

JOHANNES VOGT

Garth Evans

"Names are Misleading Things" November 7 – December 7, 2019

Johannes Vogt Gallery is pleased to present its third solo exhibition by British sculptor Garth Evans, *Names are Misleading Things*. The show focuses on plywood wall-mounted sculptures created by the artist shortly after emigrating to the United States. It comes on the heels of the artist's recent retrospective, *But Hands Have Eyes*, in Cardiff and the return of a monumental sculpture he made for the city.

In 1979 Evans was invited to Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts for a two-year visiting artist residency. Although well established in the U.K., Evans decided to stay in the United States and relocated to Canal Street in Manhattan.

In the U.K., Evans was primarily known for large expansive works, some of which covered entire floors. At Mount Holyoke, surrounded by the openness of rural America, Evans' work moved in a new and surprising direction. Instead of responding to the largeness of American culture by making even larger works, Evans began to question the need for sculpture to physically occupy great volumes of space. He began making works that were intimate in scale, demanding the attention of the viewer through formal considerations. Collectively titled *Canal*, this series began as small models made in cardboard that Evans intended to realize as larger sculptures.

Over time, cardboard models began to clutter his studio as he worked. In order to free up space, Evans began moving the cardboard models from the floor to the wall. There, the cardboard models caught and held his attention. Eventually, he was obliged to accept that they were not "models" at all, but potential sculptures which he began reworking using plywood.

One day, staring at this work he suddenly realized where he had seen it before – the sculpture reminded him of a dead rabbit, a dead rabbit in a painting by Chardin! The parallel between the plywood object and the dead rabbit was not primarily a matter of the image but rather the result of the way the two occupied space. He found that the works responded to gravity as well as the combination of implied stiffness and softness, offering Evans a point to discover other hidden sources in the plywood sculptures.

These hidden sources, while formally resolved, connected to subconscious memories that would slowly reveal themselves. Despite the specific personal references, Evans did not title these works, simply giving them the designation, *Canal* and a number. He notes:

From time to time I've been accused of giving titles that are actually misleading, and it's true that I have done that. But they're only misleading because they're not the first thing you think of, nor the second nor the third thing...

It is through depersonalizing the object that Evans misleads the audience. Despite appearing as purely geometric, formal pieces, they connect to a deeper emotional source. They are dictated by material constraints and concerns, and through the long process of production and gestation, each arrives at a discrete moment of consciousnesses.

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Garth Evans was born in 1934 in Cheshire, England. He is a British sculptor and draughtsman. His work, which is central to the narrative of British Sculpture, has been exhibited widely in both the UK and the United States. He is known for his use of everyday materials together with a restless self questioning approach, rejecting any aesthetic position that has become too comfortable. He currently lives and works between Woodstock, Connecticut and New York. Evans' work has been shown in many solo shows, including shows at Rowan Gallery, London, Robert Elkon Gallery, Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York, and Charles Cowles Gallery, New York. His works can be seen in collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Tate Gallery, London, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Johannes Vogt Gallery is committed to bringing attention to the complex artistic and cultural ties that bind New York to Europe, the Americas, and beyond. The gallery program features a strong roster of emerging to mid-career artists and has become known for reintroducing established artists to new audiences, including Garth Evans, Mernet Larsen, and Abby Leigh, among others. Founded in 2011, Johannes Vogt first opened at 526 West 26th Street in New York City's Chelsea neighborhood, where it resided before relocating to 55 Chrystie Street in the Lower East Side. In September 2018, the gallery relocated to the Upper East Side at 958 Madison Avenue.