



WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS
AMY CHENG & SHARON LIGORNER.

January 25 - March 8, 2024

Virtual Exhibition Opening

Thursday, January 25, 2024 | 10:00 AM

Lola Shepard is pleased to announce **WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS**, a two-person exhibition featuring select works by **AMY CHENG** and **SHARON LIGORNER**. The virtual exhibition will be viewable to the public on **Thursday, January 25, 2024, at 10:00 AM** and will run on the website from January 25 - March 8, 2024.

Geometric forms pervade our surroundings, constituting the foundational structure and blueprints of life in the cosmos. From the molecules of our DNA, to celestial bodies in our galaxy, all adhere to fixed laws and precise measures. **WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS** introduces the works of two artists, **AMY CHENG** and **SHARON LIGORNER**, each employing a distinctive visual language to delve into the geometric patterns woven into the fabric of the world. Highlighting the sheer wonder of existence and exploring concepts of infinity and interconnectedness, the artists illustrate a profound engagement with geometric principles and aesthetics, blurring the boundaries between craft, art, and everyday life.

Showcasing drawings and paintings from their respective bodies of work, **AMY CHENG** transcends the constraints of time and reality. Employing various painterly techniques, Cheng crafts cosmic and transcendental visions that seamlessly meld abstract painting with geometry. Her works reveal a nuanced appreciation for color, shape, and compositional elements, demonstrating the sensibilities she infuses into her art.

Cheng's galactic drawings are not purely abstract nor strictly representational; they are imaginative visual speculations on the mysteries of the universe. Infused with an interest in spatial illusion, intricacy, geometry, patterning, and cross-hatching, Cheng creates complex and mesmerizing motifs featuring black holes, wormholes, quasars, stars, and celestial objects in her attempt to grasp the inconceivable. Executed with gouache and markers on paper, the color-saturated works pulsate and vibrate across the paper, generating a lively, dynamic surface.

Cheng's paintings draw inspiration from diverse sources, including Indian and Tibetan mandalas, Byzantine mosaics, Persian textiles, and Western illusionistic painting. She renders voluminous spheres intricately interwoven within a decorated, layered realm of shimmering light and vibrant, prismatic hues. Using layering and repetitive patterns, executed with remarkable precision by way of a compass and ruler, the artist weaves together various floral motifs and mathematical patterns to construct her densely embellished, jewel-like pieces. Describing her work, Cheng

explains, *"My art centers on the heart's yearning to connect with the vastness of life, the timeless trajectory of the universe. I aim to evoke what Zen practitioners refer to as nothing and everything – the sensation of being in harmony with the universe."*

In her pursuit for beauty and equilibrium, **SHARON LIGORNER's** abstract paintings and collages draw inspiration from the universal shapes, patterns, and geometry found in the natural world. While Ligorner demonstrates versatility with gouache, acrylic, and oil, as seen in the featured glass paintings *Watersign #3* and *Watersign #22*, her primary artistic focus centers on encaustics and collage.

In constructing her encaustic paintings, Ligorner builds up layers of beeswax and pigment to create rich, thick surfaces. Using a razor blade and dental tools, she delicately scrapes away layers, resulting in luminescent smooth surfaces begging to be touched. The flexibility and immediacy of encaustic enables Ligorner to shape the artwork in the moment, and the medium's adaptability to layering and reworking aligns with her artistic need for constant transformation. Operating on intuition rather than calculation, the resulting pieces often reveal their visual history, portraying the cycle of birth, life, and decay.

In her collage work, Ligorner sifts through books and magazines, allowing shapes and colors to intuitively guide her. The collages feature ornate textile patterns, botanicals, small creatures, and fragments of sentences. Reveling in the meditative and tactile process of moving paper around, she adeptly blends diverse elements into a cohesive whole. Eureka moments occur when seemingly unrelated inspirations come together in a work. Cut and assembled into surprising compositions, the collages burst with unexpected color. The incorporation of the circular shape, a fundamental element in her creations, symbolically suggest the unity of all things great and small and the perpetual motion of all life. These multi-layered compositions vividly portray the diverse and resplendent forms within nature.

Capturing the fundamental nature of the geometric structures molding our reality, Cheng and Ligorner transcends earthly confines, ushering the viewer into the magnificence of their worlds within worlds.

AMY CHENG was born in Taiwan, raised in Brazil, Oklahoma and Texas. She received a BFA from the University of Texas at Austin, and an MFA from Hunter College, City University of New York. Exhibiting both nationally and internationally, her work is held in a number of corporate and public collections, including The Hyde Collection (Glens Falls, NY), New York University Langone Medical Center (New York, NY), Sheraton Hotels (Brussels, Belgium), Sam Houston University (Huntsville, TX) and Novartis Pharmaceuticals (Philadelphia, PA). Public art commissions include projects at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, the Howard St. El Station (Chicago, IL), the 25th Avenue Subway Station (Brooklyn, NY), the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport MetroLink Station, the Jacksonville International Airport, and the Western State Hospital (Tacoma, WA).

She received a Fulbright Teaching Fellowship to Renmin University of China, Beijing, PRC in Spring 2017, a P.S. 122 Painting Center Fellowship in New York City for a ten-month residency in 2011-12, and a Senior Lecture/Research Fulbright fellowship to Brazil in Fall 2008. She has been awarded two New York Foundation for the Arts Painting Fellowships, and an Arts International travel grant to China. She is a Professor Emerita of the Art Department at the State University of New York at New Paltz.

SHARON LIGORNER lives and works in Massachusetts. She graduated with a BFA from Massachusetts College of Art in 1986, having spent her junior year in Florence, Italy, at Studio Art Centers International. Following graduation, Sharon did a residency at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. Ligorner has mounted over 40 solo and group exhibitions including Oresman Gallery of Smith College (Northampton, MA), Elusie Gallery (Easthampton MA), Gallery 37 (Milford, DE), Francesca Anderson Gallery (Lexington, MA), Geoffrey Young Gallery (Great Barrington, MA), and Herter Gallery at University of Massachusetts (Amherst, MA), to name a few. Ligorner was one of 79 artists featured in the newly published book *Encaustics in the 21st Century*. Her paintings are included in the permanent collections of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in DC, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Headquarters in NYC, and the Art Gallery at Western New England University.

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