

ALYSON SHOTZ

The Small Clocks Run Wild

September 10 - October 10, 2020

Opening Reception: Thursday,
September 10, 12-7 pm



Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present *The Small Clocks Run Wild*, an exhibition of recent work by Alyson Shotz.

With sculpture on view in both the gallery's main space as well as its project room, this show renews Shotz's career-long inquiry and preoccupation with the universalizing forces that structure our natural world. Using a new sculptural frame of reference, Shotz expands her quintessential visualizations of the sublime—gravity, space, and time: ineffable forces that resist conceptualization. This show demonstrates an aesthetic departure from prior work, inflected by the turmoil of the contemporary moment. More intimate in nature, *The Small Clocks Run Wild* examines the duality and paradox of transformation, a simultaneously melancholic yet optimistic process.

Featured in the center of the gallery, *Intricate Metamorphosis* is a series of mesh veils comprised of prismatic interlocking metal disks. Suspended vertically by wire, these structures drape shroud-like from above. Shotz achieved their polychromatic surfaces using an electroplating process wherein a metal substrate is coated using an electrically charged bath, producing color as a result of chemical transformation. This physical metamorphosis resonates in the quantitative nature of the work—although the nucleus of each shroud is empty, they all delineate a discrete inner form. As residues of a now absent presence, these sculptures carry a corporeal subtext as well. The veils are like shed skins, discarded remains that are rife with the implication of mortality and bodily decline. And yet, their existence also suggests transcendence, either to a new physical form or to a higher state of being.

In reflecting on such duality, a tension between the spiritual, individualistic capacity of the work versus its vocabulary of science and precision emerges. Shotz expands on this dichotomy in the collection of large-scale wall panels hung throughout the gallery. Comprised of folded and compressed rubber spirals atop reflective copper grounds, these works recall the Byzantine icon with all its divine connotations. But, beyond the devotional, the wall panels also operate as indexes or records. Each piece incorporates recycled inner tubes from bicycle tires—a found material that encompasses a history of space traveled over time. This distance is compressed on the surface of each work, data abstracted into a comprehensible visual form. Yet, even as the salvaged rubber functions as odometer, it's also a shed skin of sorts, cast off when it begins to decompose. As unwanted remains, this material signifies the inevitability of decay. But, it also communicates something constructive, the completion of a journey and thus a personal evolution.

The Small Clocks Run Wild draws its significance from the dueling implications of transformative growth. Accordingly, the show is named after a line in a Stanley Kunitz poem titled *King of the River*. This incantatory work finds Kunitz observing a king salmon, nearing the end of its life, struggling upriver to spawn. Although the salmon's journey is driven by biological impulses, Kunitz finds spiritually transcendent meaning in its struggle as well. "The great clock of your life is slowing down, and the small clocks run wild." Mortality and actualization are ironically inextricable. Shotz's work is located in such contemplation, between the physical and metaphysical dimensions of metamorphosis.

-Elana Kates, 2020

On the occasion of this exhibition, the gallery is publishing a 48 page catalogue of recent work by Alyson Shotz, with essay by Jennifer Gross.

This will be Alyson Shotz's eighth solo show at the gallery. Recent solo exhibitions include The Weatherspoon Art Museum and the Hunter Museum of Art in 2019, as well as recent group exhibitions at the Guggenheim Bilbao, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the Wichita Museum of Art and Yale University Art Gallery. She will be included in the upcoming exhibition: "Taking Space: Contemporary Women Artists and the Politics of Scale", at The Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA, October 30, 2020 - April 11, 2021. Her work is included in the permanent collections of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, The Guggenheim Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain, The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Stanford University and The Yale University Art Gallery, among others.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 300 Broome Street between Eldridge Street and Forsyth Street. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday 11am to 6pm, and by appointment. For further information please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit www.derekeller.com