

# BIENVENU STEINBERG & C

Living Fragments  
Dreaming Totality

Jonathan Callan

Ali Cherri

Marti Cormand

Fernanda Fragateiro

Orange Li

Marco Maggi

Sean Micka

Stephen Talasnik

Djamel Tatah

Michael Wang

December 19, 2024 - January 18, 2025

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 9, 2025, from 6 to 8pm

Bienvenu Steinberg & C is pleased to present *Living Fragments, Dreaming Totality*, an exhibition including 11 international artists. The exhibition will be on view from December 19, 2024, to January 18, 2025, with an opening reception on Saturday January 9, 2025. Some are dazzled, others dismayed. Some are fragmented, others totalitarian. The ground creaks and cracks: software versus hardware. The show reveals the fragile and the antifragile: debris or seeds? Collapse or emergence? The artists in the exhibition reflect on the tension between destruction and unity, they explore the delicate interface between the digital and physical worlds. Each work is an invitation to reconsider the dream for completeness through a fractured reality.

Sean Micka (b. 1979, Boston, MA) creates work that is equally conceptual as it is technical, gesturing towards painting as a medium of memory as he explores various histories. Micka creates hyper-realistic flat paintings appropriating pages from auction

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catalogs, fine silverware, gemstones, watches, weapons etc. Using the apparatus of painting and drawing, Micka examines the psychology of investment inherent in our society, the ritual of collecting, and our collective projections onto private, inanimate possessions. The works navigate questions of value, labor and desire, production and circulation, authenticity and provenance.

Throughout his work, Martí Cormand (b. 1970, Barcelona, Spain) has manifested the need to document and preserve against the violence of history and the limitations of our institutional and societal memory. He applies an extraordinary level of attention to familiar objects until they become as alive as specimens under a microscope. Like a forensic detective, he examines particles and combines elements until a new reality emerges. He stitches the past with a brush and oil paint until the familiar becomes unfamiliar.

Exploring different geographies of violence in his native Lebanon but also in the broader region, Ali Cherri (b. 1976, Beirut, Lebanon) is a Paris-based artist with three decades of artistic practice spanning across film, performance, sculpture, drawing, and installations, dissecting the ways political violence disseminates into people's bodies and the physical and cultural landscape. Shaped by the vibrant artistic scene of postwar Beirut in the 1990s, Cherri began to investigate the sensorial coproduction of reality between images of conflict, the urban fabric and his own body. The photograph, *Qubba*, was taken during the filming of his first feature-length film, *The Dam* (2022). It documents the qubbas, Islamic tombs, of Old Dongola, a deserted city located on the East bank of the Nile and an archaeological site of medieval Nubia.

Michael Wang (b. 1981, Olney, MD) uses systems that operate at both a local and global scale as media for art: climate change, species distribution, resource allocation and the global economy. Wang explores the duality and connection between art and science, human and non-human life, natural and synthetic materials, hard and soft. His work has a keen awareness of the fragility of all life forms and our natural world. Wang invokes ideas from land art and eco-art, while existing in a realm entirely of his own, at the intersection of identity, energy, and environmentalism.

Marco Maggi (b. 1957, Montevideo, Uruguay) favors generic formats and materials. His abstract language refers to the way information is processed in a global and yet myopic era. Composed of linear patterns that may suggest circuit boards, aerial views of impossible cities, genetic engineering or nervous systems, his drawings and sculptures encode the world and turn abstraction into cultural criticism. The main ambition of his work is to make time visible.

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Fernanda Fragateiro's (b. 1962, Montijo, Portugal) work is characterized by a keen interest in re-thinking and probing modernism. Her practice involves an archaeological look into modernism's social, political and aesthetic history through ongoing research with archival materials. Throughout Fragateiro's career, sculpture and installation have been her media of choice, working with space in its various phenomenological manifestations — architectural, sculptural, private, public, temporal, socially determined. Her new work for the exhibition is a textile made from carefully sliced and layered pages of 'Domus' and 'Casabella'. "These iconic architecture magazines, drawn from the late 20th century, serve as both material and subject, exposing the absence of women in architectural discourse during that period...and reflect[ing] on how their contributions have been overlooked."

Stephen Talasnik (b. 1954, Philadelphia, PA) is interested in the intersection of drawing and building. His work is informed by time travel and "fictional function," intrigued with the infrastructure of the urban environment. His drawings are otherworldly, they organically evolve with a reliance on intuition; there is no desire to finish, rather an ambition to "complete". Jonathan Callan (b. 1961, Manchester, England) works with found objects and imagery. "Most of my work is derived from a fascination with materiality. I'm interested in fluff, dirt, and dust. I'm interested in things breaking down. I'm interested in what cannot be said but can only be shown." His use of books, decontextualized from their original text, transforms the language of the work into one that moves away from the linguistic to that of the visual and emotive.

Orange Li's (b. 1988, Taiwan) practice largely draws from her memories, dreams, and the intuitive connection between the body and the psychological state of the individual. Li examines the potentiality between art, research, and storytelling with various mediums such as painting, drawing, sculpture, and installation.

Reflecting both modernity and hybridization, Tatak (b.1969, ST-Chamond, France) produces enigmatic untitled paintings, whose subtle combinations of figures and monochromatic backgrounds explore the connection between the personal and the universal. The melancholic, plainly garbed figures that populate his paintings pay tribute to displaced persons throughout the world. Tatak's characters can be read as icons of existential despair. Stripped of visual detail and narratives, they inhabit a universe of emptiness. "My painting is silent, and imposing silence on all the chaos of life is almost like making a political statement," Tatak has said, "it allows one to step back and examine one's relationship to others and to society as a whole."