

PRESS RELEASE

Vestry St- Cross Lane Projects
Floor 1
6-8 Vestry St
London
N1 7RE

Exhibition Runs: 26 April to 7 June 2025

Opening Preview: Friday 25 April, 6-8pm

The Mirror at Night

Curated by Peter Suchin

Tabatha Andrews, Keith Bowler, Louise Bristow, Maria Chevaska, Gary Dennis, Nooshin Farhid, Lucy Gunning, Susie Hamilton, Lee Holden, Lizzie Hughes, Deeqa Ismail, Lucy Jagger, Simon Leahy-Clark, Fabian Peake, Jon Ridge, Giorgio Sadotti, Christine Stark, Peter Suchin, Chris Totic, Steven Wong, Mark Woods

Malcolm Bowie has observed that the most famous thing about the 19th century poet Stephane Mallarme is the “often exceptionally difficult” nature of his work. For *The Mirror at Night* twenty-one artists have been invited to respond to the final stanza of Mallarme’s notoriously elusive poem *Ses purs ongles tres haut dediant leur onyx* (1887), and have been given, together with a copy of the original French sonnet, seven different English translations of the relevant three lines. The lack of a strict correspondence between the various renditions only serves to emphasise the poem’s inherent ambiguity, a term defined by William Empson as “alternative reactions to the same piece of language.”

The chosen poetic image, reinvented in English and clearly apparent in the original, portrays a mirror in which is reflected a headless female form and a constellation of seven points of light

The Mirror at Night builds upon a willingness to reread and move outwards from what one may term the “trigger text” at the centre of this show. Rereading is, as Roland Barthes so elegantly framed the matter, “no longer consumption, but play (that play which is the return of the different)... not the real text, but a plural text: the same and new”.

References:

Stephane Mallarme, Keith Bosley (Ed.), *Mallarme The Poems*, Penguin, 1977, pp. 168-171

Malcolm Bowie, *Mallarme and the Art of Being Difficult*, Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. viii.

William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, Penguin, 1961, p. 1.

Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, Jonathan Cape, 1975, p. 16.

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Notes for editor

Opening hours: Thursday to Saturday, 12-5pm.

For more information / high res images contact Rebecca Larkin: info@crosslaneprojects.com



Simon Leahy-Clark, *Floor Show*, 2024, newspaper cuttings on linen, 51 x 51 cm

Vestry St- Cross Lane Projects opened in 2022 in Vestry St, Hoxton in London. Visitors are invited into this uniquely intimate space to read, reflect, discuss, and view contemporary art in a salon-like setting. Located in a private residence on the road that bears its name, Vestry St presents a programme of curated exhibitions and events by leading contemporary artists, both local and international.

Cross Lane Projects is a contemporary art gallery based in Kendal, Cumbria. Founded in 2018 by artists Rebecca Scott & Mark Woods, the gallery is situated in a former Kendal Mint Cake factory in the town centre and aims to bring new and contemporary art to Cumbria. Cross Lane Projects presents a curated programme of contemporary exhibitions by local, international and British artists with accompanying talks and events.