CATINCA

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Intercourse

Joe Brittain

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New York, April 3, 2015 – Serena Qui writes: Since our earliest material interventions upon the earth, we have wanted for its substance to speak to us or on our behalf. During the aggregated human lifetime, we lay hands on geological substance with sureness that it communicates beyond our graspable experiences of time and space, and that we might impress upon it something of ourselves to carry past our limits. We do not create objects from our earthly sources so much as negotiating them into being.

In the most conscientious of ways, Joe Brittain works alongside his materials and guides them to enunciate their own properties. The results of his practice are behavioral situations in which matter performs its elemental tendencies: to rust, to evaporate, to cling, to expand. Brittain's alchemy has been to deliver to our human senses these mannerisms that might otherwise unfold only over geological intervals of time, or invisibly.

Intercourse is a profoundly personal turn for Brittain, testing the capacity of material to measure human behavior and experiences of time. Though the specters of Brittain's childhood farm have materialized in his works before, he now addresses the spiritual dimensions of his upbringing. Seven marble pillars of almost human stature become sympathetic collaborators in linguistic and physical exertion. They bear witness to the repetition and the frustration of making manifest a mystical experience, which is finally as fugitive as running ink. But this fervor is balanced with more serene apparitions. A suite of paintings gives form to Brittain's adolescent barn hay hatch, the incidental oculus that bore the sudden and total appearance of many clear nights. The constellations on these painted surfaces are thus not native to our skies but to memory. Their gables roof the columns, bestowing structure to an intimate conversation between the colossi of doubt and reassurance. To inhabit the space of Intercourse is to give in to different velocities, and to feel humbled, comforted, and small.

Catinca Tabacaru Gallery brings you Intercourse, an exhibition of new works by Joe Brittain and the artist's first solo show with the gallery.