

SCALAR

a solo exhibition by
**TORKWASE
DYSON**

Usdan Gallery
Bennington College
Sept. 18–Dec. 15, 2018
Tuesday–Saturday, 1-5 pm

Opening reception
Tuesday, Sept. 18, 6-8:30 pm

Scalar, a solo exhibition by Torkwase Dyson

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The opening reception (Sept. 18) includes the artist in conversation with Horace Ballard, assistant curator at the Williams College Museum of Art.

Scalar features new paintings and sculptures by Torkwase Dyson, known for her use of abstraction and modes of inquiry from art, architecture and geography to explore the production of form within contemporary economic and political climates. With works created in response to the Bennington context, Dyson takes inspiration from the geometric and mathematic formations of the late artist and architect Tony Smith, whose tenure as an instructor at the College, from 1958-61, proved significant in his development as a sculptor. In turn, Dyson approaches her time at Bennington as an opportunity for deep reflection on the properties of scale, dimension and geometry. Of particular interest is the progressive growth of multifaceted forms and systems into structures whose scope or complexity can defy comprehension.

Artworks on view in Usdan Gallery, including a 12 x 20 foot diptych painted on site, demonstrate the artist's ongoing development of a vocabulary of forms and gestures that speaks to the history of environmental and spatial politics leading to the Anthropocene era of global crisis. With its breadth of concerns and consideration of Smith's legacy, Dyson's exhibition extends the narrative of formal abstraction at Bennington, finding new urgency for modernist traditions rooted in the College.

Although working in multiple mediums, Dyson (b. Chicago) describes herself as a painter who uses distilled geometric abstraction to create an idiosyncratic language expressive and diagrammatic. Formative years moving between North Carolina and Mississippi influenced her conception of a fundamental dialectic of architecture, infrastructure, geography and black spatial liberation. Her ongoing projects include Studio South Zero, a solar-powered nomadic workspace that supports multidisciplinary art making about the environment; and the Wynter-Wells Drawing School for Environmental Liberation (named for Jamaican writer and cultural theorist Sylvia Winter and American Civil Rights leader Ida B. Wells), a pedagogical platform for investigating and reimagining forms and uses of space in natural and designed landscapes.

Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the Graham Foundation, Chicago; the Drawing Center, New York; Landmark Gallery, Texas Tech University, Lubbock; Eyebeam, Brooklyn; and the Meat Market Gallery, Washington, DC. Her work has been included in programs in New York at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Studio Museum in Harlem, Martos Gallery, Postmasters Gallery, and We Buy Gold, Brooklyn; and at the Schuykill Center for Environmental Education, Philadelphia, and the National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC. Grant support includes the Graham Foundation; Joan Mitchell Foundation; Nancy Graves Foundation; Nicholas School for the Environment, Duke University; and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Center. Dyson is on the board of the Architectural League of New York and is represented by Davidson Contemporary, New York; and Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.

Exhibition List

All works courtesy of Torkwase Dyson;
Davidson Contemporary, New York; and
Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago

- (1) *Orientation #1*
124 x 96 inches
Acrylic, string and steel on canvas, 2018
- (2) *Scale of Consequences*
60 x 60 inches
Acrylic on canvas, 2018
- (3) *Mass of Consequences*
60 x 60 inches
Acrylic on canvas, 2018
- (4) *Weight of Consequences*
60 x 60 inches
Acrylic on canvas, 2018
- (5) *1994 (Rate of Transformation #Scale)*
Dimensions variable
Acrylic, graphite, string, steel and wood, 2018
- (6) *I Can Feel You Now (Accumulation/Distribution)*
120 x 240 inches
Acrylic, string and steel on canvas, 2018
- (7) *Up South 3 (Water Table)*
60 inches diameter
Acrylic on canvas, 2018
- (8) *Up South 4 (Water Table)*
60 inches diameter
Acrylic on canvas, 2018
(Image reproduced on brochure verso)
- (9) *Orientation #2*
60 x 60 inches
Acrylic, string, and steel on canvas, 2018

Additional events during *Scalar* provided by Usdan Gallery Student Programming Fellows. Projects connect to themes of social and environmental politics in Torkwase Dyson's work and constitute the gallery's participation in the For Freedoms/50 States Initiative, a nationwide network of arts institutions and civic discourse around the 2018 midterm elections.

Scalar is organized by Anne Thompson, Director and Curator, Usdan Gallery

