

“Genius lands where genius will, and I’m pretty sure some alighted on Bill Lynch.” - Roberta Smith, The New York Times, October 2014

Tanya Leighton is proud to present an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Bill Lynch (1960-2013). The exhibition has been curated by Matthew Higgs and developed in collaboration with White Columns, New York.

The exhibition follows two recent, and widely celebrated presentations of Lynch’s work at White Columns (September 2014) and London’s The Approach (January 2015.) The White Columns and Approach exhibitions were selected by Lynch’s friend and fellow painter Verne Dawson. The New York and London exhibitions were the first formal exhibitions of Lynch’s work which were not widely known or exhibited during his lifetime.

Writing on the occasion of the White Columns’ exhibition Dawson said:

“Bill Lynch and I met while students at Cooper Union at the end of the 1970s. Organizing the show at White Columns in New York is surely a most bittersweet experience. It should have happened thirty years ago, or twenty, or ten, or five. But it didn’t. Bill died in 2013 aged 53. He understood touch, understood paint, and understood that these are tools to access the ancient and the present, the living and the dead. His affliction, schizophrenia, eventually made our world difficult for him to be part of.”

Lynch observed the everyday world around him, and in particular the natural world, with an extraordinary degree of empathy. The exhibition at Tanya Leighton will include a group of Lynch’s drawings of frogs and birds, observed from nature, in addition to a group of landscape and still-life paintings made on found wooden supports that Lynch would scavenge from the streets of lower Manhattan. For the most part Lynch’s works remain undated although he worked consistently for more than three decades starting in the early the early 1980s.

Writing about Lynch’s work Michael Wilde has suggested:

“In these pictures everything is alive and communicating wildly. Lynch’s connection to subjects and landscapes, both in life and painting, was empathic: a flower or tree branch sings just as strongly as any bird; likewise a pre-Columbian vessel in spiritual communion with a Chinese philosopher’s stone - and he listened acutely, transcribing their conversation so you could hear it too. Their secrets opened up to him. Everywhere is meaning. Surrounded by his work, you can’t help but be struck by

this vibrant language; his sincere belief, his love.”

Bill Lynch (1960-2013) was born in New Mexico and grew up in New Jersey, USA. He studied art in the late 1970s at Cooper Union, New York. Lynch lived in New York, California and North Carolina. He suffered from schizophrenia for many years but died of cancer at the age of 53. His exhibitions at White Columns and The Approach were widely covered including reviews in Artforum, The New Yorker, and The New York Times.

We are grateful to Gerry Lynch and Bill Lynch Snr. and to Bill Lynch’s family and friends for their enthusiasm and support for this exhibition, and we are also indebted to Verne Dawson for bringing Bill Lynch’s work to wider attention.

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