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DARREN ALMOND . TIMESCAPE

11.02.2017 - 14.05.2017

PRESS KIT

PRESS KIT

DARREN ALMOND

TIMESCAPE

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Press release

DARREN ALMOND . TIMESCAPE

Exhibition from February 11 to May 14, 2017

Curator Christophe Gallois

With its astonishing formal diversity and great conceptual coherence, the practice of British artist Darren Almond is informed by concerns such as time, space, history and landscape. Exploring how these different dimensions intersect and how we "inhabit" them, many of his works testify to his interest in subjective, liminal experiences that exceed all immediate apprehension and thus play on the foundations of our perception and knowledge.

Deploying all facets of his practice – photographs, sculptures, video installation, along with textual works and paintings – his exhibition at Mudam Luxembourg combines motifs that all, in one way or another, concern the inscription of the individual in the world and in the universe. Whether they relate to the cycles of the day and the seasons, the ties that connect us to the Earth or the exploration of the solar system, whether they are interested in polar glaciers, the megalithic site of Callanish in Scotland or Chand Baori, an ancient stepwell in Rajasthan, his works situate us in a complex, sometimes contradictory, relationship with the elements and the phenomena that surround us. A certain fascination and the experience of the sublime are combined with the perception of active and dynamic links; our desire to understand and master the world is mingled with the impression of belonging to the flows that pass through it.

Borrowing its title from a recent series of abstract paintings inspired by representations of the cosmos, Almond's exhibition presents itself to the viewer as a "temporal landscape." Each artwork opens onto a singular temporality and together they describe a horizon in which different time scales come into resonance: sensory experience is anchored in geological time, the present confronts infinity, human history encounters cosmic time, the rhythm of life is attuned to the cycles that animate the world.

LAURENTIA (CORE-CASTING)

Since his 1997 piece *Darren James Almond (Intercity 125)*, Darren Almond has regularly used a form borrowed from the world of the railways, namely the train-plate, undermining the objectivity of this informative sign by investing it with other utterances: names, isolated words or groups of words, and, more rarely, poems or extracts from prose texts. In *Laurentia (core-casting)*, the sensory impressions of the poet and novelist Nan Shepherd when faced with the Cairngorms mountains in Scotland as described in *The Living Mountains* (written in the 1940s and published in 1977) thus appear on a series of bronze plates. Situated somewhere between the polarities that govern the living, the “central core of the earth” and the “fire of the sun,” the inscription within the landscape lends itself to a meditation on the relation of the individual to the world. This echoes both the temporal and geological reference alluded to in the title of the work – “Laurentia” is the name of a continent formed millions of years ago during the Proterozoic era – and that suggested by the medium of the train-plate, emblematic of the industrial revolution.



Laurentia (core-casting), 2017
Courtesy the artist
© Photo: Mudam Luxembourg

PRESENT FORM

Erected around 5,000 years ago, in a cruciform layout with a central circle, the standing stones of the megalithic site of Callanish, situated on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland, remain an irreducible enigma. Some historians have hypothesised that it is an astronomical observatory, the positions of the Moon aligning with those of the stones at different points in its cycle. This “lunar calendar” would thus be one of the first human constructions intended to quantify the passage of time. The series of photographs entitled *Present Form* consists of monumental “portraits” of some of these monoliths. Darren Almond paid particular attention to the surrounding atmosphere and variations in daylight. Emphasis is also placed on the surface of each rock, appearing as loaded with thousands of years of exposure to erosion, lichens and surrounding mosses. Despite the imprint left by time, these monoliths have resisted the centuries and civilisations that separate us from their erection, in turn embodying temporal reference points in the history of humanity.



Present Form: Ochna, 2013
Courtesy Jay Joplin, White Cube, London and the artist
© Photo: Darren Almond

APOLLO

The twelve sculptures that make up the series *Apollo*, here disseminated in space, relate the history of humans on the Moon: their arrangement in pairs and their titles each refer to the six successful Apollo missions, launched between 1969 and 1972. Individualised with the engraved initials of each astronaut, these bronze cylinders are also filled with lead so that their weight corresponds to the relative weight of each of them on the Moon. Through its ambition – both spatial and political – the Apollo programme veritably brought the Earth's natural satellite into a human scale: by leaving their traces on the Moon, the astronauts established a connection with it, making it into a spatial landmark in our solar system. The human dimension of this enterprise is also perceptible in the protocol of presenting these sculptures recumbent when the astronauts they incarnate are no longer of this world. The scale of distance travelled by them is thus compared with the fleeting nature of all existence, a way of suggesting, in parallel, the trace left by each person on his or her path through life.



Apollo, 2013
Courtesy the artist / White Cube, London
© Photo: White Cube [Jack Hems]

PRESENT FORM EXPOSED

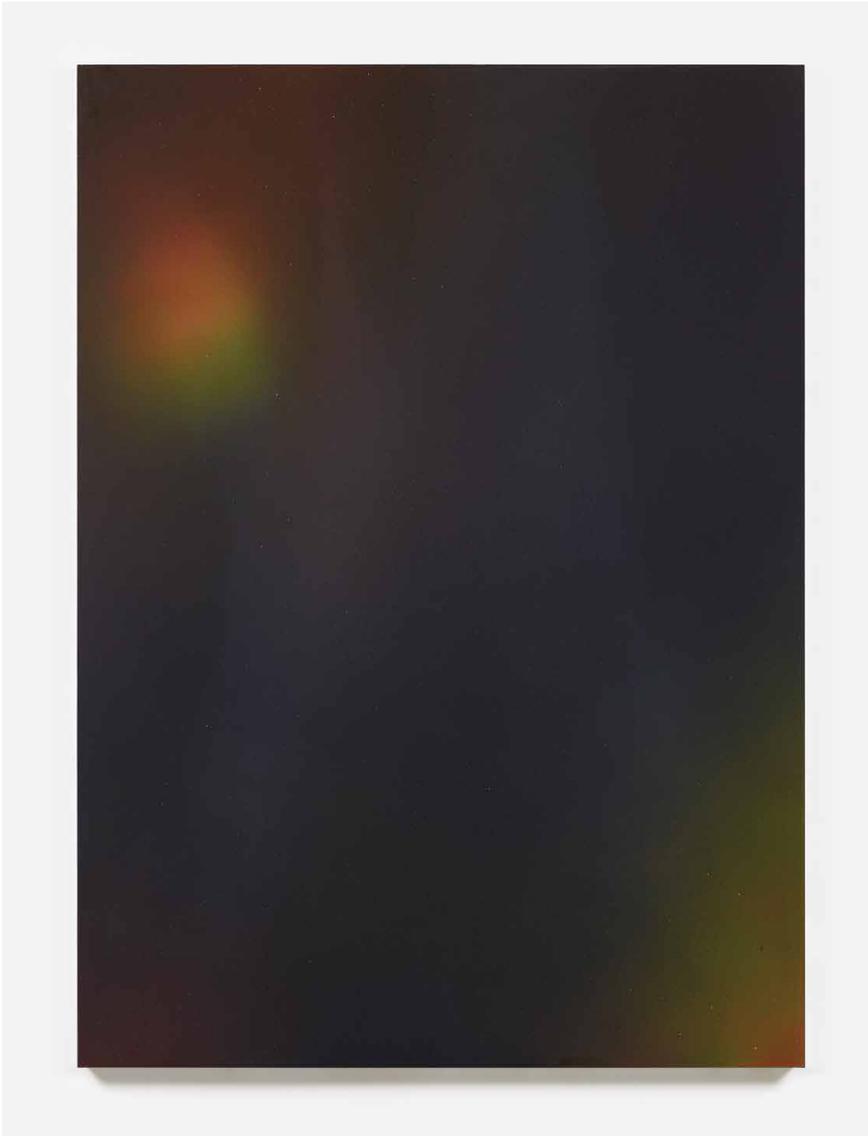
The photographic triptych *Present Form Exposed* presents a detailed view of the Perito Moreno glacier in Argentina. The sublime power of the austral ice imposes itself on the eye through close-up framing and the scale of the prints, which reflect the monumentality and density of this ocean of ice. The surface of the icescape, whose pictorial quality is reminiscent of the attraction for this motif felt by painters such as Caspar Wolf or Caspar David Friedrich, carries the stigmata of its successive ruptures: evolving in Lake Argentino, the glacier regularly discards immense blocks of ice in contact with fresh water, revealing its depths over time like geological strata. Such a phenomenon evokes both the way in which glaciers contain fragments of terrestrial history – the ice that forms the core of glaciers could be hundreds of thousands years old – and the most recent scientific research carried out in Antarctica to detect neutrinos, those “phantom” particles resulting from cataclysmic astrophysical events.



Present Form Exposed, 2013
Courtesy the artist / White Cube, London
© Photo: White Cube (Ben Westoby)

TIMESCAPE

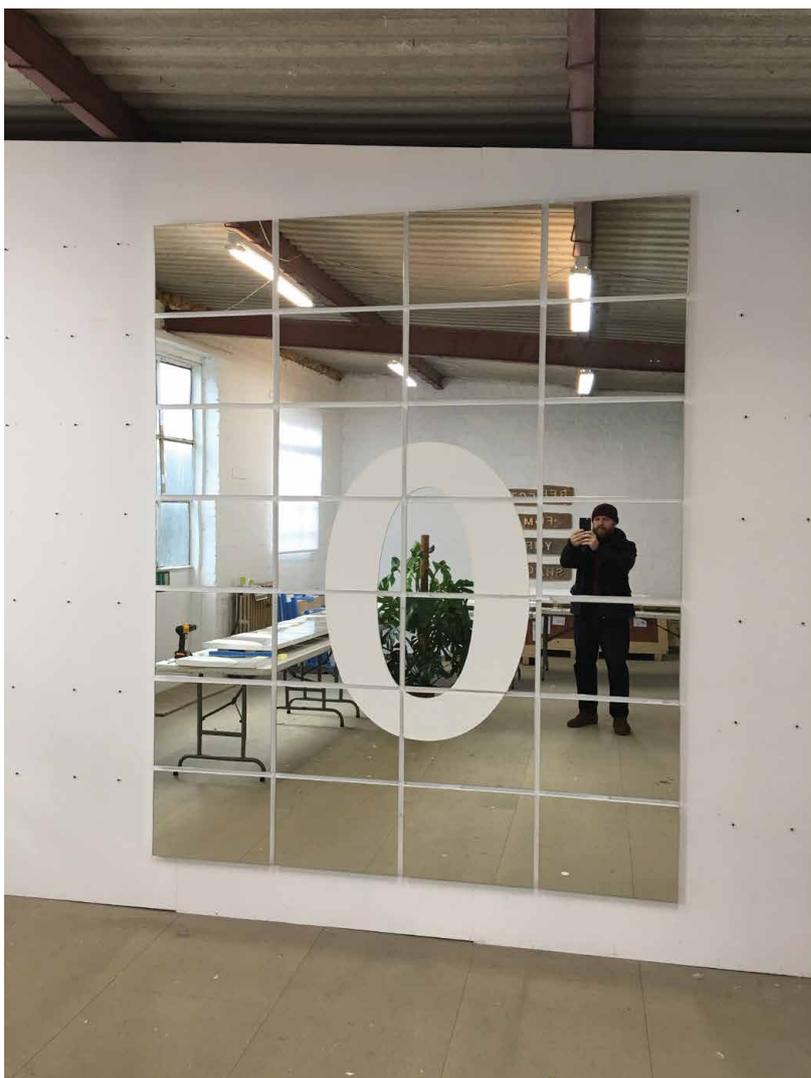
In 2013, as he photographed the sky in the “light” of a full moon one night in Patagonia – a region that remains relatively untouched by visual pollution – Darren Almond was fascinated by the spectrum of colours that ran through it. Inspired by views of the deeper space and eager to materialise the impression felt when faced with this night sky, since 2015 he has produced *Timescape* paintings, “temporal landscapes” or “panoramas of time,” that evoke the visible confines of the cosmos. Despite their apparent blackness, these paintings are obtained from numerous layers of different flat colours applied successively on an aluminium support – a process that echoes the views of space that reach us, also subject to interpretation thanks to the application of coloured filters, but also to the paradox raised by Heinrich Olbers in 1826: why is the night sky black when it is constellated with millions of luminous stars? The pictorial compositions of the *Timescape* series, dotted with tiny white spots resembling stars, are less inclined to scientific accuracy than to a dreamlike and subjective vision of a temporal and spatial beyond that surpasses our knowledge.



Timescape 23:10, 2016
Courtesy the artist
© Photo: def image

REFLECT WITHIN

"I am fascinated by the idea that whenever anything seems too far away we turn to numbers. We say: a million, billion, trillion, but we can't really grasp the actual scale of them. [...] I like the abstract quality of maths and the idea that within the abstract realm everything needs to be in balance. You need to have nothing otherwise you can't have anything," says Darren Almond. With these words, he sums up the paradox inherent in the digital language with which man tries to understand and interpret the world around him. Indeed, it is partly thanks to "zero," which relates to nothingness, that it is possible to apprehend the depths of the universe with its scales of time that go way beyond human scales. The work *One and Other* originated in this degree of abstraction, with the figure zero reproduced on a group of mirrors. It is here associated with two other works from the same series, displaying numerical combinations that are illegible, made up of sets of severed and reversed digits. One thinks of certain scientific data that is vertiginous in its complexity, but also digital clocks suspended between several temporalities – a recurring motif in Almond's work. The ensemble physically integrates the viewer into an interactive experience in which the multiplication of reflections of each observer disturbs relationships with space and time.



One and Other, 2017
Courtesy the artist
© Photo: Darren Almond

DEPARTURE

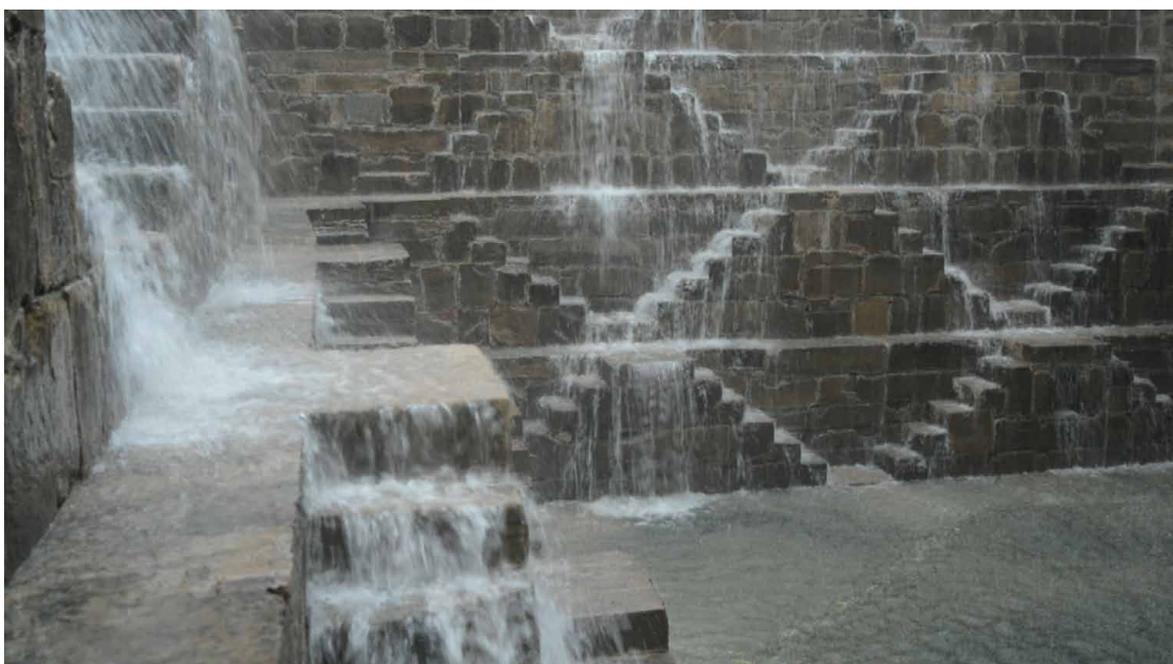
At the end of the first exhibition gallery, these few words displayed on train plates invite us to apprehend that which paradoxically emanates from shadows. Although viewed as the negative double of light, the shadow has led to some of the major discoveries in the measurement of time, mathematics and astronomy – it is in the shadow of the sun that it is possible to observe the visible confines of the cosmos. The metaphor of the shadow also intervenes here as a reminder of what is left behind. Like other works in the exhibition, *Departure* appears to be an injunction to think about how civilisations, at different times in history, have occupied their environment, sometimes leaving permanent traces of their presence. This statement thus crystallises the ecological consciousness that permeates Darren Almond's work.



Departure, 2017
Courtesy the artist
© Photo: Darren Almond

ALL THINGS PASS

“The main ingredient of a film is time; not light, not image not narrative – but time,” says Darren Almond. *All Things Pass* is a video installation combining several temporalities whose central subject is Chand Baori, an eleventh century stepwell located in Rajasthan. Filmed at different times of the day and night, during rainy and sunny seasons, and on the occasion of an annual festival (the only date on which local villagers are now allowed access to Chand Baori), the images captured by the artist attempt to make perceptible the continual and ineluctable alternation of natural cycles through the visual prism of this ancient monument. The installation is immersive and accompanied by a composition produced from the performance, by a group of Indian musicians, of a series of *ragas* related to the rhythms of the day and the seasons. The sound edit was obtained from “sound zooms” captured by the artist during the recording, concentrating on the sounds produced by the traditional instruments, which are attuned with the visual sequences, sometimes in a disturbing way. A singular atmosphere emanates from the installation *All Things Pass* that is suspended in time and is conducive to meditation pertaining to our own relation to the temporalities that give rhythm to the world.



All Things Pass, 2012
Courtesy the artist
© Video still: Darren Almond

LIST OF THE EXHIBITED WORKS

GALLERY 1

Laurentia (core-casting), 2017

Cast bronze
287 × 231 × 1,8 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Aon, 2013

C-print
268 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Ceithir, 2013

C-print
279 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Còig, 2013

C-print
287 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Dà, 2013

C-print
248 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Ochd, 2013

C-print
293 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Seachd, 2013

C-print
275 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Sia, 2013

C-print
304 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form: Tri, 2013

C-print
271 × 183 cm
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Apollo, 2013

Cast bronze and lead
12 elements
Various dimensions
Courtesy the artist/Jay Jopling, White Cube, London

Present Form Exposed, 2013

C-prints
305 × 141 cm (× 2) and 305 × 180 cm
Collection Johannes & Helene Huth, Aurach

Return, 2017

Cast aluminium
4 plates
20 × 94 cm
Courtesy the artist

Timescape 00:06, 2017

Aquacryl and gouache
on aluminium
210 × 154 × 4 cm
Courtesy the artist

Timescape 00:34, 2017

Aquacryl and gouache on aluminium
154 × 214 × 4 cm
Courtesy the artist

Timescape 01:30, 2017

Aquacryl and gouache on aluminium
214 × 154 × 4 cm
Courtesy the artist

Timescape 03:30, 2017

Aquacryl and gouache on aluminium
214 × 154 × 4 cm
Courtesy the artist

Timescape 03:35, 2017

Aquacryl and gouache on aluminium
154 × 210 × 4 cm
Courtesy the artist

Timescape 23:10, 2016

Aquacryl and gouache on aluminium
214 × 154 × 4 cm
Courtesy the artist

One and Other, 2017

Acrylic on mirrored glass
257 × 206 × 3 cm
Courtesy the artist

Reflect Within I, 2017

Acrylic on mirrored glass
257 × 206 × 3 cm
Courtesy the artist

Reflect Within II, 2017

Acrylic on mirrored glass
257 × 362 × 3 cm
Courtesy the artist

Beneath the Ice (in memory of B.R.), 2016

Aquacryl and gouache on aluminium
214 × 154 × 3 cm
Courtesy the artist

Departure, 2017

Cast bronze
4 plates
20 × 94 cm
Courtesy the artist

GALLERY 2

All Things Pass, 2012

6 channel HD video installation, colour, sound
30 min
Courtesy the artist/Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin

EVENTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXHIBITION



© Photo: Mudam Luxembourg

MUDAM AKADEMIE - AN DER GALERIE

11.03.2017, 11-12am: Darren Almond

With Nadine Erpelding

Conference-tour in the exhibition space.

Rendezvous next to Darren Almond's works.

Mudam Akademie is organised in collaboration with:
Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enfance et de
la Jeunesse

In French. Guest auditors: 7€ (subject to availability).

Information and booking:

visites@mudam.lu; t. +352 45 37 85 531



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REGULAR GUIDED TOURS

Guided tours of the current exhibitions.

LU – Saturday, 11am

DE – Saturday and Sunday, 3pm

FR – Saturday and Sunday, 4pm

EN – Wednesdays, 7pm and Sunday, 11am

For individual visitors and small groups
(max. 5 people). Duration: 45 min.

Tours free of charge, except for the entrance fee.

No booking required.

Information: visites@mudam.lu; t. +352 45 37 85 531

DARREN ALMOND

Exhibition from February 11 to May 14, 2017

Curator Christophe Gallois

The Mudam warmly thanks Micha Spierenburg, who introduced Darren Almond to the museum and initiated the dialogue around this project.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Address and information

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Opening hours

Thursday-Monday and public holidays	10am-6pm
Wednesday	10am-11pm (exhibition spaces: 10pm)
24.12 and 31.12	10am-3pm
Tuesday and 25.12	Closed

Entrance fee

Adults	7€
Under 26 years old, groups	5€
Mudami card (valid 1 year for 2 persons)	50€
Under 21 years old	free
Students under 26 years old	free
Wednesday, 6-11pm	free

By car

Kirchberg -> Avenue John F. Kennedy -> Philharmonie -> Tunnel -> Mudam
GPS: X 49.62 - Y 6.14

Images

Available on request

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MUDAM THANKS

All the donors and the sponsors, and particularly



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DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
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