

Adams and Ollman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rob Lyon: *Also Votives*
at Adams and Ollman
June 1–July 13, 2024
Opening Reception: Saturday, June 1 from 3–5pm

Adams and Ollman is pleased to announce *Also Votives*, a solo exhibition by British painter Rob Lyon, his second with the gallery. On view in the exhibition will be a series of new paintings that explore the landscape as a site of spiritual communion and transformation. Included in the show is a group of works on paper, marking the first time Lyon's drawings have been on view. *Also Votives* is accompanied by a zine made with the artist. The exhibition opens on Saturday, June 1 and is on view through July 13, 2024.

The starting point of Lyon's work to date has been the South Downs, a range of chalk hills in the South Eastern coastal counties of England, where the artist was raised and later returned with his family to live and work. Inspired by this landscape long shaped by eons of geologic forces and more recently by the vicissitudes of human intervention, Lyon uses bold, simplified brushwork and patterning to conjure its unique spirits, which he then uses as a gateway to transcend the logic and limitations of the physical world in pursuit of spiritual or metaphysical connection.

In this exhibition, Lyon builds upon a theme explored in recent works that posited the notion that the landscape is an architecture comprised of "portals." A portal, the artist posits, is formed of natural phenomena that, when engaged by us, results in a reverberation that consecrates the specific place with spiritual potency. This potency invites and enables our communion with whatever we desire to commune with. *Also Votives* develops this



theme through an exploration of the "false portal"; a blind entrance purposefully built into neolithic burial mounds located throughout the British landscape. Such "dummy doorways" are believed to have been included to permit the passage of ancestral spirits and as a place for living descendants to deposit votives. For Lyon, this portal becomes a symbolic threshold, or charged place, between in and out, above and below, ordinary and sacred, known and unknown. Said Lyon, "I struggle with the premise that we, the living, are denied the porosity of landscape afforded to our ascendants, and that we may only offer votives. These paintings and drawings refute this, depicting a network of 'true' and 'false' portals that, combined, permit free passage to the dead and living."

Lyon's new works stitch together a quilt-like map of experience. Graphic, elemental forms in a palette of terracotta orange and cerulean blues are pushed to the front of the picture plane to be read or deciphered like a map. Lyon's triangles denote a sacred place, activated by our presence. A meandering white line shows us a well-worn path. Two glowing celestial bodies—one dark and the other light—coexist in many of the works, compressing time and space and giving form to the presence of both true and false portals. The titles of the works provide wayfinding for the viewer: *Copse*, a small stand of trees;

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Mont, a mountain; or *Precation*, a prayer or request.
We are not looking at a snapshot of time, but a longer exposure, permitting us unencumbered and enduring passage.

Rob Lyon (b. 1982 Lancashire, UK; lives and works in Sussex, UK) holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and Law from Bristol University, UK. His work has been included in exhibitions at Hales Gallery, London, UK, Warwick Arts Center, Coventry, UK; Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, ES; Wondering People, London, UK; Gallery 94, Glyndebourne, UK; Blakefest 2020 and 2017, Bognor Regis, UK; the Warbling Collective, London, UK.

Rob Lyon
Bless, 2023
oil on linen
23 5/8h x 21 5/8w in
60.01h x 54.93w cm