

towards the light

21st June – 20th July

Mar Arza, Emmanuel Barcion, Bram Bogart, Enrique Brinkmann, Francisco de Corcuera, Leonardo Drew, Riccardo Guarneri, Qingzhen Han, Enrique Perezalba Red, Sabrina Jauffret, Enrico Minguzzi, Keita Miyazaki, Bongsu Park, Toti Scialoja

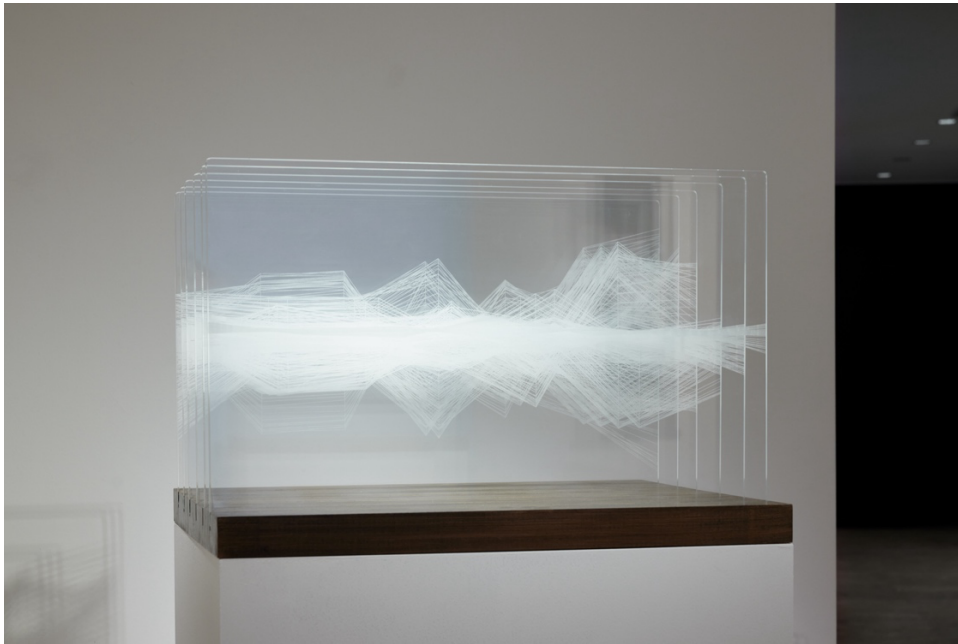


Keita Miyazaki, *White Ore*, 2023, Car parts and paper

gallery rosenfeld is thrilled to present '*Towards the Light*', a multidisciplinary exhibition featuring fourteen international artists. Thematically, each artist is primarily concerned with the colour white, and how it can be utilised to either give off, or absorb, light.

The use of light, the expression of light, the limitations of light: these have all been the primary motors of art across the centuries; from Caravaggio's invention of *chiaroscuro* and Dutch 17th century

Still Life's to Monet's Haystacks and Soulage's Black paintings. However, the use of *white* as a predominant colour, only arrived in the art historical lexicon in the 1950s, during the Minimalist period, with artists such as Kazimir Malevich and Robert Ryman making all-white paintings.



Bongsu Park, *DreamScape* - 210507031322, 202, Installation, glass panel, wood

Spanish artist **Mar Arza's** practice looks to the physical and material dimensions of words and writing. From pages of books, she meticulously dissects texts, words and phrases, erasing them, cutting them out, or incorporating them into new forms. Thus, once carefully extracted from their original context, these words take on new meanings, altering interpretations of the final work. These sculptures are often pure white, taking on the pure implications of a 'blank canvas'.

Both the French artist **Emmanuel Barcion** and Belgian artist **Bram Bogart** use cream as they try and capture some of the possibilities that light offers. Barcion paints multiple layers on wooden surfaces, each time scraping away the paint, before beginning afresh. At the end of this laborious process, he applies a gloss varnish; the eye is drawn across the surface and is at first taken by the reflections of light, before allowing itself to sink into the memory of previous coats of paint. In a similar way, Bogart treats his paint foremostly as a physical matter, pushed to the limits of the material's sculptural qualities. Thickly layering white paint, the artist creates sensual paintings created through a process of building-up, and making manifest the fusion of sensitivity to material, tactility, light, and colour.

Spanish artist **Enrique Brinkmann** has, since 1998, been increasingly concerned with light. He began working with metal mesh as his chosen surface, which was mounted some way away from the wall. This unique medium and installation allowed light to filter through the tiny gaps directly onto the wall, creating a fascinating interplay between artwork, environment, and viewer. Such works were notable for their extreme minimalism, which make use of Brinkmann's oil on mesh technique. However, as the artist explored this further, he began to experiment with painting on both sides of the mesh, resulting in works which absorbed nearly all light. In the large work, *Dieciseis mas Uno*, the artist has covered nearly all the canvas in thick, white paint, before cutting through some areas with a knife.

Francisco de Corcuera, explores themes of identity, memory and the human condition, drawing inspiration from his own experiences and observations of the world around him. In the large canvas *White City Below*, the artist makes use of oil, acrylic and pencil to create a luminous abstract piece, which appears much like a cloud: drifting, yet filled with light. Throughout his career, Corcuera has experimented with a variety of mediums, including painting, sculpture and mixed media installations.

Mostly creating sculptural works from wood, paper, rope, feathers and other found materials, **Leonardo Drew** creates objects which aim to critique social injustices and breathe new life into jettisoned materials. Much like in works by Arza, Drew makes use of paper. *32i*, a white cast paper and mixed media work, showcases the artist's ability to create powerful and moving narratives. Framed behind Perspex, the composition of the work allows for the paper to escape past the confines of the page, playing with light, and often casting shadows.

Riccardo Guarneri's works are immensely subtle in their use of colour. Debuting in the early 60s, Guarneri focuses on the relationship between light and colour throughout each canvas. As in a prism, the combination of colours, so subtle though they are, give off the appearance of a bright, white canvas. In more recent works, Guarneri creates canvases in which colours disappear and meld into each other – a gradient which implies a sense of never-ending infinity.



Qingzhen Han, *Untitled*, 2019, gesso and acrylic on canvas

Chinese painter **Qingzhen Han** also makes use of white – covering her canvases in a layer of white gesso. Han's works consequently reflect light, whilst also partially absorbing brushstrokes made by the artist. In the works *An Opened Heart*, *Collection of the Void*, and *Ephemeral* the white gesso dominates the space, absorbing colour and giving out light at the same time.

French artist **Sabrina Jauffret** also creates textural works. Taking a variety of upcycled threads and other repurposed materials, Jauffret composes fascinating material pieces free of either stitching or weaving. Within her work, she creates layers of white yarn, which are compressed and layered – they encourage close looking, and keen observation. In doing so, one is able to understand the nuance of the material, and notice the subtle interplay of tone, colour, light and shadow throughout. Creating such a harmonious blend of soft hues and undulating cervices, Jauffret's works are reminiscent of cartography.

The Italian artist **Enrico Minguzzi** is fascinated by still life. The artist has adapted this genre to create works that offer a sublime reality. Born in 1981, the artist has developed his own technique, involving epoxy resin and oil. Firstly, covering the entire canvas with epoxy resin, the artist then paints atop this monochrome surface with oil. The last stage of his practice consists of removing details of the oil painting by etching or chemical solvents, revealing the resin beneath. The result is a mesmerising and totally unique practice which at times recalls Flemish 17th century masters, whilst also linking to images of the magical gardens in Japan.

Japanese sculptor **Keita Miyazaki's** work exist in a constant state of juxtaposition. Combining car engine parts made from solid metal, with pure white origami-influenced paper creations, Miyazaki's sculptures speak an incredibly distinctive, and unique, visual language. Originally making works in response to the 2011 Japanese tsunami, Miyazaki's sculptures meld cultural significance with a fascination with materiality, political history, and colour.

Within **Bongsu Park's** multidisciplinary practice, light is used to symbolise dreams, escapism and otherworldliness. In the installation *Dreamscape*, Park looks at how our innermost thoughts connect with others, and how these can be shared publicly. White strings are held in suspension between layers of glass, where light cascades, reflecting and refracting as it goes. As the name suggests, the installation holds a poetic, and physical, weightlessness.

Enrique Perezalba Red is a Spanish, London based artist, whose work ranges from sculptural bronzes to intricate and highly figurative porcelain works. Porcelain's white, translucent quality has long been associated with purity and delicacy, symbolizing an ethereal beauty and refined elegance. The lightness and smoothness of porcelain also evoke a sense of clarity and simplicity, often linked to spiritual and moral purity. *Pieta*, a porcelain sculpture based on the famous Michelangelo sculpture by the same name, Perezalba Red merges references from both the East and West, symbolising the ever-increasing globalisation of today's world.

Toti Scialoja's practice is abstract, focusing especially on materiality. Having participated in the Venice Biennale in 1966 to great acclaim, Scialoja is an artist whose work has heavily influenced many contemporary artists today. The work exhibited as a part of *Towards the Light* is a piece made during Scialoja's one of most important period, referred to as the *Im Pronte* period (meaning 'like a finger print'); *Untitled (1960), Mixed Media on Board*, showcases three distinct, white, forms. As with most of his works, an emphasis on texture and materiality is apparent, but in this specific piece, so is colour. Juxtaposing a majority white backing, with the undulating forms that accompany it, Scialoja incorporates a bright red to slash each 'body', creating a visceral, textural, and moving, subject matter.

Towards the Light showcases fourteen artists whose diverse practices span generations and artistic movements. The exhibition highlights how each artist's cultural and societal history influences their use of white, shaping both their works and our interpretations.