

DRIFT

Ego

March 3 – 14, 2020
 540 West 25th Street
 New York

Opening Reception:
 Tuesday, Mar 2
 12–2 PM



Image © DRIFT, Photography by Marco Borggreve

New York — Pace Gallery is pleased to present a new exhibition in New York by multi-media artists DRIFT, featuring a single large-scale sculpture titled *Ego*. The work, taking the form of a shapeshifting block, is composed of hair-thin black nylon and handwoven in the Netherlands by DRIFT themselves. Tailored to the seventh-floor space, *Ego* will transform the gallery into a thought-provoking environment in constant flux. It will be accompanied by a Pace Live event with musician and singer-songwriter Lee Ranaldo, of Sonic Youth, on Thursday, March 12, at 7PM.

Ego embodies a contradiction: it is at once a man-made rigid block and a pliable living entity. Each corner of the woven block is connected to a motor-pulley system guided by software, allowing the artists to animate and choreograph it as puppeteers. The intricate network of threads collectively rises, falls, expands and contracts, transforming between natural and non-natural states that recall synthetic structures as well as the micro-organisms and material substance that make up all life. As the form softly moves through the air like a spider web in nature, its black nylon threads come together and apart, emerging into and out of vision to create a perceptual phenomenon that reflects the internal structures of things unseen.

The block shape is a motif the artists have explored over the last decade, particularly in works such as their Materialism series—in which they reduced objects, such as a bicycle, down to their distinct materials and arranged them in minimalist compositions—and *Drifter* (2017)—a large untethered, floating concrete-like cube—which was shown in Pace’s booth at the Armory in 2017. “Looking at the world that surrounds us, only man-made objects can take the shape of a square,” the artists write. “Books, houses, and even excel sheets exemplify our need to divide every little thing into blocks, contrasting with nature. Squares represent control, they are a clear overview of a space and easy to calculate, stack, and understand. They are the ultimate man-made invention.” Here, the block intimates the solidity of a man-made structure before giving way to a changeable organic entity closer to those seen in nature.

Ego was originally developed in co-production with the Dutch Travel Opera house (Nederlandse Reisopera) for Claudio Monteverdi's *Opera L'Orfeo* (1608), which premiered in January 2020. The world's oldest-known opera, it tells the story Orfeo, whose reality unravels at the death of his wife Euridice. DRIFT's work moved and shifted based on the themes of the play, particularly of Orfeo's inner state, drawing parallels to the human condition as a whole. Together with director Monique Wagemakers and choreographer Nanine Linning, DRIFT transformed the opera into a technological cutting-edge "Gesamtkunstwerk" or a total work of art.

Dutch artists Lonneke Gordijn (1980) and Ralph Nauta (1978) founded studio **DRIFT** in 2007. With a multi-disciplinary team of 64, they work on experiential sculptures, installations and performances.

DRIFT manifests the phenomena and hidden properties of nature with the use of technology in order to learn from the Earth's underlying mechanisms and to re-establish our connection to it.

With both depth and simplicity, DRIFT's works of art illuminate parallels between man-made and natural structures through deconstructive, interactive, and innovative processes. The artists raise fundamental questions about what life is and explore a positive scenario for the future.

All individual artworks have the ability to transform spaces. The confined parameters of a museum or a gallery does not always do justice to a body of work, rather it often comes to its potential in the public sphere or through architecture. DRIFT brings people, space and nature on to the same frequency, uniting audiences with experiences that inspire a reconnection to our planet.

Lee Ranaldo co-founded Sonic Youth in 1981 and has been active on the New York and International music and art scenes for the past 35 years as composer, performer and producer. In addition, he has exhibited visual art and published several books of journals, poetry and writings on music. His newest LP *Names of North End Women* was released in February 2020 on Mute Records. A new collaborative quartet album with Jim Jarmusch was released on Trost records in May 2019. Recent live performances with partner Leah Singer, *Contre Jour*, have been large scale, multi-projection sound+light events with suspended electric guitar phenomena that challenge the usual performer/audience relationship. His artwork has been exhibited internationally, and a survey show of selected old works, *Lost Ideas*, was presented at Stadsmuseum 'T Schippershof Museum in Menen, Belgium in October 2017. He was artist-in-residence at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax in July 2013 and at Villa Arson in Nice, France in April 2014. Lee lives and works in New York City.

He was a music producer for HBO's Martin Scorsese-Mick Jagger produced VINYL series in 2015-16. Hurricane Transcriptions (based on wind recordings made during Hurricane Sandy in NYC in 2012), originally written for Berlin's Kaleidoscop String Ensemble, has subsequently been performed by Sydney's Ensemble Offspring and by Brooklyn's Dither Electric Guitar Quartet at Lincoln Center in 2015.

Pace is a leading contemporary art gallery representing many of the most significant international artists and estates of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Under the leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace is a vital force within the art world and plays a critical role in shaping the history, creation, and engagement with modern and contemporary art. Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy for vibrant and dedicated relationships with renowned artists. As the gallery approaches the start of its seventh decade, Pace's mission continues to be inspired by a drive to support the world's most influential and innovative artists and to share their visionary work with people around the world.

Pace advances this mission through its dynamic global program, comprising ambitious exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances and interdisciplinary projects through Pace Live, and curatorial research and writing. Today, Pace has seven locations worldwide: two galleries in New York—including its newly opened headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street—as well as galleries in Palo Alto, London, Geneva, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

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