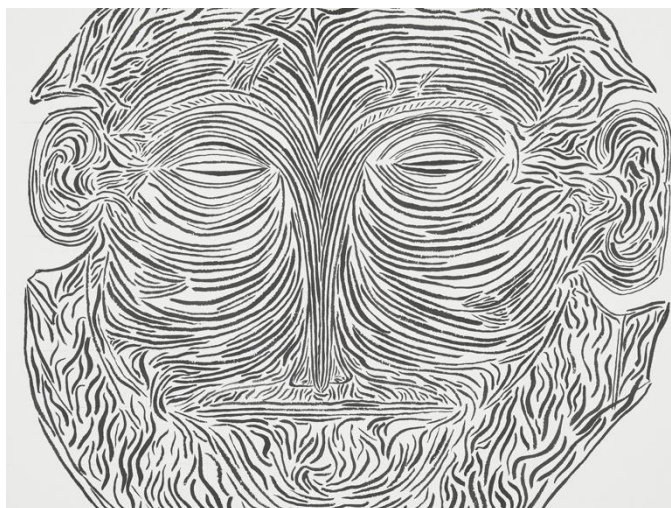


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 24, 2022

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

Carl Suddath
Aporia

March 26 – May 26, 2022



Opening reception:
Saturday, March 26, 2:00–4:00pm

Carl Suddath, *Untitled* (detail), 2021
ink on paper
20 x 14 1/8 in (50.8 x 35.9 cm)

Inman Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition **Carl Suddath: *Aporia***, on view March 26 through May 26. The show will open concurrently with **Gilad Efrat: *Ping Pong***. This is Suddath's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery and first since 2011. The exhibition features a new body of experimental drawings that the artist has produced within the past two years. Also included are selections from a second body of larger work characterized by saturated, vibrant colors that explore geometry, materiality, and offer an ambient atmosphere to the installation.

Suddath's new suite of drawings are characterized by poignant, meticulous linework that draws the viewer's eye into a morass of flowing, curvilinear forms. Suddath's compositions are visually concentrated, the linework filling the page from edge to edge, with slight variations in line weight and density. In many we observe a sea of overlapping faces, though the specific facial features become abstracted in the noise of ink. In others the forms appear more floral and organic. The small drawings resonate with an optical frenetic energy, while the larger, saturated color pieces possess a luminous, sculptural quality set within ambient fields of color.

The famed Death Mask of Agamemnon serves as the primary source for Suddath's new series of experimental, black and white line drawings. The Mask of Agamemnon is a gold funeral mask discovered at the ancient Greek site of Mycenae and is displayed in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens. German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, who discovered the artifact in 1876, believed he had found the body of the Mycenaean king Agamemnon, leader of the Achaeans in Homer's epic of the Trojan War, the Iliad. However, modern archaeological research suggests that the mask pre-dates the period of the Trojan War by about 400 years, thus problematizing the mask's own history and authenticity.

The Mask of Agamemnon's contested history likewise serves to further complicate the notion of personal identity, hidden or otherwise revealed. The anonymity of masks and their ability to obscure is a phenomenon that is deeply familiar to us in 2022. Masks have become a ubiquitous part of pandemic life; Suddath's black and white drawings are all inspired in some way by masks, whether their source is from a historical or contemporary context. These drawings engage in a visual interplay of both revelation and obfuscation of the human face. Each is titled "L'Innommable" in reference to Samuel Beckett's novel, *The Unnamable*, which was originally published in French in 1953. The drawings recall that which is unknowable, and therefore that which cannot be named.

It is worth acknowledging too that the Mask of Agamemnon is a funeral mask, a symbol of death. Loss has become an indelible part of our reality during the global pandemic. The past few years we have been surrounded by the specter of death and, as Suddath has commented, this has impacted his newest body of work. Created under the guise of this historical and emotional context, Suddath points to his interest in this particular historical object that inspired these drawings, many of which are self-portraits.

The ten experimental drawings are accompanied by four large monochromatic works that are largely sculptural in nature. In two works, Suddath uses folds to create visually intriguing linear, geometric patterns. These "folded paper" works are the result of Suddath's training as a sculptor. Through them he transforms something flat into a three-dimensional object while still retaining the paper's original two-dimensionality. These folded pieces are paired with two contrasting atmospheric works, one soft and misty blue, and another all black, which stand next to the black and white mask drawings. Created using only graphite, the untitled black piece retains a similarly sculptural quality through its weight and stiffness. The paper is entirely altered by the heft of the graphite application to create a highly worked surface that is both matte yet luminous, unwieldy yet fragile.

Though formally divergent, the two series coexist in the exhibition to create a contemplative space for the viewer. There is an atmospheric calm across the works, and a primordial or archaeological quality relates one series to another. Though the line drawings are individually loud and energized, when viewed together they become quieter, tempered not only by their monochromatic counterparts, but also by the seriality witnessed in their collectivity. Together the works become meditative, the rhythm of the show offering moments of pause and vitality, both contemplation and rejuvenation.

Carl Suddath (born 1976, Jacksonville, FL) earned a BFA from Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL (1999) and an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL (2004). He has exhibited in both solo and group shows nationally, including at Inman Gallery, Houston, TX (2015, 2011, and 2008); The Suburban, Oak Park, IL (2009); and Light & Sie, Dallas, TX (2009). Suddath received an Artadia Award in 2012 and was a Core Artist-in-Residence at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in 2004-06. His work is in the public collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.