

## PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

**BILL WOODROW**

***Fata Morgana, Crocker Land and the odd Superior Mirage***

**27 October – 25 November 2017**



Bill Woodrow, *Crocker Land*, detail, 2017  
wood, ceramic, glass, paint, coloured pencil  
84 x 230 x 50 cm, 33.1 x 90.6 x 19.7 in

Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is very pleased to present a solo exhibition of new works by acclaimed British artist Bill Woodrow.

Woodrow emerged as a pivotal figure in the New British Sculptors movement of the 1980s. Following his first institutional solo show in 1972 at the Whitechapel Gallery, he went on to represent Britain at Biennales in Sydney (1982), Paris (1982, 1985) and São Paulo (1983). He was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1986 and participated in Documenta 8, Kassel in 1987. After being elected as a Royal Academician in 2002, the artist had a retrospective at the Royal Academy, London in 2013. This will be Woodrow's first solo exhibition with Pippy Houldsworth Gallery.

In *Fata Morgana, Crocker Land and the odd Superior Mirage*, Woodrow explores optical phenomena that occur in the natural world. The title of the exhibition refers to an expedition from 1913 that sought to investigate an island supposedly sighted by legendary explorer Robert Peary in the Arctic. Crocker Land, named after the sponsor of Peary's original expedition, was later found to be non-existent. Taking inspiration from these phenomena and falsehoods, Woodrow plays tricks with the viewer's perception in the exhibition. Using mirrors and feats of materiality, the artist subjects glacial landscapes to mirage-like distortion where sheets of ice and surreal objects seemingly float in mid-air. Similarly, in a new series of paintings, ships and satellites are suspended amidst aurora-filled skies.

In the same vein as his cut-out sculptures from the 1980s, Woodrow continues to experiment with notions of materiality, yet this new body of work also encompasses the artist's longstanding preoccupation with climate change. Pointing to the fragility of the ecosystem, igloos sit atop expanses of black oil and precariously positioned boards, whilst towers of ice melt away in alarmingly vibrant shades of red and blue. In this hallucinatory world, not everything is as illusory as it seems.

### **About Bill Woodrow**

Woodrow is arguably best known for his cut-out works made from salvaged consumer goods including defunct washing machines and car bonnets. Cutting directly into their surface, the artist then transformed them into fantastical objects. The remodelling of form from one context to another lends a narrative element to Woodrow's work which has continued with his later pieces made from bronze or welded steel, demonstrated by his monumental sculpture for the Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square, London in 2000 and his commission for this year's Folkestone Triennial.

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Selected solo exhibitions have included those at Whitechapel Gallery, London (1972); Modern Art Oxford (1983); ICA, Boston (1985); The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh (1986); Tate, London (1988); Seattle Art Museum (1988); Camden Arts Centre (1995); Tate, London (1996); South London Gallery, London (2001) and Royal Academy of Arts, London (2013).

Woodrow's work is held in numerous public collections including Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art; New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Tate, London; British Museum, London; Museum Boymans van Beuningen, Rotterdam; British Council, London; Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington; Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Victoria & Albert Museum, London and Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal, amongst many others.