

For Immediate Release



## **Amy Myers: *Daughter Universes***

**15 October - 16 November, 2019**

**515 West 29th St., New York**

***And in each daughter universe, there is a copy of you witnessing one or the other outcome, thinking - incorrectly - that your reality is the only reality.***

**-Columbia University physicist Brian Greene**

**Malin Gallery** (formerly Burning in Water) is pleased to present *Amy Myers: Daughter Universes*. On view in New York through November 16th, *Daughter Universes* is the first exhibition to focus on the artist's paintings. The exhibition features five large-scale oil paintings on canvas accompanied by series of smaller gouache paintings rendered on silk.

Known for her intricate large-scale drawings, Amy Myers creates elaborate images replete with visual allusions to various fields of scientific inquiry including cosmology, theoretical physics, ontology, neuroscience, anatomy and physiology. As the daughter of a scientist and an aviator, Myers was raised in an environment suffused with scientific theory and empiricism. Coexisting with the ratiocinative elements of Myers' images are spiritual, ethereal and meditative qualities and a pervasive femininity. Employing the concept of the multiverse derived from theoretical physics as a "springboard into the imagination," Myers strives to render ineffable dimensions or states of being, describing her artistic visions as "fluid to the point of indeterminacy and infinite to the point of transcendence."

Though Myers' primary conceptual starting point is theoretical physics, she modulates between a range of scientific frameworks in her approach to form. Echoing the fact that all matter is composed of mostly empty space, Myers' composition evokes motion, fluidity and a startling sense of void. Looping, recumbent trajectories suggest the paths of quantum particles with form deriving only from motion. Myers' deep acquaintance with particle physics since childhood has yielded a highly singular approach to rendering matter and form, interpreting form as fundamentally a consequence of subatomic motion, collisions, particulate interplay and energy transfers. As the artist notes,

***The perspective of particle physics is one of a universe without stuff. All particles exist with the potential to combine with and become different particles. They are intermediate states in a network of interactions and are based upon events, not things.***

While Myers' approach to depicting mass and form is deeply informed by consideration of subatomic dynamics, the primacy of negative space within her work simultaneously evokes the celestial. Thus, her images collapse and commingle the infinitely microscopic and macroscopic in a manner that cannot be disentangled by the viewer, with his or her perspective constantly shifting between the universe in a grain of sand or the universe itself in its infinite expanse.

Central to Myers' approach is the concept of the multiverse derived from theoretical physics and closely associated with string theory. Erwin Schrödinger introduced his "lunatic" notion of the multiverse in 1952, when he suggested that the universe may encompass "multiple histories" that "are not alternatives, but all really happen simultaneously." The notion of the multiverse allows stretches toward the elusive unified theory that reconciles all space, energy, time and matter within one overarching conceptual framework. Immune to empirical evaluation, the idea of a multiverse has generated many variations. The title of the exhibition is taken from one of these versions of the multiverse: the concept of daughter universes. Rooted in quantum mechanics' insistence on probability and indeterminance, one conception of the multiverse suggests that all possible outcomes of a given event do occur in parallel but in separate "daughter" universes.

In Myers' hands, such ideas yield forms that appear suffused with the liminal, contingent or indeterminate. Though rooted in science and quantitative theories, the idea that the universe's constituents are simultaneously everywhere and nowhere inexorably leads towards the stubbornly non-empirical realms of the spiritual, the sacred and the metaphysical. Such defiantly ethereal domains seem to be acknowledged in Myers' paintings by the inclusion of visual allusions to mandalas and other totemic symbology. Also frequently embedded within Myers' works are anatomic-seeming forms. Though these forms have an innately feminine character, they remain more referential than representational. Thus, the gendered elements remain somewhat ambiguous and fluid. Nevertheless, the incorporation of genital forms insists upon a pervasive recognition of the role of the sexual organs as the progenitor of all life. The *Daughter Universes* paintings may therefore be construed as reformulations of Courbet's *Le Origine du Monde* for a post-quantum, multiphasic and intersectional age.

Critic Miriam Brumer has described Myers' singular style of imagery as follows:

***Consciously she refers to subatomic particles, galactic forces and sexual organs, but what our eyes perceive is a magically engendered, non-specific world, in which elements tenuously exist in an activated space and in a constant state of metamorphosis. She may be thinking about science, but what she has evolved is a mysterious and tenuous world.<sup>ii</sup>***

In her attempt to render irreconcilable dimensions simultaneously, Myers has undertaken as her artistic agenda an attempt to paint the entire universe at once - an admittedly quixotic but endlessly engaging endeavor.

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*[Myers'] feminine fantasies are as delicate as lacework, as eloquent as a bridal gown, as spectacular as fireworks, and as uninhabitable as a distant planet...*

*Her constellations atomize into a spinning, vibrating abstraction that draws you irresistibly toward an ever-widening interiority—a near-infinite, yet intimate, space of dizzying electromagnetic seduction.*

-Eric Fischl

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**Amy Myers (b. 1965, Austin, TX)** is a New York-based artist whose large-scale abstract drawings and paintings simultaneously reference particle physics, biology, philosophy, the human mind, and the mechanics of the universe.

Myers has received numerous grants and fellowships, including The Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (2019); Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts; Ellen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation Studio Residency and Award at MANA Contemporary; and The Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation Studio Grant. Past residencies include Yaddo Artist Residency (Saratoga Springs, NY); Dora Maar House (Menerbes, France); and The American Academy in Rome.

Previous solo exhibitions include Mike Weiss Gallery (New York, NY); Mary Boone Gallery (New York, NY); Suzanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects (Los Angeles, CA); Danese Gallery (New York, NY); Rhona Hoffman Gallery (Chicago, IL); and Dunn and Brown Contemporary (Dallas, TX).

Past museum exhibitions include The Sweeney Art Museum at California State University (Riverside, CA); Pomona College, Montgomery Art Center (Claremont, CA); and University Art Museum, California State University (Long Beach, CA).



Myers has artworks in the permanent collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York, NY); Pérez Art Museum Miami (Miami, FL); California State University Art Museum (Long Beach, CA); Fort Wayne Museum of Art (Fort Wayne, IN); Greenville County Museum of Art (Greenville, SC); Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art (Peekskill, NY); Laguna Art Museum (Laguna Beach, CA); Museum of Fine Arts (Houston, TX); Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art (Overland Park, KS); and the American Express Corporate Collection.

Myers' artworks have been cited in numerous publications, including *The New York Times*, *Hyperallergic*, *Artnews*, *Art in America*, and *BOMB*.



**Malin Gallery** (formerly Burning in Water) is a New York-based gallery featuring an innovative curatorial program that highlights the work of living artists with reference to broader issues confronting society. Founded in 2015 by Dr. Barry Thomas Malin, the gallery's program conjoins a series of exhibitions by artists represented by the gallery with historical exhibitions of work by American and African artists.