

MICHELLE STUART

The Armory Show, Javits Center, Booth #300

The Handwriting of Nature: Works from 1967-2017

September 9 - 12, 2021



Michelle Stuart, *Galesteo II Book*, 1977.

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, in collaboration with Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Los Angeles is pleased to announce a presentation of historical works by Michelle Stuart for The Armory Show 2021. Since the 1960s, Michelle Stuart (b. 1933, Los Angeles, CA) has created pioneering works that synthesize Land Art, drawing, painting and sculpture. Through her use of nontraditional often organic materials, Stuart brings the natural environment into her work, exploring a diverse array of cultures and their relationship to the land. Collapsing time, memory and place, Stuart's work addresses the metaphysical while remaining profoundly rooted in its own materiality and the artist's interest

in archeology, anthropology, botany and history.

Throughout her career, Stuart has been an explorer and a voyager, traveling the world to collect and record natural and cultural phenomena, creating works that embody a sense of place. In *#14 Blue Stone*, 1973, an early and iconic graphite rubbing by the artist, Stuart captures the subtle variations from the ground at the site where the work was created. Gestural markings recorded onto the large-scale paper scroll create a vibrating surface, both ethereal and immersive.

Other times, Stuart's process begins in the landscape and is completed in her studio. In *Strata Series: Comotan, Guatemala*, 1981, for example, Stuart takes soil from the site and later incorporates it into muslin-backed paper. With *Galesteo II Book*, 1977, Stuart binds together leaves of earth-laden frottage into an unreadable book, turning the ultimate symbol of learning and knowledge into an illegible record of place and the artist's experience.

Also on view are photographs presented in a grid, a formal structure that became synonymous with the cool detachment of Minimal and Conceptual art in the 1960s. In *Petroglyph, Three Rivers, New Mexico*, 1978 Stuart subverts the rationality of its grided format to convey a sense of time rooted in personal and cultural experience and documents her visit to one of the largest prehistoric sites in the United States. *Timeless Land*, 2017, with its blurred, atmospheric depictions of land and sea, demonstrates photography's ability to highlight subjective experience over objective fact. Stuart sees photography as an imprinting process, frequently researching and re-photographing old images to recall forgotten moments in history.

A fascination with the cosmos and the effect of lunar and planetary phenomena on human activity are equally important in Stuart's work. *Wave Flow*, 1969, explores the effect of lunar gravity upon tides.

Stone Alignments/Solstice Cairns, 1978-79, documents one of Stuart's most important land interventions on Oregon's Rowena Plateau and marks the summer solstice of June 1979.

This presentation coincides with two ongoing institutional exhibitions in which Stuart is participating: *Dream Monuments: Drawing in the 1960s and 1970s*, at The Menil Collection, Houston, and *Land Art: Expanding the Atlas*, at the Nevada Museum of Art, Reno. A documentary on the artist, *Michelle Stuart: Voyager*, produced by Karen Shapiro and directed by Karen Bellone is currently in production. Link to video preview: <https://vimeo.com/412429754>

Stuart has exhibited internationally over the past 40 years. Notable solo exhibitions include *Sayreville Strata Quartet*, Dia:Beacon, New York (2017); *Theatre of Memory: Photographic Works*, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York (2016); *Place and Time*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and *Drawn from Nature*, which opened at the University of Nottingham, England and travelled to Parrish Art Museum, Watermill, New York (2013) and Santa Barbara Museum of Art (2014). Her work is featured in public collections worldwide including MoMA and Whitney Museum, New York; Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland; The Centre Pompidou, France; The Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania; The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Moderna Museet, Sweden; Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia; SFMOMA, California; and Tate Gallery, England.

Stuart was born in 1933 in Los Angeles, California, and currently lives and works in New York, New York.

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