

L & M ARTS

660 Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA 90291

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



MATTHEW RITCHIE

Monstrance

November 2 – December 10, 2011

Opening Reception: Wednesday, November 2,
2011

6-8 pm

L&M Arts, LA is honored to present New York based, and internationally recognized artist Matthew Ritchie in his Los Angeles debut, *Monstrance*. The exhibition will include paintings, drawings, sculpture, a site-specific multi-media installation and a performance.

Matthew Ritchie's work defies categorization: it began as an exploration of systems of knowledge, those that already exist and ones of his own making, to create the personal 'working model' on which his visual language is based. He recombines these systems into what he describes as a 'super-positional state' that both extends the space of painting and attempts to recover meaning from the complexity and entropy of modern life. Frequently working across multiple disciplines, he then applies this model to a specific "site"; which can be an idea, place or a time. In this case, it is both Los Angeles and the gallery, L & M Arts, which is built on grounds that once housed the home of the author Ray Bradbury, one of our most prolific generators of modern monsters.

Monstrance refers to the term for a ritual vessel created in the medieval period for the public display of relics; and is derived from the Latin word meaning 'to show'. In the performance, presented at the exhibition's opening, a masked singer, representing the many forms of the sun, presents the 'office of the evening' as the sun sets. *Monstrance* is a composition of different kinds of information, painting, drawing, music, animation and sculpture. Information systems are the means used to extend the slow time and infinite space of painting onto a performance. A performance of one of the most essential myths in Hollywood: A fallen star.

The same systems are also used to extend and map the space of the performance back into painting. The exhibition includes a sequence of eight 'angel' paintings, partly inspired by the 'liturgy of hours', the Catholic cycle of eight daily prayers. The hallucinatory paintings depict a shrouded composite figure (somewhere between Benjamin's 'Angel of History' and Turner's 'Angel of the Sun'), whose form is derived from a systemic search of sources representing "high energy states:" pole dancers, solar storms, female athletes and aerial views among them, combined with images from Ritchie's films and sculptures. This 'figure' is disrupted by dots and lines matching the patterns of the constellations visible from Los Angeles on November 2nd, 2011, the opening of the show and 'the feast of all souls'.

The artist has also produced four contrasting 'monster' paintings, (originally inspired by the monsters of classic Hollywood: Dracula, Frankenstein, Mummy and Wolfman), systemically re-ordered to the edge of complete abstraction. In these paintings Ritchie uses lines and dots to depict the constellations visible from Los Angeles, this time on October 31st (Halloween). The emerging monsters are all quite different, generated from another search of sources representing "negative energy states": such as surgery, terror attacks, video games and ecological disasters. In both series, faded notations in multiple languages, including Hebrew and Arabic, conjure office whiteboards and remind us of the difficulties of any final interpretation. These jewel-like paintings are as visually complex as they are densely layered in their influences, creating an infinite window into Ritchie's ethereal world.

In the East gallery, there is a large-scale wall 'drawing', which incorporates a series of windows or 'luna', showing a dream-like animation. They use a visual vocabulary similar to the paintings and depict the events of the performance, but in an alternate and devastated Los Angeles, inhabited only by the characters of the performance. This animation is accompanied by three related sculptural works: the Unconquered Sun, the Conquered Sun and The Missing Sun. These refer back to the figure of the 'angel' and integrate the recombinant scaling systems of the performance, components of the wall drawing and video installation, as individual tabletop and large-scale works, and as outdoor sculpture in the gallery's garden. These sculptures are built from modular scaling generations of complex fractal units, which can be endlessly recombined to create delicate, lattice-like works or building sized structures. Although apparently fragile, these structures, like Ritchie's entire process, are engineered to scale up to the size of the universe.

Matthew Ritchie lives and works in New York. He will be an Artist in Residence at the Getty Research Institute in Spring 2012. Ritchie will also be included in exhibitions at the Barbican, London, UK; and at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo in 2012. His installation 'The Morning Line' will be presented in Vienna during 2012. Ritchie's work has been included in numerous exhibitions including: Andrea Rosen Gallery, NY; the Venice Architecture Biennale; the Seville Biennale; the Havana Biennale; 'Matthew Ritchie, The Iron City,' St. Louis Art Museum; 'Wunderkammern' Museum of Modern Art, New York; 'The Guggenheim Collection,' Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain; 'Not For Sale' PS1, New York; 'Confines,' IVAM, Valencia, Spain; 'The Shapes of Space,' Guggenheim Museum, New York; 'Between Art and Life,' San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; 'The Kaleidoscopic Eye,' Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; 'In the Beginning: Artists Respond to Genesis,' Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco; 'Experimental Marathon Reykjavik,' Reykjavik Art Museum; 'The Last Scattering, Phase Two,' London, 'To the Milky Way by Bicycle,' Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Germany; 'The Architectural Imaginary in Contemporary Art,' Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego.

GALLERY INFORMATION: L&M Arts, Los Angeles, 660 Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, 90291. Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 - 5:30 and by appointment. For additional information, please contact L&M Arts at: +1.310.821.6400 or visit our website: www.lmgallery.com.