

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reade Bryan
Geomorphic Agents

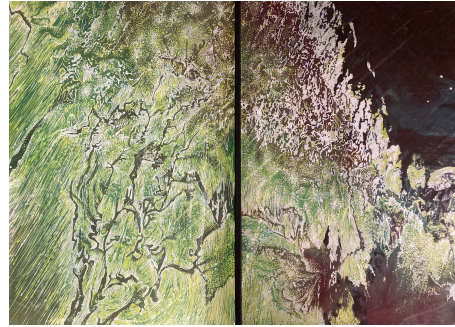
June 26 - August 8, 2021

Opening Reception: Sat. June 26, 4-7PM

* RSVP required

Artist-led Tours: Sat. July 17, 2:30–4 PM

Virtual Artist Talk: Thurs. July 29, 7 PM



Reade Bryan, *Thirty Years* (detail), 2021.
Batik on silk fabric, aluminum framing,
48 x 156 x 156 inches.

Geomorphic Agents includes five painted and sculptural installations by interdisciplinary artist Reade Bryan, focused on regions that have been dramatically altered by man-made irrigation systems. In this new body of work, the artist combines layered batik paintings on silk organza juxtaposing root systems of desert flora, various linear irrigation maps, and contemporary architecture, mounted in metal frames, with the addition of one plywood sculpture that formally references entangled canal structures.

The exhibition's site of departure is the Aral Sea, which was an endorheic lake located between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in central Asia. This once rich ecosystem began to recede in the 1960's after the former Soviet Union diverted river flow in order to irrigate the desert for the production of monoculture crops, primarily cotton, which the government referred to as "white gold." The centerpiece of the exhibition, *Thirty Years*, comprises temporally distinct views of the Aral Sea from 1977 and 2006, revealing the scale of dessication within this relatively short geologic time frame. Other works visit the Hohokam Canal System, a complex irrigation system abandoned in the fifteenth century spanning the Salt River and Gila River Basin in modern-day Arizona and Mexico, as well as Lake Mead, serving Las Vegas and its expanding suburbs which has reached a historically low level due to unpredictable annual flow, drought, and climate intensity.

The exhibition's title references research from the late geomorphologist Roger LeBaron Hooke, who referred to humans as the earth's premier geomorphic agents, surpassing naturally occurring forces due to the dramatic and exponential alterations imposed by man-made tools onto the earth's surface in recent millenia. Bryan's exploration pushes Hooke's analysis further to foreground irrigation systems in addition to deforestation and crop production, looking at how the control of water has contributed to domination through capital extraction. Through the painted lines of these diminished waterways, *Geomorphic Agents* traces the nationalistic hubris feeding the desire for power on a global scale.

S m a c k M e l l o n

Bio:

Originally from Houston, TX, Bryan earned a BFA from Parsons School of Design in 2006. He has been the recipient of the AIM program (2013), which culminated with the exhibition *Bronx Calling* organized by the Bronx Museum. His solo shows include *REFLEX* (2013) at Signal Gallery and *Inhabited* (2014) at Wave Hill.

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