

Anthony Miserendino

New Drawings

October 16 - November 13, 2021

Moskowitz Bayse is pleased to present *New Drawings*, an exhibition of recent wall works by Anthony Miserendino. *New Drawings* is the artist's fourth solo presentation with the gallery, and will be installed in our Viewing Room from October 16 - November 13, 2021.

In recent works, Anthony Miserendino continues to explore the inherent poetic through-lines between material, process, and subject matter. Combining digital tools with traditional techniques of French Polishing, marquetry, and paper making, works are accumulations of attention that reflect on concepts of layering, distance, and the beauty of receding presence.

Ornamentation and the decorative become sites of meditation and transformation; the diminutive becomes declarative. Miserendino locates and instills meaning in the outwardly quotidian and finds, in lace and ceramic embellishment, consummate examples of demoted artforms. This decidedly humble subject matter becomes a vehicle for reconsideration through an art-making process that is rooted firmly in creation and transfiguration.

The artist draws with a stylus and tablet, both from observation and memory, and then uses a vector file to laser-engrave each image directly into his surfaces—either hand-made paper or plywood, occasionally adding inlaid wood veneer to the latter. The works on paper, executed entirely by laser-cut line, are, in surface and in essence, shallow sunken reliefs. For the works on plywood, Miserendino applies dozens of thin layers of hand-mixed shellac that embalm and encase the wood, highlighting the wood grain and the layers of plywood. The shellac is then worked and reworked by hand, then a contrasting color of shellac is added into the engraved line to accentuate the drawing. Through this process, the artist transforms relief-like subject matter into images made by tethering engraving with shallow relief, ultimately presenting as flat surfaces. The drawing is present entirely inside a veil of shellac, with an emphasis on the in-between space the coating creates between the viewer and the raw wood.

The clarity of the drawn line and the linearity of the process supplant the fragility of the subject matter, exposing both the fissures and connections between material, process, subject matter, and object. Miserendino contends with the actions and implications of drawing and line, as well as their reciprocal relationship with relief. This relationship defines the artist's latest body of work, where relief and drawing overlap and meld in a series of gestures that complicate the distinction between one and the other.

The works in *New Drawings* pronounce themselves most saliently in the shallow, liminal spaces: encased edges of plywood, slivers of exotic veneer, microns-thin laser cut lines, and tiny bumps of paper pulp combine to offer remarkably deliberate objects whose glancing power comes across almost entirely through intersecting subtleties. The work's meaning nestles itself in these nuances, too, with subtle adjustment and transmutation occurring in place of grand gesture. The artist, in his most direct engagement of digital technology to date, characteristically employs and subverts it, gently prodding subject and process. He pairs the ancient, historied, and natural shellac with the laser cutter's glaring newness, detangling materials and processes from their received roles and prescribing them new ones.