

LYDIA WEGNER

ON SPACE

ARC
ONE
GALLERY

30 NOVEMBER - 4 FEBRUARY



ARC ONE is thrilled to be staging LYDIA WEGNER's latest solo exhibition, *On Space*, as our last exhibition for 2022. With a pared-back approach to her characteristic theatrical abstraction, Wegner's new series highlights the mesmerizing aspect of her practice.

An opening reception will be held on Wednesday 30 November, 6-8pm.

In her studio, LYDIA WEGNER moves a precious object slightly off centre. It's a triangular scrap of card with a reflective coating. It curls up at the sides. It is no understatement to say that this humble scrap holds literally everything together. It is the heart of her image *Green Wave* (2022). There is a reason the artist says that she is interested in the "magic of visual abstraction". Wegner's work has an alchemical quality, turning nothing into everything.

There are many ways you can think about Wegner: a painter using photographic gels, a stage director, a maximal minimalist. These designations hint at her studio practice, which involves selecting, arranging, lighting

and photographing objects on a table-top in her studio. Her compositions, however, reveal a sculptor's eye for balance and dimension, and a birdwatcher's eye for significant colour. And like a birdwatcher, Wegner is open to chance. A sparkle of reflected light, an animated shadow. She uses these momentary effects to inspire her before, as she says, "my hand takes over". What we see in Wegner's photographs is the taut orchestration of accidents accepted and refined.

On Space represents a return to more minimal arrangements inspired by Wegner's desire to create "more simplistic and contemplative assemblages". At the same time, these works are some of the largest the artist has made. At this new scale, Wegner has given her humble materials an epic quality. Surrounded by unprecedented space, the air between objects become charged with shifting colours and unreliable depths. Looking deeply at these works, by some magic, Wegner has caught you in her impossible architecture.

Lydia Wegner's work is held in the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, Monash Gallery of Art, Gippsland Art Gallery, Artbank, Gold Coast City Gallery and the Price Waterhouse Cooper Collection. Since graduating with Honours from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2011, Wegner has held six solo exhibitions, including showcases at the Centre for Contemporary Photography and Bus Projects. Additionally, she was featured in the landmark group exhibition, Melbourne Now, National Gallery of Victoria, 2013–14, while in 2019 she was commissioned by the Monash Gallery of Art to create a series of works in homage to Robin Boyd, in a Portrait of an Australian House. She has twice been a finalist in Australia's most important photography prize, the Bowness Prize, in 2019 & 2022. She has been a finalist in the 2022, 2016 & 2015 Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award, and the 2015 Churchie National Emerging Art Prize. In 2010, she was a Finalist in the Wallara Travelling Scholarship Prize, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, and in 2013 she was a Finalist in the Keith and Elizabeth Murdoch Scholarship Prize. Wegner was also awarded a Hill End Artist Residency through Bathurst Regional Art Gallery in 2013.

IMAGE: Lydia Wegner, *Green Wave*, 2022, Archival inkjet print, Edition of 4 + 2 A/P, 95 x 63 cm.