

VAN DOREN WAXTER

Douglas Melini

Special Online Presentation
March 24 - April 7, 2020



Untitled, (tree painting/spectrum-yellow), 2019, oil on linen, acrylic stain on reclaimed wood w/artist frame, 42 x 42 inches (106.7 x 106.7 cm)

Van Doren Waxter is pleased to present new works by Douglas Melini across the gallery's online platforms. This special online-exclusive presentation will run from March 24th - April 7, 2020. Inspired by the lush forests of the New Jersey Pine Barrens, and the dense folklore often associated with these natural places, Melini's latest body of work conflates the visual realms of geometric abstraction with the natural order of environmental creation, serving as allegorical windows to the outside world through inward contemplation; a walk in the woods.

Melini's "tree" paintings celebrate the unity between two disparate worlds, one man-made, one grown from the earth. The heart of these paintings are an accumulation of monochromatic oil on linen, opaque and layered, a marker of endless human assembly. In contrast, the transparent layers of stain applied on the outer wooden surfaces expose the natural textures of the trees from which this medium came, time's natural erosion visibly present on the surface. Sourcing the wood from old tobacco barns, Melini reveals the transcendence from a fraught history of production and labor to a new state of environmental reverence.

In direct symbiosis with the paintings, Melini's mushroom collages are a play on the mutual connective relationships these fungi have with the forests they inhabit, as both the genesis of life, as well as the harbingers of death. With the cultural and biomorphic symbol of the mushroom brimming with irony, Melini's cut-outs crowd space on the visual field, against a backdrop of charged watercolor abstraction. These collages operate as microcosms, requiring an intimate and closer look by virtue of the work's smaller scale. Much like the paintings, the collages open a visual portal, creating a space for contemplation that holds all the elements of the natural world, and how we use those elements to decode the world around us. Melini's new body of work reminds us that our relationship to nature is at once ontological, as well as a series of transformations, all replicating the universal need for connection.

This special online presentation will run in concurrence with the artist's solo exhibition, "[Into the Woods](#)," at SOCO Gallery, Charlotte, North Carolina, on view through May 1, 2020.