

LESLEY DILL

SCULPTURE: 1994 - 2018

January 18 – March 2, 2019

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 17 from 6-8pm



WORD THROUGH, 1998
Aluminum, oil paint, silk ribbon and salt, 60 x 19 x 11 in. 152.4 x 48.3 x 27.9 cm.

Sculpture: 1994-2018, Lesley Dill's second solo show with Nohra Haime Gallery, will be on view from January 18 - March 2, 2019. This survey of 18 works captures how Dill uses the power of written language to create art with a profusion of textures, forms and materials. In a NY Times review, Benjamin Genocchio has written: "Her art evokes an imaginative and emotional space, deftly balancing sure, concrete reference points with whimsical intimations of some other, larger, escapist universe."¹

Dills' materials in these works are many, including wood, bronze, fabric, copper, glass, horsehair, paper, feathers and thread. But the common ground drawing together her disparate images and materials is the written word: poetic texts entwined with image have long been the consistent and unique region of Dill's explorations. What began decades ago with a deep dive into the poetic text of Emily Dickinson has since expanded into a handful of other literary sources, including the poets Tom Sleigh and Salvador Espriu, and the writers Franz Kafka and Nathaniel Hawthorne. In an essay on Dill's work, curator Nandini Makrandi has written, "Dill describes herself as a collector of language, calling it the 'pivot point' of all her work. As the artist has moved through different series in different years, language has remained the constant, used to capture what she describes as the enormity of the inner self."²

"Ms. Dill's sculptures are less visual objects for detached aesthetic contemplation", Benjamin Genocchio wrote in the NY Times, "than knotty philosophical puzzles that use sculpture as a launching pad."

Word Through, a freestanding metal sculpture, is gently pierced by a ribbon of words hand stamped with the words of Franz Kafka:

I am a hesitation before birth
My life is a hesitation before birth

The words appear on a figure with a delicate body and large clenched hands. The visual tension acts as a metaphor of the often conflicting moment of doubt and anticipation before committing to an idea. The clenched, hard surface of the body highly contrasts to the loosely strewn ribbons of text.

In *Woman in Dress With Star*, the bronze sculpture is cut with the words of Medieval writer John Donne:

*In Mee the Flame was Nevermore Alive
I could Beginne again*

Dill has called these words "fierce, fragile and hopeful", capturing the flash of creative thought, of being alive again. Atop the head rests a star-like crown, invoking "the Flame", the inner world's fire at the point of creation. Below is the dress, with flowing layers and folds. First formed as a paper sculpture, it is then cast into bronze in a manner that retains the surface tactility of paper, and captures the tension of lightness against the hard metal, like armor. The illusion is so strong that viewers often touch the dress to confirm it is truly metal.

Art writer Arlene Raven saw potent transformations held in these artworks, as she wrote: "For Dill, words are dimensional elements seen and felt, filling a room with silent yet penetrating speech."³

Born in Bronxville, New York, Lesley Dill grew up in Maine and the Adirondacks. Now based in Brooklyn, the artist works with a variety of materials such as horsehair, muslin, thread, photography, and metal that accumulates into sculpture, performance, works on paper, and fabric. From the early 1980s onwards, Dill has had over 100 solo exhibitions. Her work is found in museum collections across the United States, and has been shown both nationally and internationally. She was recently awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. Lesley Dill is the most recent artist represented by Nohra Haime Gallery.



WOMAN IN DRESS WITH STAR, 2011
Bronze with light blue-white patina, 52 x 52 x 61 in. 132.1 x 132.1 x 154.9 cm.

DATES: January 18 – March 2, 2019

OPENING RECEPTION: Thursday, January 17th from 6-8pm

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Leslie Garrett at gallery@nohrahaimегallery.com or 212-888-3550

¹ Genocchio, Benjamin. "Mixed (Media) Messages," *The New York Times*, May 20, 2007, illustrated.

² Makrandi Jestic, Nandini. "Vision, Touch, Voice." *I Heard A Voice: The Art of Lesley Dill*. Hunter Museum of American Art, 2009, exhibition catalogue.

³ Raven, Arlene. *Lesley Dill-A Ten Year Survey*. Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, The State University of New York, New Paltz, 2002, exhibition catalogue.