

Gertrude Contemporary was pleased to present a new solo project by Sydney-based artist Geoff Kleem. Over the previous twenty-five years Kleem's practice had been typified by its diversity - traversing photography, sculpture, painting and even performance.

For Gertrude Contemporary Kleem was presenting a new site-responsive installation where he explored the parameters of the gallery space through inserting a group of 24 karat gold scaffolding poles supporting a mass hovering between ceiling and floor. The custom designed supports generated a sense of compression and purpose while actually supporting the heavy boxlike form. Designed for an underground space in New York and originally shown on Cockatoo Island Sydney these essentially functional objects were transformed through being plated in 24k gold - a material laden with powerful symbolic and economic connotations which elevates their utilitarian status while blurring both their meaning and their function.

Whilst Kleem's work defies a persistent thematic thread it is consistently sophisticated. Functioning in a space between representation and conceptual strategies. Kleem works to extremely high levels of production to create works that operate like formal and descriptive riddles that are at once ambiguous and monumental.

Kleem's investigations into the structural and conceptual properties of media have seen him intersect painting and photography throughout the 1980s, whilst in the 1990s he merged photography with architectural space and sculpture by photographing industrial spaces spray painted with monochromatic colour. More recently, Kleem has created furniture and seeming utilitarian objects that defy function - glass screens on wheels associated with photographic mural installations, which like mobile decoys invite deeper readings while referring back to their curious form and origins.

Kleem's work is held by most state and national art galleries and has received numerous accolades. With an extensive exhibition history he has covered much ground and influenced a generation of photographers. He has exhibited widely in the USA, including at PS1 New York, Chicago and MAK Museum Vienna as well as exhibitions in Australia at Artspace Sydney, Institute of Contemporary Art Perth, Monash University Gallery, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, University of Queensland Art Museum, Heide Museum of Modern Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art (Sydney).

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