

Drawing a Universe of Cosmic Sexuality

Clarity Haynes, Hyperallergic, 2015

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The artist Eric Fischl once called Amy Myers's abstract drawings "totems to Cosmic Sexuality." These words may seem hyperbolic, unless you've seen her startling, lacy constructions in the flesh. Her imagery is founded on vulva-like forms that emerge from a central axis, recalling the "central core" or vaginal imagery in early feminist work by artists like Judy Chicago. (Myers claims Lee Bontecou and Roberto Matta as artistic influences.) To my eye, Myers builds upon early feminist art in exploring the powerful intersection of sexuality and spirituality, revamped for the 21st century.

Spectral Bond, Light as Spiral, at McKenzie Fine Art, is Myers's first solo show in New York in seven years. Her last exhibition, at Mike Weiss Gallery, featured gargantuan drawings that towered over the viewer. Her current show, while still imposing, is more intimate in scale. Entering the exhibition, one encounters a suite of four large, chromatically austere drawings, whose irregular, widely spaced presentation accentuates their subtle asymmetry. Towards the back, there is a group of smaller pieces in a sort of nook. These framed drawings bring to mind illuminated manuscripts with their precise, ornamental style.

Myers works with graphite, gouache, pastel, and conté crayon, rendering complex forms that bloom from the center of a grid, made from joined sheets of paper. At first glance, the drawings look digitally created. Upon closer inspection, the seams of the paper become apparent. Then one begins to notice the deliberately off-kilter symmetry, the handmade facture, the small stray notations in pencil, the ghostly erased sections.

Myers's father is a physicist, and her titles reflect her interest in cosmology and black hole theory. "The Ultraviolet Underground-PT1" (2015), the largest work in the show, is a succession of lambent and corset-like shapes, drawn in velvety black silhouettes on cream-colored paper. Pale petals stream out from

yonic portals like peacock feathers. Lines recede and advance, overlapping each other, creating space, then canceling it out.

Looking at the drawings for an extended period, one starts to recognize a myriad of familiar entities: ball gowns, galaxies, uteruses, dandelion spores, pelvises, ribcages, spider webs, checkerboards, constellations. These shifting elements, never clearly representational, harmonize in ways that suggest the interconnectedness of the natural world. *Spectral Bond, Light as Spiral* leaves the viewer in awe, with the sense that the mysteries of the universe are not ours to fully know.