

Opening: 18:00 - 21:00, August 25, 2018 August 25 - September 23 La Vallonea, Capalbio

This exhibition at La Vallonea presents works by five international artists - all recognised for their strong use of line and a further unifying factor being that they all either have studios in Italy or have made their works for this exhibition here. The exhibition takes the idea of line/borderline as a conceptual tool. From ancient carvings on bone and stone to the intricacy of modernist abstraction, the use of line has pervaded art throughout the centuries and across many different cultures. With their interpretation of line/borderline the works in this exhibition exert a physical presence and intensity insistently demanding the viewer's fullest attention.

Borders and, more specifically, borderlines are a frequently discussed topic in contemporary society. They can be a physical representation of liminality, the threshold between different (literal and metaphorical) states: geographical, ideological, religious, literary, political and ethical; or between states of being and thinking, reflecting a formalised organisation of society based on divisions, tribalism, nationalism, globalism, grids and binary oppositions or in terms of class, gender, territory or religion. Borderlines that are enforced by separations with the building of stockades, concrete walls, barbed-wire fences and yet on the other hand celebrating crossings, hybridisation, differences, blurring and transgression. These are among the major issues of our time.

La Vallonea itself is built on the historic borderline of Toscana and Lazio, the confine between the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Pontifical State, the border where Caravaggio crossed and died, reportedly from a fever while on his way to Rome to receive a papal pardon. Thus the west door of this building looks to Tuscany, the east to Lazio. The locality is Pescia Fiorentina, while the other side of the divide is Pescia Romana.

We start by looking at the plein air landscape paintings of Charlie Masson, the only strictly figurative artist in the exhibition, depicting this ancient border running through La Vallonea. His borderscapes, made in the last year whilst in his residency here, help ground us immediately in our surroundings.

Dividing the room in two is the sculpture by Eva LeWitt. This work acts as a physical borderline, which we must traverse to access the exhibition, reminding us of what happens when boundaries – physical, political and psychological – are crossed. We must go through the arch to access the rest of the exhibition: its transparency gives us a sense of what lies on its other side and we can crawl under it, showing us that no border is impenetrable.

Zak Kitnick's paintings, made at La Vallonea during the residency program earlier in the summer, are based on the instantly recognizable layout of the backgammon board, one of the oldest known board games, its history traced back 5,000 years to archaeological discoveries in the Middle East. This geometric layout draws, frames, plans, limits, introduces the notion of escape, departure and rupture and with a vivid rainbow palette creates interlocking arrangements of bright primary colours.

The work of Max Renkel provides a wide-ranging investigation of the procedures, logical connections, unpredictable rhythms, and imperceptible passages that, in the elaboration of an image on canvas, intervene between idea and execution. Situated part way between abstraction and representation, his line paintings break from the severity of the strong linear border, and instead project human forms and a level of sexual psychology and eroticism, bringing to mind the discreet or triumphant pleasure of illicit crossing, which cannot be experienced unless the border has previously been clearly drawn.

Sebastian Lloyd Rees' works on paper are evocative of his shift of demographic environment. Made in his studio in Viterbo, the series of hoarding from construction sites, that continues on from what was recently exhibited at Mothers Station gallery in London engaged with what can be viewed as terms of isolation, neutralization, separation and embracing the horizontal and diagonal spaces within the metropolitan cityscape. The drawings represented at La Vallonea respond to more naturalistic experiences and the infinite possibilities of a city dweller, embracing the chaotic narrow stone-paved pathways detached from the rectangular box, leading to a more free-form memory where the artist's piece of graphite or black rollerball pen draws out the colliding spaces of conflict between rectangular, horizontal, diagonal lines and the freer space of poetry within a line.

La Vallonea was set up to bring artists from around the world together, breaking down borders and creating new possibilities and perspectives. This is the second exhibition to be held here, and we hope there will be many more.

BORDERLINE will remain open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays 3 – 8 pm and by appointment through September 23rd. For additional information please contact : info@studiolavallonea.com, +39 3455018102

La Vallonea
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Directions

From Siena:

take S223 direction Grosseto
in Grosseto take Via Aurelia (S1/A12) direction Roma
pass Orbetello
exit Pescia Fiorentina / Chiarone
go east (left)
pass first road to the left
take second road to the right

From Roma:

take Via Aurelia (A12/S1) direction Civitavecchia/Grosseto
pass Civitavecchia
pass Tarquinia
pass Montalto di Castro
exit Pescia Fiorentina / Chiarone
go east (left)
pass first road to the left
take second road to the right

From Leonardo da Vinci International Airport:

take A12 to Civitavecchia
pass Civitavecchia take Via Aurelia
direction Grosseto
pass Tarquinia
pass Montalto di Castro
exit Pescia Fiorentina / Chiarone go east (left)
pass first road to the left
take second road to the right