

Matthew Schreiber

Possession: Experiments and Holography

January 23 — March 2, 2024

Floor 2

Press Release

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Marlborough is delighted to present *Possession: Experiments and Holography*, an exhibition of intimately scaled works by the artist, Matthew Schreiber. The exhibition, the artist's first with the gallery, will open on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, with a reception from 6pm until 8pm, and will remain on view through Saturday, March 2, 2024, in the second-floor gallery of 545 West 25th Street. Spanning holograms, sculptures, drawings, video, and collaborative projects, each of the works on view nod to Schreiber's varied interests and research in light, the occult, spectacle, simulation, urban legends, and conspiracy theories. While *Possession: Experiments and Holography* might represent a prelude to the artist's forthcoming exhibition at The Getty Museum, *Sculpting with Light: Contemporary Artists and Holography*, the current exhibition expands on the conceptual motivations behind his work and its esoteric nature.

To understand Schreiber's practice is to understand the science behind holography, the artist's primary medium, which he refers to as a "sacred craft." Schreiber's optical laboratory in Brooklyn, New York produces real or "wave interference" holographic recordings with laser light. Light vibrates from all materials, and in holography these waves are recorded with light sensitive materials on glass. There is no image produced by a hologram, only a pattern of information that contains the entire or "whole message" of the material recorded, much like the DNA within our bodies. Several of Schreiber's ongoing series present examples of pure light diffraction or gratings. As the artist states, "these works are tools that behave as Talismans. They present deep, real, and contemporary examples of physics and nature".

Schreiber has a longstanding history of working with fellow artists. On view are collaborative works made with the Los Angeles based painter Daniel Newman. Together, they created *RUNT WOLFE (Red)*, 2016 and *RUNT WOLFE (Green)*, 2016. Complimenting the holograms are Newman's own experimental Dummy paintings (*GARBO S*, 2018, *MACHINE ELF with SHAGGY DOG*, 2018, and *CUT MAN*, 2018). Newman created the paintings by utilizing a ventriloquist dummy as a conduit, exploring the idea of working in a trance state (a concept which has been of continued interest to both artists). As Schreiber says, "In my collaborative work with holography, I become the "dummy," being taken on by the other or possessed by the artist I work with."

The exhibition also includes holographic works by Paul McCarthy (*CSSC, 3 Channel*, 2020, *CSSC, White White*, 2020, and *CSSC, Deep Red*, 2020) and Ed Ruscha (*Metro, Petro, Neuro, Psycho*, 2022). In the former, Schreiber manipulated special effects prosthetics used in selected films and sculptures by McCarthy. The latter's utilized altered video data and spatial cues, allowing different readings of the image based on the position of the viewer relative to the work. For Schreiber, both explore perception, obfuscation, and stagecraft.

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Cassadaga, Vortex #5, 2011
silver halide reflection hologram on glass, unique
12½ x 16½ x 1½ in. / 31.8 x 41.9 x 3.8 cm

However, Schreiber's holograms venture beyond scientific or collaborative endeavors, with his own oeuvre often emphasizing illusion, the paranormal, and the occult. *Lily Dale, Stump*, 2020-23 is a key example of his exploration of these themes. In 2020, the artist and his wife Benedicte traveled to Lilydale, New York, universally considered one of the original and largest Spiritualist communities. During his time there, Schreiber was taken to several of the town's legendary "spiritual vortexes", sacred sites believed to contain swirling centers of energy conducive to healing, meditation and self-exploration. Schreiber created *Lily Dale, Stump*, 2020-23 during this visit. While essentially an image of a tree stump, the color, distortions, and overall strangeness inherent to the holographic medium evoke a sense of otherness in the viewer.

The exhibition culminates with a video depicting a walk through the *Lily Dale Labyrinth* during one of Schreiber's first visits to the Spiritualist community. The visuals consist of a strobing software the artist developed, forcing an "entrainment" or meditative state upon the viewer. The complimentary "binaural" audio is based on Russian composer Alexander Scriabin's *Mystic Chord*. Additionally, the artist worked with design aficionado George Gilpin to source furniture for the tableau in which the video is viewed. This includes furniture by Pierre Jeanneret from Chandigarh, India (a city designed by the modernist architect Le Corbusier), and an Abel Sorenson lamp originally from the UN's Delegates Lounge. The final element of the installation is a hologram of ephemera discovered by the artist in Gilpin's studio: a fragment of the original fence that surrounded the United Nations in New York, designed by Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer. While the original fence no longer exists, Schreiber's hologram of it speaks to "an illusion of stability or a safeguard, that the UN is meant to project." This play of illusion and reality runs throughout the exhibition and is a continual area of exploration for Schreiber. "As my practice moves deeper into physics and perception, I find some authenticity can be drawn from illusion."