

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

For Immediate Release

N. DASH

March 3 to September 15, 2019

Opening Reception: Sunday, March 3, 3 to 5 pm

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is pleased to announce a solo exhibition devoted to a new body of work by N. Dash (b. 1980, Miami). This is the artist's first solo museum exhibition on the East Coast of the United States.

Dash's work spans painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography, and employs both natural and manmade materials, including pigments, adobe/mud, jute, graphite, fabric, string, styrofoam, and found objects. Across these media, the artist's principal interests lie both in recording the sensory and informational capacities of touch and revealing typically unobserved conduits of energy: ecological, architectural, and corporeal. The works unfold through what Dash terms a "bifocal" approach, where two minds – under the influence of physical and extrasensory influences—are communing visions both nearby and remote.



N. Dash, *Untitled*, 2018. Courtesy of the artist, Casey Kaplan, New York, Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp, and Galerie Medhi Chouakri, Berlin. Photo: Jason Wyche

One of the essential components and an integral material agent in Dash's work is "fabric sculptures," small forms made by continually rubbing pieces of white cotton fabric between the fingers until they dissolve into whorls of thread. Imbued with a patina of oil and dirt and the labor of continual movement—unseen but still palpable within the fibers - the result of slight but significant haptic motions—the sculptures embody a preverbal, visceral, and intuitive system of communication. Distressed and abject, these forms are distilled through archival documentation and subsequently preserved and re-presented as photographs or silk-screened images incorporated into paintings. Activities that seek to distance the sculptures from their original physical iteration and to magnify their diminutive size to likenesses the scale of the human body and beyond.

Communicating unseen forces of energy that extends beyond the somatic vitality of the fabric sculptures into similar potencies are inherent within other materials and forms. The paintings often feature troweled-on-fields of adobe—earth transposed from the landscape—that is gathered from the high desert and shipped to the artist's studio. This material develops skin-like puckers and furrows as it dries, creating surfaces that suggest a sort of dermal membrane that protects, insulates, and breathes, qualities present both in the body's protective layer and vernacular architecture. Serial lengths of string are frequently embedded into the adobe and then partially removed, leaving thin channels that evoke both the terrestrial meridians that geographers impose on the earth for navigational purposes and the corporeal meridians that govern the flow of *qi* or energy through the human body.

Many paintings are composed of several discrete components, separated by lengths of polystyrene in their readymade industrial hues of pale green, pink, or blue. Like adobe, this type of foam is frequently used as an insulating construction material, but also commonly lines shipping crates made for art transport or supports

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unhung works-in-progress. The compositions of these multi-panel works recall cross-sectional views of interior architecture—often undetectable perspectives that represent compartments of space through which energy and movement flow. Often, single or multiple panels are shrouded in lengths of cloth taken directly from the bolt, selvages still perceptible, like enfolding mantles that safeguard a significant object laid to rest.

N. Dash (b. 1980) lives and works in New York and New Mexico. Dash has mounted solo shows at Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp; Fondazione Giuliani, Rome; Casey Kaplan, New York; Galerie Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and White Flag Projects, St. Louis. Selected group exhibitions include: Dallas Museum of Art, The Flag Art Foundation, New York; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; American University Museum, Washington, D.C., Birmingham Museum of Art; Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles; Jewish Museum, New York; LesBrasseurs Art Contemporain, Liège; MAXXI Museum, Rome; and Palazzo Strozzi, Florence. Dash's work is included in the public collections of major institutions such as: Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Blanton Museum of Art, Austin; Dallas Museum of Art; Frac des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Gent; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

A full-color scholarly publication, with an essay by the curator, will be available during the exhibition. This book will be the first hardcover monograph of Dash's work.

Organized by Amy Smith-Stewart, curator, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

For press inquiries, please contact Emily Devoe at 203.438.4519, extension 140, or edevoe@aldrichart.org

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