

JDJ

Athena LaTocha

Small Works

JDJ Tribeca
373 Broadway, B11
New York, NY 10013

January 12 - February 25, 2023
Opening Thursday, January 12th, 6-8pm

JDJ is thrilled to present our third solo exhibition with Athena LaTocha, and the first exhibition of her work at our location in Tribeca.

LaTocha's process begins with deep observation of and research into the land in which she is working, which informs her artistic approach on all levels. Whereas LaTocha's 2022 exhibition at JDJ the Ice House was inspired by the gallery's location in the Hudson Valley, this exhibition, which features a suite of ten intimately-scaled works, takes the urban environment of New York City as inspiration.

"One of the difficult things about working in an urban environment is trying to figure out what's going on underfoot," LaTocha explains in a recent interview in *Frieze*. "So much erasure has taken place in this area. It's worked and overbuilt. It's a complicated read – you don't have access to the bedrock or even the original soil. The question for me was how do I understand my connection to the original landscape, when it's been so built up and torn down?"

Conceptually and materially linked to the monumental works exhibited last year at MoMA PS1 and BRIC, Brooklyn, these new pieces use a combination of ink, debris from construction sites in the city, pulverized brick, reflective glass microbeads which are commonly mixed into traffic paint, and earth from Greenwood Cemetery, one of the only places in New York City where one can find pure, untrampled earth that has not been excavated for building purposes, and where LaTocha's monumental lead sculptural installation is currently on view through January 22, 2023.

LaTocha applies these materials thickly to resin-coated paper in many layers, and then scrapes them off, leaving traces of each to interact with one another. The resulting works are torn, shredded, and perforated by LaTocha's dynamic process, and are enclosed in raw-steel frames designed by the artist. Each work reads like a diminutive yet powerful sculpture, buckled by the intensity and energy with which they are created.

Athena LaTocha (b. Anchorage, AK, lives and works in New York) has exhibited her work across the United States including at such prominent venues as the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AK; IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, NM; MoMA PS1, BRIC, Greenwood Cemetery, CUE Art Foundation and Artists Space, all New York, NY; and the New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA. Recent solo exhibitions include those at the Visual Art Center, Summit, NJ, JDJ the Ice House, Garrison, NY, the Plains Art Museum, Fargo, ND; and the MacRostie Art Center, Grand Rapids, MN. LaTocha is the recipient of the prestigious Eiteljorg Fellowship in 2021, and of numerous grants and fellowships, including the Joan Mitchell Foundation, Wave Hill, the Pocantico Center, and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Her work was acquired in 2022 by the Dallas Museum of Art, The Hessel Museum of Art, The Forge Project, and the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts.