



David McDermott, *Vesuvio*, 2024, Oil on lead primed Italian linen
47 3/4 x 47 3/4 x 17/8 inches (121 x 121 x 4.5 cm) © David McDermott;
Photo by Tim Durham; Courtesy the artist and Vito Schnabel Gallery

**LOLA MONTES AND DAVID MCDERMOTT:
THE GREAT MOUNTAIN PAINTINGS 1888 & LANDSCAPES
FROM THE UNDERWORLD
JULY 27, 2024 - SEPTEMBER 15, 2024
VITO SCHNABEL GALLERY
VIA MAISTRA 37
7500 ST. MORITZ, SWITZERLAND**

Mountains, like friendships, are forged. And the rarest friendships, like mountains, endure. It is in this spirit that Vito Schnabel Gallery is pleased to announce the joint exhibition of David McDermott and Lola Montes, opening July 27 in St. Moritz, two artists whose friendship spans four decades: the elder McDermott acting as a catalytic beacon and constant supporter of the younger Montes in the process of discovering her artistic practice.

McDermott, an artist whose work has been exhibited internationally since the 1980s, presents his latest pictures in richly encoded paintings of mountains from around the world, extending this eternal theme in art through the lens of the Aesthetic Movement. McDermott's emphatic insistence on the beautiful, the miraculous, looks beyond promises of techno-modernity to mirror themes of 19th century artists' rejection of the Industrial Revolution, a collision that would drive

creative forces both to retreat from this "brave new world" and simultaneously push forward to unexplored faraway lands. Crafted with painstaking devotion using the finest materials, McDermott melds his voluminous understanding of past traditions into a precisely colored palimpsest of each mountain's respective elemental iconography. His is an aerial vision of aspiration, creating inspiring icons of what the viewer has yet to attain.

Montes takes the subterranean route, excavating rare clays and pigments from the earth itself, remainders and chthonic reminders of the eruption of Mt. Etna which looms near her studio in Sicily. In uncovering these hidden materials then fusing them both through the flames of her unconscious vision and the searing heat of clay-firing kilns, Montes' amalgam of exacting ancient techniques yields results unknown even to her until the work's completion. In these blindfolded acts of imaginative epiphany, her work is a windswept ascent to the summit: a topological dreamscape of myth and emotion.

They are the physical and sculptural nature of drawing woven through mud and then sifted into the delicate and gossamer sheen of faience - a miraculous high wire act.

What is even more miraculous however, is when the smile of The Fates brings two kindred spirits together, separated by generations, in a lifelong friendship of flourishing adventure and seeking, with them - and us - as the grateful beneficiaries of the treasures they bring home to share.

Like mountains and all rare friendships, this exhibition is a revelation.

Opening July 27, 2024, *The Great Mountain Paintings 1888 & Landscapes From The Underworld* will be on view at Vito Schnabel Gallery, St. Moritz through September 15, 2024.

About the Artists

David McDermott (b. 1952, Hollywood, CA) began his artistic journey at Syracuse University from 1970 to 74, when he moved to New York. He now lives and works in Ireland.

David McDermott's practice is an ongoing exploration of art and history; painting, living and working within his unique time experiments. His work consistently pushes the boundaries of time and environment, creating immersive, fantastical spaces for artistic expression.

In 1980, David and Peter McGough formed the artistic duo McDermott & McGough. Their collaboration has been marked by the use of alternative historical photographic processes, such as cyanotype, gum bichromate, salt, tricolor carbon, platinum, and palladium

printing. Their practice explores themes of popular art and culture, religion, medicine, advertising, time, fashion, and sexual behavior.

McDermott & McGough's work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria; Manezh Moscow, Moscow, Russia; and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland. They participated in the Whitney Biennial 1987, 1991, and 1995, and presented a mid-career retrospective at the Provincial Museum voor Moderne Kunst in Oostende, Belgium.

Lola Montes (b. 1981, New York, NY) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work consists of painting, sculpture, film, and design. She received her BFA in 2008 from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art and is based in Sicily and Milan, Italy.

Montes' practice draws on metaphors from her own mythology. She works with the unconscious to create psychic images that consist of timeless patterns, creating an exquisite order. By painting the subject's spirit, she translates a primitive timelessness into other realities.

Montes' work has been exhibited at the Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany; Tripoli Gallery, Wainscott, NY; Vito Schnabel Gallery, New York, NY; Nilufar Gallery, Milan, Italy; Labor Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico; Ileana Tounta Contemporary Art Center, Athens, Greece; Zuecca Projects at the Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy; The Hole, New York, NY; and at Nomad Design Fair (St. Moritz and Capri), among others.

She serves on the Board of Advisors for Anthology Film Archives and has directed music videos for Lou Reed, Benjamin Clementine, and Nike. Montes has also directed short films on fellow artists Luigi Ontani, Rene Ricard, Jonas Mekas, and Vahagn Arslanian, and Julian Schnabel. Her design work includes textiles for Alice & Olivia, Zac Posen, and Max Mara, furniture (tables, stools, candelabras, and more) and album covers for John Frusciante.



Lola Montes, *The Hero's Journey*, 2024, Hand-painted terracotta tiles mounted on steel support, 50 7/8 x 35 inches (129 x 89 cm) © Lola Montes; Photo by Gianni Mania; Courtesy the artist and Vito Schnabel Gallery

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