

LUHRING AUGUSTINE CHELSEA

531 West 24th Street
New York NY 10011
tel 212 206 9100
www.luhringaugustine.com

Sliced Tropics & Cosmic Dancers

Luhring Augustine Chelsea

September 10 – October 25, 2025

Opening reception: Thursday, September 11, 2025

Luhring Augustine is pleased to announce a group exhibition that highlights the work of **Lygia Clark, Sarah Crowner, Mark Handforth, Elizabeth Murray, Richard Rezac, and Philip Taaffe**. *Sliced Tropics & Cosmic Dancers*, which borrows from the titles of two works included in the presentation, opens in our Chelsea location on September 10. These six artists share a kindred interest in disrupting familiar forms, employing unique strategies such as manipulations of lines and planes – folding, pinching, slicing, splicing – and radical shifts in scale to reshape and reimagine recognizable and quotidian motifs.

ARTIST BIOS:

Lygia Clark (b. 1920, Belo Horizonte, Brazil – d. 1988, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) is one of the preeminent artists of the twentieth century, whose pioneering body of work reimagined the relationship between audience and the art object. A founding member of the 1950s Brazilian Neoconcretist movement, Clark proposed a radical approach to thinking about painting by treating its pictorial surface as if it were a three-dimensional architectural space. Her iconic *Bichos*, or sculptures constructed out of hinged metal planes, allowed for the audience to exercise authorship through participation. Clark's reliance on the viewer to steer her sculptures through many possible configurations not only jeopardized the autonomy of the art object itself, but also reconfigured her art as a performative, time-based event.

Sarah Crowner (b. 1974, Philadelphia, PA) explores the spaces where geometry abuts gesture, materiality merges with composition, and the graphic confronts the handmade. Her sewn canvases initially appear pristine in their composition, however closer inspection reveals the various slippages, imprints, and nuances of hand-painted surfaces constructed from separate yet related elements. Architecture plays a significant role in many of her works; her site-specific wall pieces transform spaces into three-dimensional experiences in which the viewer processes the environment as one autonomous artwork. The patterns in her work, drawn equally from the natural world and historic sources, create an entryway between the art object and the context, enabling the viewer to be enveloped and literally step inside her work.

Mark Handforth's (b. 1969, Hong Kong) works are interventions in space: offering novel engagements within existing environments and asserting new perspectives on familiar fixtures. His sculptures displace quotidian objects and recontextualize their forms in unexpected articulations. In some of his iconic works, the bodies of stars, streetlamps, and traffic signs whimsically buckle, twist, and droop. The seemingly defunct and defeated contortions in these forms are countered by a gracefulness imparted by Handforth's meticulous craftsmanship; this incongruity imbues the works with a wry humor and an endearing pathos. His works reference a post-punk aesthetic and utilitarian minimalism, while the capricious scale and juxtapositions draw on the legacies of Surrealism and Dadaist absurdism.

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Elizabeth Murray (b. 1940, Chicago, IL – d. 2007, Granville, NY) was an artist at the forefront of American painting for five decades and is considered one of the most important postmodern abstract artists of her time. Her drive and determination produced a singularly innovative body of work characterized by a Cubist-informed Minimalism and streetwise Surrealism. Throughout her career, she reveled in the physicality of paint and approached her work through the constructive vocabulary of sculpture, warping, twisting, splintering, and knotting her canvases. In the 1980s Murray introduced three-dimensionality to her canvases, bringing about a complete break from traditional, flat, rectilinear compositions. Muddled, moody, and gestural, these paintings blazed a course of international recognition and notoriety.

Richard Rezac's (b. 1952, Lincoln, NE) abstract sculptures, rooted in a studious consideration of the history of art, architecture, and design, quietly connote everyday sources, leaving the viewer with a sense of familiarity and closeness. Exceptionally precise in their execution, with each decision carefully considered by the artist, the pieces are made to be looked at and thought of with absorption. Their human scale and careful placement (the height on the wall, the distance they hang from the ceiling, etc.) initiates a dialogue that demands time, the works revealing themselves slowly. This combination of exquisite craft and spatial intentionality imparts a knowing presence to the sculptures, lending an ostensible sense that they are full of concealed information. Taciturn, earnest, and magnetic, they toggle between congruence and dissonance, space and form, lightness and solidity.

Philip Taaffe's (b. 1955, Elizabeth, NJ) practice is distinguished by its elaborate sampling of techniques and symbols that merge iconography, design, and art historical and cultural motifs to generate something authentically new. Celebrated for his ability to build intricate and contemplative compositions culled from this wide-ranging lexicon of imagery, Taaffe produces transfixing works rife with geometric forms and interwoven complex patterns that call into question traditionally accepted definitions of realism and abstraction. The visual vibrancy and dynamism that underlie his work reveals the convergence of the optical and the conceptual, the decorative and the narrative, the natural and the man-made, as well as the ancient and the modern.

For further information on the exhibition, please contact Grace Deal at grace@luhringaugustine.com.

For press inquiries, please contact Caroline Burghardt at caroline@luhringaugustine.com.