

Odyssey: Natalia Wróbel

November 2 – December 16, 2018

Abigail Ogilvy Gallery proudly announces the solo exhibition of artwork by Natalia Wróbel. In this multi-sensory exhibition, Wróbel brings the viewer on a journey through her hyper-saturated abstracted pseudo-landscapes. The paintings read as mystical mirages that on one glance come together and another break apart, in a continuation of her interest in forms appearing to be moving and still at the same time. This vibrating duality is echoed in the use of sound as a critical component of this exhibition. Through this new body of work, Wróbel encourages the viewer to experience their own inner transformation through heightened observation and presence.

“My paintings are portals into imagined, meditative worlds that represent the liminal realm of infinite time and space that we can’t sense in physical dimensions. Though I paint in an intuitive, heartfelt manner, I am inspired by a range of elements- sacred architecture, quantum physics, the cosmos, botanical micro structures, nature, a range of spiritual beliefs, Japanese wabi sabi philosophy (the beauty of imperfection), mindfulness and music. The paintings are about the interconnectedness of all things, from the micro/quantum level, to the macro/cosmic level, to nature and humanity in between. My goal is to create an embracing space with a resonant uplifting atmosphere that encourages contemplation of the nature of being.

The paintings exist along the threshold of abstraction and representation, with forms seemingly coming together and breaking apart at the same time. Within the pieces, there are suggestions of understood forms and images, but never enough that the painting or any element in them is prescriptive. The viewer has agency in this exhibition; their observation, contemplation and engagement completes the work, giving it a multi-faceted, yet personal meaning.

My work examines the coexistence of dualities- chaos and harmony, dark and light, movement and stillness, abandon and control, open fluidity vs. tightly wound spaces- and attempt at resolution as a metaphor for the endurance and adaptability of the human spirit. Oscillating between two ends of the spectrum creates a sense of vibration within the composition that gives it life. This vibrating duality is echoed in the use of sound as a critical component of this exhibition.

Painting for me is a contemplative exercise, an investigation, a search for meaning and beauty, an avenue for prayer and a moving meditation. It allows me to dive inside and outside of myself, to enter an intuitive state of mindfulness, where an authentic felt experience comes first and all analytical thought and otherwise comes second. I am interested in creating an all-encompassing, all-embracing space and providing the conditions for a meaningful experience, even if this experience is inarticulable. I seek to encourage an experiential odyssey in the viewer and a stirring of the interior by engaging sensations in the exterior- specifically sight and sound. I hope these paintings encourage slowing down through heightened observation and listening, to allow a deep sense of presence to bloom into a sense of eternity.

While living in Berlin and Amsterdam for the past year, I pursued a body of work transmuting sound onto canvas. Music has always played a major role in my painting practice- I am hyper-conscious of how sound impacts my painting flow. For the largest piece in the exhibition titled *We Are All Made of Light*, measuring 8 feet by 27 feet, I listened to a specific set of songs that encouraged an uplifted meditative state throughout the month-long painting process. This included five songs by contemporary Icelandic composer Olafur Arnalds.

During the exhibition, visitors to the gallery are encouraged to put on headphones playing this soundtrack and be absorbed by the multi-dimensionality of the music and embracing forms within the painting. The intention of sharing the music is to transform your viewing experience into a three-dimensional, felt, meditative experience. Feel free to move how you feel, stay as long as you like, and give into the presence of the moment.” – Natalia Wróbel