



Michael Andrew Page

Claustrum

Michael Andrew Page's ongoing series *Bivvy* makes use of the eponymous single person dwelling as the starting point for each painting. Through a complex series of analogue and digital processes the humble tent is transformed into something that resembles stained glass, more rooted in a gothic vernacular; worthy of spiritual contemplation.

Using architecture as a means to explore abstraction, Page painstakingly transcribes architectonic components typical of found bivvy structures into the architectural software programme CAD. These are then multiplied and manipulated to produce a 3D model, which forms the basis for his compositions. The initial image is transferred from CAD to canvas via the photographic method of cyanotype, after which, Page adds layers upon layers of oil paint in a slow meditative process, a monastic reverie if you will.

Claustrum, the title of Page's second solo show at Project Native Informant has a multitude of meanings: "a hidden place/hidden away", "draw near to", "a portion of a monastery closed off to the laity". Taken together, these definitions provide a useful way of analysing the key concerns of Page's practice. The more one tries to decode the fractal-like geometry of Page's compositions, the less the structures reveal themselves. Lines disintegrate, light refracts and space collapses.

In *Bivvy 23*, the architectural framework seems initially apparent, however as your eye moves down and across the pictorial plane, the composition seems to dissolve and collapse in on itself. On first glance, the repetitive geometric structure seems unwaveringly precise and mechanical, yet, upon closer inspection the painterly gesture reveals itself in the transparent layers, where form gives way to contemplative abstraction.

Sparsely hung in the gallery space, the works call out for close analysis and encourage deep reflection. Operating like portals to another dimension, Page's paintings challenge the logical limits of architectural space, pictorial perspective and the painted medium.

Unit 1 (clockwise from entrance)

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| 1. | Michael Andrew Page
<i>Bivvy 25, 2024</i>
Oil on linen
86.5 x 54 x 3.5 cm (34 x 21 1/4 x 1 3/8 in) | 4. | Michael Andrew Page
<i>Bivvy 24, 2024</i>
Oil on linen
86.5 x 54 x 3.5 cm (34 x 21 1/4 x 1 3/8 in) |
| 2. | Michael Andrew Page
<i>Bivvy 22, 2024</i>
Oil on linen
150.5 x 98.5 x 3.5 cm (59 1/4 x 38 3/4 x 1 3/8 in) | 5. | Michael Andrew Page
<i>Bivvy 21, 2024</i>
Oil on linen
150.5 x 100 x 3.5 cm (59 1/4 x 39 3/8 x 1 3/8 in) |
| 3. | Michael Andrew Page
<i>Bivvy 23, 2024</i>
Oil on linen, diptych
Each: 150 x 107.5 x 3.5 cm (59 x 42 3/8 x 1 3/8 in)
Total: 300 x 215 x 3.5 cm (118 x 84 6/8 x 1 3/8 in) | | |