

BORTOLAMI

Virginia Overton

Água Viva

3 May – 15 June 2019

Opening Friday, May 3 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Bortolami is pleased to announce Virginia Overton's first solo exhibition at the gallery, *Água Viva*.

Overton is best known for repurposing industrial objects into elegant, minimal sculptures in which materials are transformed by both subtle and drastic interventions. Incorporating an ever-expanding color palette of found objects as well as the artist's first neon works, *Água Viva* features sculpture especially focused on water vessels, color, and allusions to the natural world.

In the gallery, Overton has installed a massive steel cement mixer which she adapted into a fully functional fountain. Cascading water flows freely and in stark contrast to the weathered, rusted patina of the yellow mixer. The fountain is an apt metaphor for the artist's recirculation of materials, finding new lives for discarded objects and refusing a linear finality in favor of cyclical reinvention.

Another new series pairs metal pipes, formerly functioning as water supply lines, with neon bulbs made to perfectly contour the ebb and flow of the pipes. These entirely unique sculptures function like colorful line drawings which illuminate the metallic sheen of copper and brass.

In the Bortolami office, Overton has hung a wood slab from a sugar maple she recently felled from her family's farm in Tennessee. The tree, planted before the artist's birth to commemorate her parents' marriage, was sawed almost entirely through and then toppled over. This action produced a powerful effect: a jagged, miniature cityscape of tree bark sandwiched between smooth planes of wood.

Among these new works, Overton situates sculpture between depictions of a place or object and the object itself. A large elephant ear houseplant sits in front of a "blank canvas" stretched with a white projection screen, capturing its soft silhouette in the gallery's changing daylight. The ingenuity of Overton's gestures evokes the inescapable presence of nature in even the most post-industrial contexts.

Virginia Overton was born in Tennessee and currently lives and works in New York. Solo exhibitions have been presented at the Don Rivery Valley Park (Toronto), Socrates Sculpture Park (Long Island City), The Fogelman Galleries of Contemporary Art at the University of Memphis, Museum Of Contemporary Art Tucson, The Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (Ridgefield), White Cube (London), All Rise (Seattle), Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Storm King Art Center (Mountainville), Westfälischer Kunstverein (Münster), Kunsthalle Bern, The Kitchen (New York), and The Power Station (Dallas). Recent group exhibitions and projects include Future Audio Graphics (New York), Frieze Sculpture (London), FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art, Office Baroque (Brussels), MAY68 (New York), Maisterravalbuena (Lisbon), Lever House (New York), The David Ireland House at 500 Capp Street (San Francisco), Institute of Contemporary Art (Philadelphia), Parcours (Art Basel), Contemporary Art Museum (St. Louis), High Line Art (New York), MoMA PS1 (New York), and SculptureCenter (New York). Her work is collected by The Whitney Museum of American Art, The San Antonio Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson, Kunstmuseum Bern, and Kunsthaus Zürich.