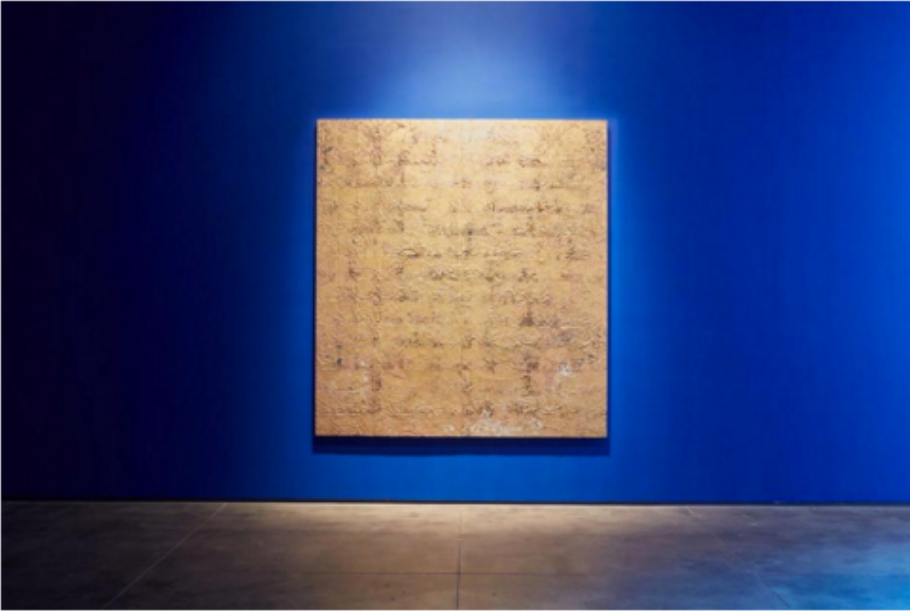


SEAN KELLY

Binlot, Ann. "Artist Hugo McCloud Searches for Overlooked Beauty in 'Veiled'." *Forbes*, January 11, 2017.

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Artist Hugo McCloud Searches For Overlooked Beauty In 'Veiled'



Installation view of Veiled by Hugo McCloud at Sean Kelly. (Sean Kelly)

"What you're witnessing tonight is the birth of an enormous talent," art dealer Sean Kelly announced to a gallery full of dinner guests on a frigid December evening. Two long tables stretched along the main room to fête Hugo McCloud, the Bay Area-born, Brooklyn-based artist for his exhibition, *Veiled*, which runs until January 21st at Sean Kelly in New York.

For the exhibition, which is McCloud's first solo gallery show in New York, the artist traveled to Bataan in the Philippines for a residency at Bellas Artes Projects. McCloud spent nearly three months in the quiet town. The artist worked with craftsmen to carve out patterns he found in discarded furniture onto wooden blocks. McCloud eventually used them to emboss a pattern onto his paintings.

"The idea of going to the Philippines and carving these old blocks is basically to revert back to the way things are done in the past by hand, because everything right now is so mechanic and machine based, so to go somewhere and spend two-and-a-half months doing nothing but carving every day is not really a practice artists are doing anymore," said McCloud.



Hugo McCloud used plastic sacks to create this piece in Veiled. (Sean Kelly)

McCloud also visited area landfills to collect the plastic sacks used in construction and food industries to make pieces, befriending some of the families who lived there. “I made relationships with them,” said McCloud, who also did the same thing in India and South Africa in the past. “Most of them were from a family whose father lost his job in the industry, and then they moved to this garbage site, and then they lived there and collected recycling.”

The artist cleaned the sacks, lining them up on canvases, turning everyday the sacks, that most people considered to be waste or trash into a work of art. With the process, McCloud added value and beauty to materials associated with waste and poverty. “It’s always been part of my work to look at things from all sides of life because in the art world, we’re always having more with the elite and the people that have, but most of the places I travel to, there’s the contrast of wealth and poverty,” said McCloud.



Dubbed Illusion by Hugo McCloud. (Sean Kelly)

In the main galleries, hang McCloud's Veil Paintings, colorful paintings that are "veiled" by either a white finish or a layer of foil, causing the viewer to question what is hiding beneath. "You're covering and what is underneath and it brings the question of what is being covered, as well as the relationship to the foil because the foil causes this reflective aspect," said McCloud. "So now you have become part of this piece when you stand in front of it, your reflection."

Those hoping to acquire one of McCloud's pieces are out of luck; the exhibition sold out as soon as it opened.