



NICOLA VASSELL
ABIGAIL LUCIEN

Wrought

MARCH 12TH — APRIL 18TH
OPENING MARCH 12TH
5 — 8PM

138 10TH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY

NICOLA VASSELL

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Abigail Lucien: Wrought

Nicola Vassell is pleased to present *Wrought*, an exhibition by Abigail Lucien, the artist's first solo presentation with the gallery. The exhibition features a constellation of recent and new sculptures that capture the evolution of Lucien's practice over the last few years and is grounded in a poetic meditation on memory and placemaking through an architectural vernacular.

A workable mineral born from the explosion of stars, iron forms the molten core of our planet and is also essential to human life, coursing through our blood. Crucial to Lucien's work is the idea that iron retains memory. Low iron levels in blood can lead to forgetfulness —without it we forget. Lucien nurtures a commemorative practice through metal by transforming iron and steel, an alloy of iron and carbon, into conduits through which to channel past lives, knowledge systems, and traditions of craft that span across vast temporalities and geographies. Each sculpture—bent, cast, and fused by the artist's hands—calls upon a greater lineage of blacksmiths from the Caribbean and the African diaspora whose legacies reverberate in the formation of each piece. The grates, grills, and breezeblocks transform into liminal thresholds where past and present converge and echoes of ancestral memory are rendered fixed in metal.

The sense of lineage permeates through Lucien's material poetics. *When Day and Hour Come* (2024) features about 250 pounds of cacao butter cast in a series of heart-shaped breezeblocks. The piece—cast from a block borrowed from Lucien's grandfather's home in Haïti—can be interpreted as a memorial of care and speaks to the lyricism with which the artist reinterprets the built environment. Lucien complicates the perceived ephemerality of organic materials, transforming them into essential forms of infrastructure.

For the artist, sculpture marks a set of actions, a space of duality of both solid and fragile arrangements. Lucien's newest metal works complicate the perceived rigidity of steel as they unfurl, ooze, and undo themselves. These pieces reflect an evolution in the artist's practice that moves away from more narrative scenes and instead places greater attention to the energetic propulsion of the materials handled and shaped. This shift away from representational forms opens a new liberatory space of potential that gestures towards the multiplicities inscribed within the exhibition's title. The term 'wrought' does not simply convey labor, rather, it indicates a process of being formed, molded, altered, and changed by circumstance. *Wrought* encapsulates a stretching of matter, an act of creation through intention so that material may transform into a meeting point for memory, geography, time, and the built environment.

Gallery Hours

Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm

138 10th Ave. New York, NY 10011

For press inquiries

ask@nicolavassell.com

NICOLA VASSELL

Abigail Lucien

b. 1992, Cap-Haïtien, Haïti

Abigail Lucien is a Haitian American interdisciplinary artist. Working across sculpture, writing, and time-based media, their practice addresses themes of (be)longing, futurity, myth, and place by considering our relationship to inherited colonial structures and systems of belief/care. Implicating our relationship to material and place through an architectural vernacular, Lucien uses formal poetics to ponder concepts such as loss, love, and grief as fluid processions rather than states to reach or become.

Lucien's work has been featured in publications such as *The New York Times*, *Hyperallergic*, *Artforum*, *Frieze Magazine*, and *Art in America*. National and international exhibitions include Palais de Tokyo (Paris), MoMA PS1 (New York), Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore, MD), SculptureCenter (New York), MAC Panamá (Panamá City, PAN), Frost Art Museum (Miami, FL), Tiwani Contemporary (London, UK), Deli Gallery (New York), Nicola Vassell Gallery (New York), and Atlanta Contemporary (Atlanta, GA). Awarded fellowships and residencies include Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (Madison, ME), Amant Studio & Research Residency (New York), the Fabric Workshop and Museum (Philadelphia, PA), the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Fine Arts (Wrocław, Poland), The Luminary (St. Louis, MO), Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Richmond, VA), Santa Fe Art Institute (Santa Fe, NM), ACRE (Steuben, WI), and Ox-Bow School of Art & Artist Residency (Saugatuck, MI).

Lucien is based in New York, where they are an Assistant Professor and Area Head of sculpture at Hunter College in New York City.

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