



MITCHELL LONAS

reception march 3rd 6-9

STILLNESS

At once precise and poetical, visually dramatic yet serenely contemplative, Mitchell Lonas' artworks encompass the dualities we seek out in the solace of nature. In his sixth solo exhibition with Callan Contemporary, Lonas expands his repertoire of imagery and reinterprets established subject matter in his signature style and media. Using customized tools, he incises painted aluminum panels with sinuous, evocative shapes that engage in a profound dance with light. The artist debuts two new series in this show. In one, he depicts idealized forests: trees receding into silky darkness, beckoning viewers into the solitude and mystery of an abstracted landscape. The second series focuses on *banksia* pods—vital elements of a native Australian plant that spreads its seeds after bushfires, replenishing burnt soil. In the pods' delicate contours we infer a cycle of organic life in which adversity and decay yield to healing and regrowth.

Lonas studied art history at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) and is based in Asheville, North Carolina, a stone's throw from the Blue Ridge Mountain trails and waterfalls that feed his artistic inspiration. His works are included in distinguished private, public and corporate collections including Morgan Stanley, Stanford University, Barclay Global Investors, Cooley LLP and other Fortune 500 companies. In his forest and *banksia* pieces—and his portrayals of robins' and sparrows' nests, floating feathers, and waterfalls—a hushed, meditative quality prevails, reminding us of the clarity and heightened awareness we experience in nature. His arcing, expressionistic curves recall the lyrical abstraction of Hans Hartung, while his agile finessing of negative space evokes the East Asian idea of “*ma*”—the passages of supple emptiness enveloping forms in historical Chinese and Japanese landscape painting.

Lonas has developed and perfected his innovative technique over many years. With a combination of intuition and painstaking skill, he controls the depth, density, and angle of each inscribed line, optimizing reflectivity and detail. Each line catches the light differently. “The deepest cuts give the illusion that they’re closest to you,” Lonas explains. “It’s like drawing in reverse; you’re drawing the light and only the light.” The images that flow from the artist’s hand are archetypal, existing outside space, time, and scale. They are icons whose power lies in their simplicity. They are structures that contain ideas.

Richard Speer

RECEPTION SATURDAY, MARCH 3RD 6-9PM

EXHIBITION DATES MARCH 1ST - APRIL 28TH, 2018

Front Cover: *Stillness*, incised, painted aluminum, 46" x 81"



Flow V, incised, painted aluminum, 24" x 36"



Robin Nest, Late Afternoon, incised, painted aluminum, 47" x 47"



Sweet Gum Seed Pod, incised, painted aluminum, 59" x 47"



Aloft I and II, incised, painted aluminum, 32" x 23" each



Cooper's Hawk, Crow and Barn Owl Feather, incised, painted aluminum, 34" x 12" each

CALLAN CONTEMPORARY

518 Julia Street | New Orleans, LA 70130



Banksia Seed Pod

incised, painted aluminum, 59" x 33"

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