

Cosmic Geometries

January 13, 2022 - February 26, 2022

Natessa Amin
Yevgeniya Baras
Lisa Beck
Biren De
Grace DeGennaro
Evie Falci
Anoka Faruqee & David Driscoll
Rico Gatson
Diana Guerrero-Maciá
Xylor Jane
Valerie Jaudon
Laleh Khorramian
Julia Kunin
Marilyn Lerner
Anne Lindberg
Mahirwan Mamtani
Carrie Moyer
Stephen Mueller
Sky Pape
Dorothea Rockburne
A.V. Ryan
Laurel Sparks
Barbara Takenaga
Jackie Tileston
Johanna Unzueta



Carrie Moyer. *Cosmic Shiva*. Acrylic, sand, glitter on canvas.
66 x 60 inches. 2021. Courtesy of DC Moore Gallery, New York.

Organized by **Hilma's Ghost (Sharmistha Ray and Dannielle Tegeder)**

EFA Project Space is thrilled to present ***Cosmic Geometries***, organized by **Hilma's Ghost**, a feminist collective project by **Sharmistha Ray** and **Dannielle Tegeder**, and featuring a diverse, intergenerational group of artists, with work by: **Natessa Amin, Yevgeniya Baras, Lisa Beck,**

Biren De, Grace DeGennaro, Evie Falci, Anoka Faruqee & David Driscoll, Rico Gatson, Diana Guerrero-Maciá, Xylor Jane, Valerie Jaudon, Laleh Khorravian, Julia Kunin, Marilyn Lerner, Anne Lindberg, Mahirwan Mamtani, Carrie Moyer, Stephen Mueller, Sky Pape, Dorothea Rockburne, A.V. Ryan, Laurel Sparks, Barbara Takenaga, Jackie Tileston and Johanna Unzueta.

Cosmic Geometries is a group exhibition of intergenerational and intersectional artists that examines the spiritual and aesthetic functions of abstract painting and geometry in art. The artists deploy a range of painterly devices to create cosmic and transcendental visions that combine esoteric world traditions with the language of Modernism. Their motifs are inspired by sources as divergent as Islamic architecture, Buddhist mandalas, Hindu yantras, medieval Christian stained-glass windows, and quantum mechanics, rendering formal devices that range from tessellations, optical illusions, to elaborate ornamentation techniques. These artists primarily work with the language of painting, but also draw from languages and materials adapted from sculpture, installation, craft, textiles, and ceramics. Within these works lies a rich sensibility for color, shape, and compositional elements, which reveal the daring sensibilities that artists are bringing to the historically overlooked arena of the spiritual in art. These artists' practices build upon palimpsest legacies of alternative power structures that are constantly being erased.

Curatorial Note

Being a community driven project, Hilma's Ghost stands in opposition to hierarchical machinations. We are artists curating a show, not curators. The exhibition has been conceived as a salon, where artists from diverse backgrounds and generations are invited into conversation with each other; the desired outcomes are open-ended. You have the cosmological visualizations of a feminist icon like Dorothea Rockburne, who is known for her interest in mathematics and astronomy, but also derives from Western art historical representations of Christian mysticism. You also have Rico Gatson, whose cosmic abstractions and specific color relations speak to pan-Africanism, Black liberation, and spirituality. Both artists underscore that identity politics and spiritual abstraction are not mutually exclusive. Personal histories between these artists are also important to the "conversation": Stephen Mueller, for instance, had a close friendship with Carrie Moyer while he was alive, and she has carried his legacy forward in many ways. Presenting their work together reveals dynamic relationships in color, technique, and style.

The overlapping and interconnectedness of world cultures is also significant: Philadelphia-based artists Jackie Tileston and Natessa Amin are from different cultural and generational backgrounds but they find distinct material ways to draw upon Tantric visualities through painting. Alongside these artists, you have the incredible abstractions of Indian artists and Neo-Tantra pioneers —Biren De (1926-2011) and Mahirwan Mamtani, who lives in Germany and is now in his 80s — both little known in the U.S., but whose works hold the possibility of

reframing the language around Modernism and spirituality through other cultural loci. Things start to happen when you fold these myriad voices and practices into a common space. We hope these cross-pollinations spur new germinations for the artists involved and for the viewing public.

Instead of “curating” the arrangement and placement of works, we built upon our use of processes of ritual and divination to install the exhibition. Last year, we created an original Tarot deck, [ABSTRACT FUTURES TAROT](#). To determine the layout of Cosmic Geometries, we invoked Hilma’s spirit—as we always do at the beginning of our online workshops—as we drew cards divinely from our Tarot deck for each of the artists in the exhibition. Most of these cards were drawn from the Major Arcana, which represent life’s archetypal themes, which have karmic and transformative meanings. The drawn cards have been placed next to the works to which they correspond. The meanings behind these pairings are as much a mystery to us, so we have purposely left it open to the viewer’s interpretations.

This process intends to challenge traditional forms of curatorial authority by relinquishing control over institutionalized methods of exhibition-making.

-Sharmistha Ray and Dannielle Tegeger, Hilma’s Ghost

ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

Hilma’s Ghost, a feminist artist collective, was co-founded by Brooklyn-based artists Dannielle Tegeger and Sharmistha Ray in 2020. The collective seeks to address existing art historical gaps by cultivating a global network of women, nonbinary, and trans practitioners whose work addresses spirituality. Hilma af Klint’s groundbreaking exhibition at the Guggenheim in 2018 served as a reckoning for art history’s blindspots, especially for women artists considered too ‘mystical’ for the conservative art world. Named after af Klint, Hilma’s Ghost believes that western heteropatriarchal societies maintain a false binary between spirituality and science. This bias serves to overlook womxn artists whose explorations of ancient and pre-modern knowledge systems is a source of personal strength and aesthetic innovation. Hilma’s Ghost acts as a restorative project that uplifts these voices and makes them visible.

Hilma’s Ghost has run online programs and free public workshops since their launch in 2020. These programs have attracted hundreds of artists and other spiritual practitioners from across the globe onto their unique platform on subjects ranging from shamanism, automatic drawing, to sigil making. In 2021, Hilma’s Ghost had their first artistic collaboration with *ABSTRACT FUTURES TAROT*, which was shown at The Armory Show from September 9-12, 2021. The project which consisted of 5 paintings, 78 drawings, and an original Tarot deck, was highlighted by Will Heinrich as one of the exhibitions to see in the rundown of the art fair for [The New York](#)

[Times](#). *Cosmic Geometries* at EFA Project Space is the collective's first curatorial project. Learn more about Hilma's Ghost at the website www.hilmasghost.com and follow them on Instagram @hilmasghost where they profile living womxn artists and announce new programming.

Sharmistha Ray is an artist, art critic, and educator based in Brooklyn, New York. For two decades, their work has explored subjective experience through the lens of queerness, language, and memory. Ray's core practice consists of drawing, but also includes painting, sculpture, video installation, and photography. They have exhibited their work in solo exhibitions in Mumbai, New York, and Singapore, and shown in group exhibitions and art fairs in the U.S. and abroad. They are the recipient of a Joan Mitchell MFA Grant, and received their MFA in Painting from Pratt Institute. Currently, they teach in the MFA programs at Parsons School of Design and School of Art at Carnegie Mellon University. www.sharmistharay.com

Danielle Tegeder is an artist and professor at The City University of New York at Lehman College. For the past fifteen years, her work has explored abstraction through the lens of systems, architecture, and utopianism. While the core of her practice is paintings and drawings, she also works in large-scale installation, mobiles, video, sound, and animation and has done a number of collaborations with composers, dancers, and writers. In March 2020 Tegeder founded The Pandemic Salon, a community-centric project intended to dismantle the hierarchical structures of institutional discussion, which showcases topics related to the pandemic by bringing together creative minds in an informal, online environment that has connected over 600 participants from 40 countries. www.danielletegeder.com

EXHIBITION EVENTS

Please visit the EFA Project Space website for more information on events and to RSVP.

Thursday, January 13, 2022, 3-4:30pm

Exhibition Opening Reception, ONLINE via ZOOM

Join the curators and EFA staff for a virtual reception and curator conversation celebrating the opening of *Cosmic Geometries*.

Wednesday, January 26, 2022, 3-4:30 pm

Sarah Potter: "Going Beyond Tradition: Tarot Basics for Artists and Creatives"

Tuesday, February 8, 2022, 6-7:30 pm

Art & Magic: Artists and the Occult – A Zoom Workshop

More events to be announced, check Project Space website for more.

PRESS INQUIRIES

Judy Giera, Program Manager
EFA Project Space Program
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EFA Project Space, launched in September 2008 as a program of **The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts**, is a collaborative, cross-disciplinary arts venue founded on the belief that art is directly connected to the individuals who produce it, the communities that arise because of it, and to everyday life; and that by providing an arena for exploring these connections, we empower artists to forge new partnerships and encourage the expansion of ideas.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501(c)(3) public charity. Through its three core programs, **EFA Studios**, **EFA Project Space**, and **EFA Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop**, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. EFA is a catalyst for cultural growth, stimulating new interactions between artists, creative communities, and the public. www.efanyc.org. EFA Project Space has received public funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, as well as from generous individuals in our community. EFA Project Space's SHIFT: A Residency for Arts Workers is supported by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF), Teiger Foundation, the Willem de Kooning Foundation.

ACCESSIBILITY AND COVID-19

Masks and up-to-date vaccination status are required to view the exhibition and must be worn at all times.

EFA Project Space is located on the 2nd floor of 323 West 39th Street, between 8th and 9th Avenues. The building has an ADA wheelchair accessible elevator that provides access to the gallery from the ground floor. There are all-gender single stall bathrooms and an ADA approved bathroom on the 3rd floor. The space is not scent-free, but we do request that people attending come low-scent. Admission to the building does not require an ID, but you will be asked to sign-in and out to facilitate contact tracing, as necessary. The closest MTA subway station is the Port Authority A, C, E stop which is ADA wheelchair accessible. Texts and programs are in English. Large format texts can be provided with an advance request. EFA Project Space is committed to nurturing an intergenerational environment and we encourage children & kid noise at our events. Please notify us of any accessibility needs by email to projectspace@efanyc.org, or by phone at (212) 563-5855 x 244.



A Program of The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
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