

BERNHEIM

ELI PING

Hard Goods

BERNHEIM, London

May 7 - June 21, 2025

In *Hard Goods*, Eli Ping's solo debut in the UK, the artist reimagines the history of sculpture with a new body of work that pushes the limits of materiality and form. These new works draw inspiration from his earlier *Monocarp* series, in which he transforms canvas into eerie, textured sculptures through a process of resin application and sandblasting, resulting in works that appear to defy gravity — hovering just above the ground while simultaneously slicing through the air, reaching towards the ceiling in a strikingly dynamic display of motion and stillness.

The exhibition presents new floor-standing bronze works that bypass the traditional mould-making and lost wax processes used for millennia in bronze casting. Instead, Ping slashes, carves, and twists expanses of foam fabric, creating unique forms that serve as a repository for molten bronze in a process of direct burnout. The resulting freestanding sculptures render silhouettes of calligraphic contours that are at once alluring and threatening.

Drawing inspiration from the bold materiality of John Chamberlain, the lyrical abstraction of Sam Gilliam, and the elemental purity of modernists like Brancusi and Giacometti, Eli Ping weaves a visual language that is at once profoundly contemporary and timeless. At the core of his work lies a meditative exploration of light, shadow, and texture — an approach that transcends the visual to tap into the philosophical and spiritual. His compositions are guided by a reverence for balance and harmony, achieved through his meticulous attention to proportion and his fervent investigation of how materials speak to one another.

The eternal dance between beauty and violence forms the heartbeat of Ping's practice, and nowhere is this tension more delicately revealed than in his latest ensemble: a suite of five oil paintings that shimmer with a soft power. At a glance, the works appear as kindred forms — subtle variations within a shared rhythm. Each painting unfolds like a whispered secret, built from hundreds of layered gestures, each stitch and breath of colour bearing the weight of intention. The surface pulses with restraint and release, as hues melt into one another with near-imperceptible shifts, inviting the eye to wander, to question, and to feel.

This bold presentation of works marks a pivotal moment in Eli Ping's practice, displaying the full breadth of his work in sculptures, low reliefs, and paintings made using diverse materials, including cast iron, bronze, resin, wax, oil paint, and cotton. In each series and piece, he pushes the boundaries of medium against and into each other, blending raw industrial elements with delicate, tactile textures. Ping's practice is a study in interconnectedness, where opposing forces are not merely juxtaposed but brought into dialogue. The exploration of the subtle rhythms that connect the physical to the metaphysical is revealed in the interplay of dualities — light and dark, rough and smooth, tension and ease. Each duality is not a conflict to be resolved, but an opportunity for exploration. Through his mastery of nuance, Ping allows a natural flow to emerge—one that feels less constructed than conjured, as though the materials themselves were guided by unseen currents.

Hard Goods represents Ping's ultimate bravery, showcasing the courage of simplicity by stripping materials and forms to their very essence, thus revealing the most universal feelings.

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Eli Ping (born 1977, Chicago, USA) lives and works in New York, USA.

Ping's work has been featured in numerous publications, including The New York Times, Sotheby's Magazine, Vogue UK, Artforum, Flash Art, Cultured Magazine, Mousse Magazine, Justsmile Magazine, and The Brooklyn Rail, among others

His recent solo shows include *Stamina* at C L E A R I N G, New York (2024); *Eli Ping* at Micki Meng, New York (2024); *Eli Ping* at Bernheim, Zürich (2022); *Eli Ping* at ANDNOW, Dallas (2022); *Motes and Monocarps* at Ramiken Crucible, New York (2021); and *BONE* at Ramiken Crucible, New York (2020).

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