

BROADWAY

Claire Oswalt

We Have Never Been Modern

May 18- June 17, 2023

Anthem

*Articulate the infinite
draw a ring around a cloud
time drags in a net
behind a fearless inflection of sound
another note is needed to carry
this long and longing song
so many instruments in the orchestra
but from here I hear just one*

—Claire Oswalt

Broadway is pleased to announce *We Have Never Been Modern* a solo presentation of new paintings, wall-mounted marble works, and works on paper by Austin-based artist Claire Oswalt.

The exhibition title, borrowed from philosopher Bruno Latour's 1991 book, provides a clue to Oswalt's omnivorous practice. Latour's rejection of Modernity's tendency toward intellectual fragmentation and specialization resonates with the artist who blends literature, poetry, painting, craft, collage, music, and natural observation.

With a new suite of acrylic paintings on sewn canvas, Oswalt expands her lyrical, layered abstraction to include gridded passages and swathes of staccato vertical seams. Elsewhere her familiar sinewy stitched curves resolve the opposing forces of concave and convex while mimicking the small, cut paper and acrylic studies that precede them.

As a writer and literature obsessive, language has been central to Oswalt's practice. Poetry works in tandem, and titles that turn on curious, percussive words (*Mammatus*) and evocative phrases (*Girls on the A Team*) find a parallel in her formal vocabulary of marks and gestures that have been isolated and patiently distilled through repetition. This is particularly apparent in the relatively austere and potent marble works. Concocted in a similar fashion to the paintings, with laser cut sections of marble precisely fitted together, these pieces focus on mysterious glyphs sequenced within a grid. Refined from casual, offhand line drawings, Oswalt views these gestures as an integrated system of marks and, as such, they read like a poem—acting as a Rosetta Stone for the exhibition as a whole.