

MARGARET EVANGELINE

The Invisible Side of the Universe

21 September – 29 October 2016

PRESS RELEASE

JONATHAN FERRARA GALLERY is proud to announce *The Invisible Side of the Universe*, an exhibition of New York City-based artist **Margaret Evangeline**. For her second solo show at the gallery, Evangeline debuts her latest suite of post-minimalist, oil paintings. The exhibition will be on view in the main gallery from 21 September through 29 October 2016 with a *First Saturday Gallery Opening* on **1 October** from **6-9pm** in conjunction with the annual *Art for Arts' Sake* city-wide art openings.

The artist says of the exhibition . . .

At this juncture these paintings of celadon fields with white wave-like patterns refer to gravity, or gravitational wave signatures. Albert Einstein predicted the existence of gravitational waves in 1916 in his general theory of relativity. There is a Louisiana connection to all this. In a lab in Livingston Parish, one of two gravitational wave detectors, the sound of two black holes colliding, was heard for the first time early this year thus proving Einstein's 75-year old theory.

This discovery inspired the series "The Invisible Side of the Universe". My entire painting practice has been devoted to the vulnerabilities of the discovery process, of finding one's way to significant content through maintaining a stance of openness to failure. My question that led to the artworks was, if I knew what gravitational waves looked like, what would that be?

Seeing an artist's conceptualized illustration of energy inside a black hole struck me as looking like a drawing of a Camellia from my mother's garden. It recalled to me an experience on the coldest day of the year when I picked all the buds from a Purple Dawn Camellia for a bouquet for my mother. That experience felt important and I knew that it would inspire something some day when I was ready. My early interest in Camellias and my interest in coincidence guide me. We are built to understand the world through patterns of flukes and accidents.

Margaret Evangeline is a contemporary painter, sculptor, and installation artist who lives and works in New York City. She was the first female recipient of an MFA in Fine Arts from the University of New Orleans in 1978. She taught at Delgado Community College, where she pioneered the school's first fine arts program. It was during this time that Evangeline's interest in using unconventional and aesthetically resistant materials emerged in her painting, a technique that has come to define her formal practice. Evangeline began creating large-scale abstract oil paintings on canvas, layering crystallina, flocking, and other cultural detritus with her oil paints. Working during the Persian Gulf War, Evangeline created a body of paintings that were intended as a response to the political turmoil internationally at hand, and the social issues particular to the environment of New Orleans. These works were the first in a long line of paintings and sculpture that Evangeline created to reflect on the cultural climate of our times.

In 1992 Evangeline had her first show in New York City, that was well received and went on to garner a particularly insightful review by Eleanor Heartney in *Art in America*. This experience had a profound effect on Evangeline and ultimately led her to permanently relocate to New York, where she continues to live and work today.

It was upon settling in Manhattan that Evangeline was able to begin processing the impact of the south on her work, and experimenting with the way in which location affected her practice. Today, the experience of growing up in Louisiana has come to define her work as an artist. The long, circuitous history of Evangeline's Acadian forebears, through the Hudson Bay down to Louisiana, forms a rich backdrop for her reflections upon and responses to current political questions. In 2002, during a residency at the Santa Fe Art Institute dedicated to supporting artists affected by 9/11, Evangeline began to further explore the act of shooting. Confronted by the vastness of the landscape and mired in the unanswerable questions left in the wake of the national tragedy, Evangeline began shooting holes in giant aluminum panels, engaging the landscape of the place through the absence she had created in the works, thereby finding a language to explore the collective loss the country was feeling.



Evangeline has since gone on to create a stunning collection of shot metal sculptural works and large-scale installations that provide an abstract reflection on collective memory, loss, growth, and the passage of time. In addition to solo and group exhibitions at notable institutions internationally, public installations of Evangeline's work are in place around the world. In 2004 she received her first commission to create a site-specific work for the permanent collection of The Fields Sculpture Park at Art Omi near Ghent, New York. There, drawing on the tradition of shooting road signs in rural areas, Evangeline constructed a double-sided, mirror-polished stainless steel panel that she shot with a .22 caliber rifle. The work, which reflects the landscape, draws on the notion of place, reality, and space as a medium, as visitors are confronted by both ethereal distortions of their surroundings and focused glimpses of the material place itself within the bullet holes on the piece's mirrored surface. Evangeline further elaborated on the notion of space in a 2008 commission by Illuminate Productions, for which she created a site-specific installation on the River Thames, opposite the Tate Modern in London. The work, *Saved from the Waters*, was a fifteen by thirty-foot floating sculpture that featured reflective steel transpierced with gunshot, memorializing the pleasure boat *Marchioness*, which sank on the Thames over thirty years before.

In 2014, Evangeline's work was featured in a solo exhibition titled, *Sabachthani*, at Michigan State's new Eli and Edythe Broad Museum of Art. Evangeline began creating the work as a collaboration with her son, then a lieutenant colonel stationed at a US Air Base in Balad, Iraq. Conceived of as a way to comprehend and process the war, *Sabachthani* features a series of metal bars which Evangeline mailed to her son and his unit in Iraq, in the year before the withdrawal of the troops. These active-duty soldiers shot through the bars using military ballistics before sending them back to Evangeline, creating a figurative dialogue between Americans and their distant war.

Evangeline was selected among 30 notable artists to exhibit in the acclaimed traveling exhibition *Guns in the Hands of Artists* curated by Jonathan Ferrara. In 2015, she became a represented artist at JFG and was exhibited at VOLTA12 Art Fair 2016 (Basel, Switzerland), Miami Project, Art Market San Francisco, Seattle Art Fair and Texas Contemporary. Her work was also included in *EXCHANGE*, an international exhibition at Galerie Jochen Hempel, Berlin, which was then re-installed at the Spinnerai in Leipzig in September 2016. Today, Evangeline continues to explore new modes of mark making in her diverse and ever-evolving practice.

For further information, press or sales inquiries please contact the gallery director, Matthew Weldon Showman, at matthew@jonathanferraragallery.com or at the gallery +1.504.522.5471.

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