indifference for binary certitude. These ambiguous objects choose neither, allowing every outcome to be true from any given perspective.

Lasserre’s abstract forms provide the most room for self-projection, through portals that she has opened up, or into interior spaces she has carved out. The curved splice that floats across *Smoker’s* monochromatic face lingers in the middle of its planar mass, a seemingly snug fit for the escaped shadow on the floor beside it. Meanwhile, the scattered cut-outs that puncture *With’s* modeled surface flatten the space beyond the sculpture, including whatever view is framed by their absence as another element comprising its surface. The gaps function much in the way that swaths of color do, breaking up the surface and adding texture.

Amongst many of Lasserre’s more slender silhouettes, a renegade pair of bulbous works from 2011 hunker close to the ground, solidly uneasy. *Mute* determinedly balances on its uneven limbs while *After* It seems to writhe on the floor. In both works, the plaster-bandaged surfaces feel structural, as if holding together trunks and branches. Lasserre revisits this absurd pretzel of dependent appendages in *L’insomniaque*, a larger and more skeletal iteration where the structural rational is just as ambiguous. Stretched out, draping, and leaning, these wiry lines comprise one of the slightest works in the exhibition. Yet as a singular piece, it replicates the effect of multiple sculptures staged in the gallery, with its overlapping outlines that urge movement in order to frame a particular view.

Lasserre’s sculptures are right on the verge of animation—they squat, loom, jut, and vie with the viewer no matter their path. Wandering through this offbeat coterie is almost vexatious, as singular views are unavoidably fractured and the space between objects is often sliced by some lithe protrusion. There is a figurative gleam in the eye of the denied route or obstructed view, a charm in something so thin and insubstantial wreaking havoc on individual will. Even more so when the works with the least material substance command the most space. When Lasserre yields a mere sliver of corporeality, it allows the physical emptiness to be full of something psychically charged, the way the absence of touch makes the hairs stand up on your forearm.

Perhaps, “make room for space” is not so much a mantra for the artist’s studio practice, but more like an unconscious meditation by the viewer, who traveling amongst the breadth of her work, gives a wide berth to something that is hardly there.

Rebecca Wing  
Curatorial Assistant





