

GAZELLI ART HOUSE



© Matteo Zamagni, *Refracted Bodies*, 2023.

Matteo Zamagni *Refracted Bodies*

Preview: 9 February, 6 – 8 PM (GMT)

Exhibition: 10 February – 18 March, 2023

Matteo Zamagni's debut solo exhibition at Gazelli Art House explores the interconnections of artifice and reality via immersive environments.

Refracted Bodies is the distillation of Zamagni's latest artistic endeavours, combining established artistic media alongside XR (Mixed Reality) experiences. Realms composed of physical and non-physical elements bid visitors occupy and consider their role within the intricate technosphere that constitutes the contemporary age. Sculptures and found objects dispense connections between land and society, and consider the preservation of ancient knowledge and beliefs.

A laser-engraved print on cracked industrial plaster – repurposed from a Hackney demolition site – depicts a compound of the most powerful and transformative natural plants in the biosphere. These images are provided by the Royal Botanic Gardens online archives.

Existing in both realms, as a physical object and as a sound symbolising the spiritual importance of the land is a Talisman emitting crystalline light. The former is constructed of two rings: the outer is thrice layered in laser-cut frosted material with custom engravings, water jet cut mild steel, and porcelain; the inner ring is metal; both are furnished with latex sheets. At the centre is a crystal, and two contiguous lasers which meet in the stone and deliver a luminous burst.

Defined physically by two branches covered with 3D-printed lichen-like structures and lasers, a portal connects two distinct virtual realities; a pristine cave, 3D mapped from the artist's visits to the Lake District and displayed with a uniquely constructed spatialised soundscape, and a mine. From the tangible objects

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scattered about the space, to the painstakingly constructed spectral landscapes, the practice of gathering and assembling is explicit.

Here, Zamagni juxtaposes relics of hyper-industrialization and the preservationist outlook of indigenous culture, where ecological, cosmological, and spiritual understanding, paved the way for a symbiotic relationship with nature. A critique of contemporary extractionism, *Refracted Bodies* considers the eradication, disrespect, and destruction of indigenous communities, exacerbated by capitalist forces.

About the Artist

Matteo Zamagni's (B.1992) practice encompasses visual arts, multimedia installations, film production, and electronic music. Combining these unique yet interlinked contemporary technologies with oracular themes, Zamagni reflects on the environmental, economic, and social turbulence of today.

Zamagni's practice offers a holistic commentary on the correlations between disaster capitalism and the Earth's ecosystems. Using analytical geoscientific tools, VR/AR/MR, real-time generative imaging, world-building, photogrammetry, physics simulations, and CGI techniques, his artworks simulate and combine elemental natural forms with immersive media. This has included procedurally generated fractals, local reconstructions of existing terrain via LiDAR point clouds, and macro-scale aerial views of the earth. The resulting works are often stacked composites of recurring patterns in tangible and notional structures, depicting a complex continuum of local-global phenomena (from densely overpopulated spaces to climatological models).

About the Gallery

Founded in 2010 by Mila Askarova, Gazelli Art House in London brings a fresh perspective to Mayfair – through championing artists from all corners of the globe. Focusing on artists at the height of their practice, the gallery showcases their work through a diverse programme of exhibitions and events.

Along with its sister site in Baku, Gazelli Art House specialises in promoting art from Azerbaijan and its neighbours to introduce a greater understanding of the rich linguistic, religious and historical ties that connect these areas to international audiences. In 2015, the gallery further expanded to support artists working in digital art through its online platform: GAZELL.iO, comprising an online Residency programme, NFT drops and collaborations, a dedicated Project Space holding monthly exhibitions, and a permanently installed VR Library – all in the heart of Mayfair.

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