

JDJ

Athena LaTocha

May 28 - July 24, 2022

JDJ the Ice House
17 Mandalay Drive
Garrison, NY 10524

JDJ is thrilled to present our second solo exhibition with Athena LaTocha. The three new works on view incorporate ink and earth on paper along with sculptural elements made from sheets of lead that were hand-molded around rock formations in the terrain surrounding the gallery.

LaTocha's process begins with deep observation and research into the land in which she is working, which informs her artistic approach. She uses ink and earth applied on heavy, resin-coated paper, using industrial objects like bricks and shredded tires rather than traditional painting tools. Most of the mark-making happens on the ground in an active, physical process—she applies the materials thickly and then scrapes them off, or lets them pool and recede. The resulting works are buckled by the intensity and energy with which they are created; they operate within the realm of abstraction, yet they are inspired by, made from, and at times visually resemble the landscape. She manipulates supple sheets of lead around rock outcroppings, which take a direct impression of geologic activities that occurred on the land and become integrated into each work.

The mountainous terrain of the Hudson Highlands, where Garrison is located, has a unique geological and sociological history. The bedrock of the area is more than a billion years old, formed during the Grenville Orogeny, a mountain-building event that was caused by the collision of three continental blocks. The landscape and its close proximity to the Hudson River served as an important region in the movement of people, since the establishment of the Munsee Lenape tribe, who were the original inhabitants of this land, and the Appalachian Trail. It was also an important location for the early colonizers and the American military. West Point, which is directly across the river from Garrison, was considered by George Washington to be the most important strategic position to control in America. The area is dotted with Revolutionary War historical markers that provide a one-sided view of the history of this land. The rocks and mountains in the landscape keep the memories of the stories belonging to those who have been forgotten.

Athena LaTocha (b. 1969, lives and works in New York) was raised in the Alaskan wilderness, and from an early age, has been fascinated by the shaping of the earth by natural events as well as humankind's impact upon it. Recent exhibitions include *Greater New York 2021*, MoMA PS1, Queens, NY, BRIC, Brooklyn, NY, Fiterman Art Center, New York, NY, Visual Art Center of New Jersey, Summit, NJ, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA, the Plains Art Museum, Fargo, ND, Crystal Bridges Museum of Art, Bentonville, AR, among others. Her solo exhibition *Mesabi Redux* opens at the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, NM in June 2022.