



Valentina D'Amaro, *Untitled*, 2016, oil on canvas, 17 3/4 x 25 5/8". From the series "Viridis," 2016–19.

ROME

Simon Callery and Valentina D'Amaro

GALLERIA 1/9UNOSUNOVE

Via degli Specchi 20

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UK-born Simon Callery and Italian Valentina D'Amaro propose very different, equally unconventional variations on contemporary landscape painting in this two-person

exhibition. The first room is devoted to Callery's recent "contact paintings," 2018–19, a series created during and after his sojourn in Rome last winter as an Abbey fellow in painting at the city's British School. Large canvases soaked in monochrome pigments, each a different color but all in naturalistic tones (such as ocher, orange, blue, green), are covered with holes and lacerations: indices of physical contact between the works' surfaces and the city's ancient ruins, parks, and embankments. These abstractions hang on unusual three-dimensional wooden supports, creating articulations that fold back in on themselves with a spatial depth that locates them between painting and sculpture. Never belonging fully to either category, they appear more like fossil traces of places, abstract topographies of a fragmented landscape.

In the second room, D'Amaro presents paintings from her most recent series, "Viridis," 2016–19. While at first glance viewers may intuit the photographic derivation of these landscapes, their surfaces are marked with blurrings and densities that explicitly denote the works' pictorial and nonrealistic character. Painted in a deliberately disaffected manner, they lack human presence, and the dominant color (indicated by the series's Latin title) is green, but an almost digital and synthetic green. Here the landscape, accentuated by the scintillating artificiality of the artist's oil technique and use of glitter, becomes a sort of *vanitas*, suspended at the threshold of the global environmental crisis.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

—Francesca Pola