

Press Release

Exhibition: Drawing with Metal

Works by *Lucie Beppler, David Connearn, Benjamin Cottam, Marietta Hoferer, Károly Keserü, Sam Messenger, Susan Schwalb, Dillwyn Smith, Damian Taylor and Erika Winstone*

Opening: Wednesday 9th September 2015 6-9 pm

Exhibition dates: 10th September to 10th October 2015

Patrick Heide Contemporary Art is delighted to announce 'Drawing with Metal', a group show of contemporary artists that are working with metalpoint or employ metal itself on paper or canvas. 'Drawing with Metal' is coinciding with an exhibition at the British Museum entitled 'Drawing in Silver and Gold' (traveling from the National Gallery in Washington DC), which gives a historic overview on artists working with metalpoint from the Renaissance to the present day.

Technically accomplished and evocative as a medium, metalpoint is traditionally executed on carefully prepared surfaces and allows an astonishingly delicate rendering of lines. Though not featuring prominently in contemporary drawing, quite a few living artists use the classical stylus for its ephemeral and subtle qualities. Many use metalpoint as an alternative to pencil or ink. Others have started experimenting, amongst them three British artists living in London. *Erika Winstone* employs found metal objects to draw onto a specially prepared canvas, *Damian Taylor* applies liquid metal directly onto the surface while *Dillwyn Smith* has been inspired by the use of metals in scientific brain research.

One of the most prominent names in contemporary drawing often associated with metalpoint and also featured in the exhibition at the British Museum is *Susan Schwalb*. The American artist uses the classical Renaissance technique of metal and silverpoint while challenging traditional concepts. Entirely abstract, her compositions are often pushing the boundaries of the medium. *Schwalb* uses a variety of up to 8 different metalpoints to obtain soft shifts in tone and a shimmering luminosity that give the drawings an almost physical quality. Her work is included in most major American museum collections as well as the collections of the Ashmolean in Oxford and the British Museum.

British artist *Sam Messenger* often works with ink on paper or canvas to create organic weavings like in his important "Veil" series or in his more geometric compositions. Messenger is drawn to silverpoint mainly as an alternative medium to achieve different tonal effects and more visual depth.

David Connearn also executes his meditative drawings usually with ink, just as *Károly Keserü* uses ink and graphite in most of his playful, geometric works on paper. Especially for the show, both gallery artists ventured into the use of metalpoint, a technique that lends itself to their practice yet a novelty for both.

Also, German artist *Lucie Beppler* turns to metalpoint only occasionally and mixes it with the use of etching and engraving needles. Scratching and embossing the surface as well as drawing, *Beppler* carefully builds up relief-like abstract compositions. The tranquil grid drawings of NY based artist *Marietta Hoferer* are often executed in silverpoint and some recent collages also incorporate metal tape. This technical shift gives *Hoferer's* minimal compositions a luminosity and metaphysical purity that is subtle yet striking.

Erika Winstone combines her film and performance work with using metal to develop an ongoing dialogue between video and painting. *Winstone* employs found metal objects such as wire or cutlery to draw onto a zinc white gouache surface, resulting in an amalgam of words, faces and scribbles in response to her films. *Benjamin Cottam's* "Dead Artist" series ties in with *Winstone's* nostalgic film and painting "Only Love". Portraying dead artists, or in Amy Winehouse's case anticipating her death, *Cottam* draws tiny, almost vanishing portraits, their effect greatly enhanced by the fading and ephemeral tonality of the silverpoint.