

Press release

Propylon Stela

ZIN TAYLOR

January 21, 2026 – March 31, 2026

On Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 7:00 pm, Quartz Studio is pleased to present *Propylon Stela*, the first solo exhibition in Italy by Canadian artist **Zin Taylor** (Calgary, Canada, 1978).

The title of the exhibition evokes the image, common both in archaeology and in science fiction, of a threshold, a gateway providing access to another dimension. The installation for Quartz will utilize a selection of Zin Taylor's sculptural output (ambient tokens) to create a specific narrative for this site. These ambient tokens are slab-like tablets that levitate on the wall. They vary in size and color, and are embossed with a familiar language of geometric and chromatic units. The creation of each tablet uses an index of illustrated elements painted and cut from card and polymer that are pressed into time-sensitive synthetic clay. The materials are synthetic because the ideas are synthetic. These are copies, references, and appropriations; sub-culturally experienced memetic projections re-translated into cuneiform alphabets of colour and shape. These generate an enigmatic abstract language, closely related to the playful-geometric idiom that characterizes Paul Klee's work during his years of teaching at the Bauhaus.

In mastaba, ancient Egyptian tombs such as that of Kanisut (2450 BC), the concept of the threshold is represented by the presence of a false door. On the Acropolis of Athens in the 5th century BC, the Propylaea constituted the monumental entrance that separated the earthly realm from the divine sacred area. Moving from the ancient world to the contemporary one, *Propylon Stela* finds its most immediate sources of inspiration in science-fiction literature that frequently employs the notion of the threshold in a mythological sense: crossing the "portal" allows access to another plane of existence, making it possible to transcend the limits of ordinary space. In *Stories of Your Life* (2002) by Ted Chiang, and particularly in the short story that gives the collection its title, on which the film *Arrival* (2017) is based, the theme of the threshold is articulated through language as a cognitive device, where perceptual transformation is triggered by learning the non-linear writing system of the Heptapods. Göbekli Tepe (9500–8500 BC), a megalithic site in southeastern Anatolia, represents one of the most significant prehistoric examples of stelae understood as ritual threshold devices. Adopting Ted Chiang's theory of time as non-linear and circular, the megalithic architecture-sculpture of Göbekli Tepe finds resonance with the site-specific project conceived by Zin Taylor for Quartz Studio, where, by crossing the threshold of the exhibition space, one enters a kind of propositional antechamber.

Inside it is possible to orient oneself through tablets (tokens) fixed to the walls as modular units that are interrelated. Conceived as a single space in which the remote past and the anterior future coincide, Quartz is thus constellated with forms of different shapes and sizes, containing colored elements arranged in a syntax-like manner. The moments used for their creation propose scenarios by their location. They spread along the walls, augmenting corners and isolating moments in space. The installed arrangements insinuate a narrative aesthetic of soft sci-fi psychedelia. These factually

scaled objects wish the orientation of ambient space, their installation in the gallery insinuating spatial nodes and legends, intercoms, modules, and control panels.

Zin Taylor's practice, developed across multiple media (sculpture, drawing, and texts), consistently examines form as a site for the condensation of an archeo-technological narrative. His approach is strongly metonymic, driven by a continuous slippage among materials, symbols, and temporal references, in a constant oscillation between the evocation of the ancient world and the prefiguration of the future, between the language of form and the concept of time.

Zin Taylor (Calgary, Canada, 1978) lives and works in Turin, Italy. Taylor's work employs familiar visual cues to probe the malleable and mysterious divisions between concept and material. His process looks at the construction and inscription of form through specific cultural histories, asking how objects might translate thought, and how abstract ideas can find tangible articulation by engaging in a dialogue where thoughts about a subject are translated into forms about a subject. Solo shows have occurred at Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster, Germany; Belvedere 21, Wien, Austria; The Artist's Institute, New York, USA; Witte de With, Rotterdam, The Netherlands; M HKA, Antwerp, Belgium; Ursula Blickle Stiftung, Kraichtal, Germany; Etablissement d'en Face Projects, Brussels, Belgium; Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, USA; Isabella Bortolozzi Galerie, Berlin, Germany. Group shows include Kunstmuseum, St.Gallen, Switzerland; XYZ, Tokyo, Japan; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada; MAK, Vienna, Austria; Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark; Frac Ile- de-France / Le Plateau, Paris, France; and Le Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Musée du Louvre, Paris, France. Writing, artist books, and monograph publications have been published by Kodoji Press, Bern; Sternberg Press, Berlin; Mousse Publishing, Milan; Art Paper Editions, Gent; Karma, New York; Shelter Press, Rennes; Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster; Bywater Bros., Toronto; and Artforum, New York.

Quartz Studio would like to thank the artist. The exhibition will be open from January 21, 2026, to March 31, 2026, by appointment.

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