

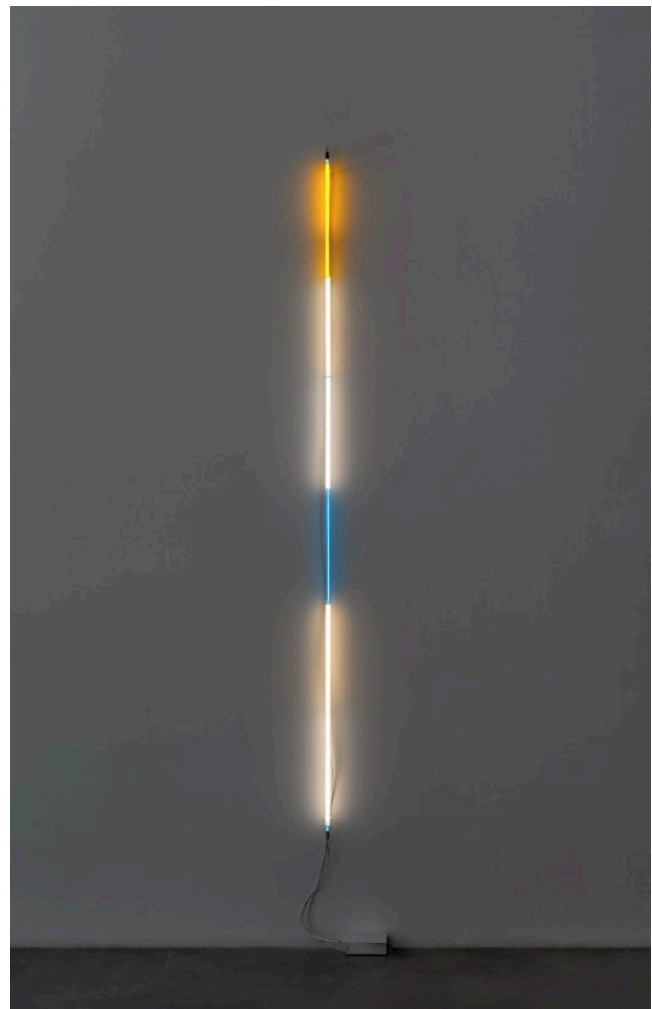


Shady Beautiful

1 July - 11 September, 2021
515 West 29th St., New York

Malin Gallery is pleased to present the group exhibition *Shady Beautiful* featuring work by eleven artists: Aaron Young, Anoka Faruqee & David Driscoll, Cornelius Völker, Dorian Gaudin, Iván Navarro, Joseph Hart, Laddie John Dill, Larry Bell, Oliver Lee Jackson and Vaughn Davis Jr. The show was curated by New York-based adviser Anna Hygelund, who selected an output from the Wu-Tang Clan Name Generator as the title for the exhibition.

Intrigued by the term, Anna derived four curatorial premises that she used to select works for inclusion in the show:



Laddie John Dill, *Light Sentence*, 1969

- 1) A tension or conflict between the inherent aesthetic beauty of a work and a “dark” conceptual basis that guided its development;
- 2) The use of extreme shading or the “light-dark” of chiaroscuro;
- 3) The integration of “shade” generated by shadows cast by the topography of a work and its interplay with light;
- 4) The creation of visual beauty through processes that may be considered destructive or violent.

The exhibition title also serves as a sly reference to the art world and the machinations of its denizens.

Aaron Young is a multi-media artist who lives and works in Los Angeles. Young frequently employs performance or spectacle in the creation of his works. The artist is particularly known for his “burn-out” paintings, which feature plywood, aluminum or bronze coated with multiple layers of automotive paint. The image is derived from the tire tracks of motorcycles driven across the surface of the piece, with sequential layers of paint being stripped off by the sharp turns and “burn outs” of screeching tires.

Collaborators since 2021, **Anoka Faruqee** and **David Driscoll** produce optically alluring paintings that utilize simple, slightly off-set geometric forms and juxtapositions of color to vibrant and dynamic effect. Their technique involves rendering geometric forms by raking custom tools across the canvas. Different colors are applied in successive layers and the basic form is repeated in a slightly misaligned fashion. The results are singular but simultaneously evoke Op Art, moire patterning and digital interference on computer screens as points of

reference. The central portions of the paintings are sanded down to reveal the colors and patterns of different layers simultaneously, while the periphery of the canvas foregoes this refinement in favor of imperfections and accretions of paint. A compelling tension is established between the precise, exacting forms at the center and the evidence of materiality and hand-wrought process revealed in the periphery. Faruqee comments that, “I feel like I’m sublimating the materiality for the optical experience [yet] so much of what you are seeing are traces of residue or material events.”

The German artist **Cornelius Völker** trained at the renowned Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and is now a Professor of Painting at the Kunstakademie Münster. Known for his precise yet fluid brushwork, Völker’s work references historical genres of painting, most notably still life and portraiture. The subject of the paintings is often alluded to rather than overtly depicted. His still life paintings are typically populated by mundane objects that have been transformed through human action: gum wrappers, cigarettes, partially-eaten food. Such works reference personhood and prosaic human actions by focussing on objects that reveal traces or artifacts of life.



Cornelius Völker, *Rubbish*, 2006

French artist **Dorian Gaudin** creates work that involve kinetic motion and machine processes. His metal wall sculptures are static, but suggest the aftermath of a propulsive collision. Gaudin characterizes these sculptures as “invitation(s) to imagine the movements that initiated them.”

Iván Navarro was born and raised in Santiago, Chile, where he grew up under the regime of the repressive dictator General Augusto Pinochet. His work frequently involves mirrors and neon and fluorescent tubing. The use of electrified elements refers back to the artist’s youth in the Pinochet era, when electricity was used as a means of controlling the population (e.g though the imposition of selective black-outs). Though Navarro’s sculptures evoke the visual ethos of minimalism, his subject matter is often the sweep of history during a period of totalitarianism and the personal ramifications of sociopolitical repression. In works such as *Impenetrable Room* (2016), Navarro employs both neon tubing and infinity mirrors to produce a surface plane in which viewers can see themselves disappear - an experience that suggests peering into the abyss.

Joseph Hart lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His typical process begins with large sheets of paper spread on the floor upon which he renders gestural marks in graphite and then applies acrylic paint. His stated preference for creating work is to “construct a painting” rather than “paint a painting.” Accordingly, he tears and removes portions of the work and then reassembles them using techniques of collage and assemblage. Working in New York, Hart has commented that the “anxiety, grime, density, contradiction, beauty and possibility” of the city influences his work. He considers his art to reflect multiple dualities or “contrasting sensations”: “deliberate but chaotic, rageful and generous, awkward yet bizarrely graceful.”

Based in Los Angeles, **Laddie John Dill** initially emerged as one of the original proponents of the West Coast Light and Space movement during the late 1960s. Dill has continued producing

his *Light Sentence* works for over five decades. Created from custom blown-glass forms that are lined with fluorescent emulsion and infused with electrified gases, Dill's *Light Sentence* sculptures are straight glass tubes of varying lengths that emit sequences of colored and clear light. Although Dill considers the *Light Sentence* series to be an ongoing investigation into the interaction of light, color, gas and electric charges, viewers often see the works as ethereal or otherworldly. *New York Times* critic Ken Johnson described Dill's *Light Sentence* works as sculptures that "glow beautifully like strings of illuminated glass beads."

Larry Bell is one of the key figures of the Light and Space movement. After being struck by the effect on light and shadow of a crack in a picture frame, Bell began to incorporate glass into his paintings. Subsequently, glass, often coated with a metallic film, became Bell's prototypical medium. Since the early 1960s, his focus has been the experiential effects on the viewer of alterations of light and shadow through refraction. In 1968, he developed a large machine, "The Tank," which facilitated the deposition of thin films of metal particles onto large sheets of glass. Bell was influenced early on by his mentor Robert Irwin's concept of "Perceptualism," and for six decades Bell has explored the impact of transformations of light on viewers. Bell has



enjoyed international acclaim for his works that shape viewers' experience through optics and their effect on visual and sensorineural perception.

The Oakland-based painter and sculptor **Oliver Lee Jackson** began his artistic journey as part of the influential, multidisciplinary *Black Artists Group (BAG)* in St. Louis in the late 1960s. Although many of his works appear quite abstract, Jackson's starting point is always the human figure. In his *Dark Illumination* paintings, Jackson works in a monochromatic register with only slight tonal variations on black. Jackson identifies the subject of his *Dark Illumination* paintings to be the variable interplay of light with the painting's surface and its impact on the viewer's perceptions. Employing a dark, restricted palette allows Jackson to isolate the impact of subtle changes in incident light. As is true with Jackson's work generally, the *Dark Illumination* paintings generously reward sustained viewing, with the dense, layered imagery of the works gradually becoming perceptible to the viewer with changes in perspective or light



Dorian Gaudin. *I Am a Quark Cocktail*. 2019

conditions - an experience akin to the manner in which forms and visual details become appreciable as the eye adjusts to a darkened room.

The St. Louis-based artist **Vaughn Davis Jr.** creates work employing sheaths of unstretched, unprimed canvas, which he highly manipulates through actions such as cutting, ripping, fraying and soaking in pigment. The resulting forms are strongly geometric and feature vibrant yet flat coloration. Davis' process is influenced by the urban decay of blighted areas of St. Louis, which contain many abandoned and dilapidated structures. The artist characterizes his paintings as "objects of madness" that "hang in their own identity" - reflecting an "inherited chaos through their occupation in this time."



Malin Gallery (formerly Burning in Water Gallery) is a New York-based contemporary art gallery. With a close-knit group of roster artists and industry professionals, Malin Gallery is a 21st century gallery that still maintains a classical value system of integrity, scholarship, and long-term support of individual artists.

Founded in 2015 by Dr. Barry Thomas Malin as Burning in Water, Malin Gallery actively represents a diverse roster of living artists. The curatorial program combines exhibitions by roster artists with historically-oriented shows, particularly of work by previously under-recognized artists. The gallery's progressive approach to curation has earned it a reputation in both introducing and re-introducing important artists to a New York audience. Malin Gallery exhibitions have been reviewed in multiple national publications, including ***The New York Times***, ***The New Yorker***, ***Artforum***, ***The Wall Street Journal***, ***ARTnews***, ***Time Out - New York***, ***Galerie***, ***The San Francisco Chronicle***, ***The London Review of Books*** and ***Artnet News***. Gallery artists are included in renowned public collections worldwide, including the **Museum of Modern Art**, New York; the **Metropolitan Museum of Art**; the **Whitney Museum of American Art**; the **Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**; the **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art**; the **National Gallery of Art** (Washington D.C.); the **Victoria & Albert Museum** (London), the **Saint Louis Art Museum**; and the **New Orleans Museum of Art**. Gallery artists have also received important grants and awards, including the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, the New York Foundation for the Arts Grant, a National Endowment for the Arts Award, the Robert Rauschenberg Fellowship, the Art for Justice Fund Grant and the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship.



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