

Supercluster

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A MOVING FREQUENCY: COSMIC ART EXHIBIT COMES TO NEW YORK

ART, PHYSICS, COSMOS

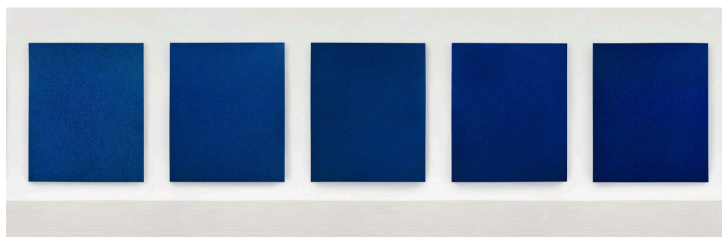


Artworks by Cyrielle Gulacsy | Photo by Timothee Chambovet

Seven years ago, I interviewed Paris-based [Cyrielle Gulacsy](#) for the [New York Observer](#), a burgeoning artist who found inspiration in the exploration of the cosmos, using graphite or ink to create illustrations of space-faring machines. Back then, Gulacsy sought to reveal the aesthetic details of technical objects like satellites, rockets, and even parachutes. Today, she has returned to New York City with a new exhibit at the Mignoni gallery that peers into the quantum universe and further interrogates the cosmos.

Gulacsy, born in Paris in 1994, is an artist whose work is currently rooted in the realm of astronomy and astrophysics, subjects of great interest to her. Gulacsy explores and interprets complex scientific concepts like spacetime, electromagnetism, and the diffraction of light, in an effort to help others appreciate the astonishing mechanisms behind reality. By translating layered ideas into minimalist and abstract imagery, Gulacsy aims to provide viewers with a glimpse of the invisible world that surrounds us. Mignoni notes that Gulacsy believes, like the philosopher Baptiste Morizot, that 21st Century man may have grown too desensitized to their surroundings.

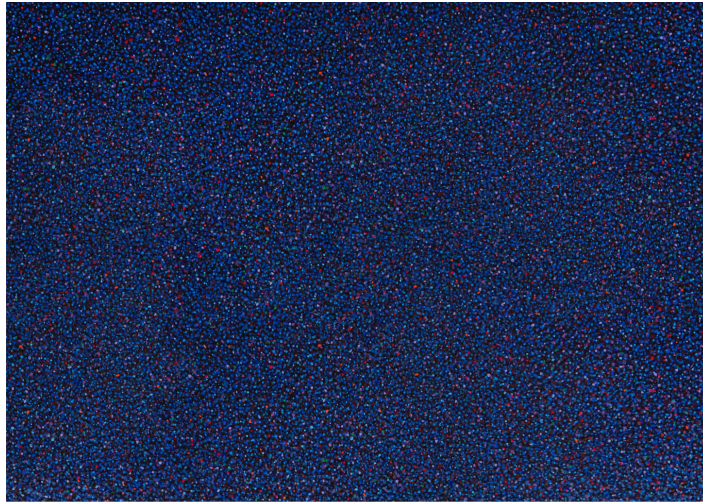
Her paintings often involve meticulous research and are known for their simplicity and evocative power, inviting viewers to reflect on the elusive framework of the universe. Her work features themes of light and time, illustrating how the light we see from celestial objects is a form of time travel, representing images from the past.



Artworks by Cyrielle Gulacsy | Photo by Mignoni

A Moving Frequency is Gulacsy's second solo exhibition at Mignoni. Her first was in 2022 and was titled Light in the Distance, "an exploration of the properties and power of light." Gulacsy worked to reveal the range and variety of the often invisible cosmic light that emanates from distant stars.

A Moving Frequency comprises of eight, identically-sized, 70 7/8 X 59 1/16 in. (180x150 cm) paintings, each giving a shade of a deep, ethereal, iridescent blue. "Approximated and rendered physically in acrylic paint, these vibrant dots together form a highly material pictorial surface of variegated color, depth, and texture that, when seen from close to, appears to suggest an infinite and energized field of collectively pulsating particles," explained the Mignoni in a press release for the opening. "Seen from further away, however, this pointillistic cosmic soup fuses in the eye of the viewer into a single, shimmering, near-monochromatic field of color that radiates on a single, penetrative blue wavelength."



Artworks by Cyrielle Gulacsy | Photo by Mignoni

Seven years after our first interview, I visited Cyrielle Gulacsy at her studio just outside of Paris as she planned and prepared to return to New York City for the new exhibit. We discussed her road as an artist, the new subjects she's exploring, and we dive a little deeper into the science and theory behind A Moving Frequency, running at Mignoni from May 29th to August 31st.

ROBIN:

Since we last spoke on the subject of your art years ago, how has the body of your work changed? Has there been a shift in the philosophy behind your approach?

CYRIELLE GULACSY:

Over the last 7 years, my work has evolved a lot.

It was amusing to read our first interview together and revisit my concerns at the time. I had just began to show my work in galleries and I had not even started to properly paint or use colors, which are now key elements in my practice.

My subject matter has also significantly evolved. Back then, I was already interested in the viewers' ability when facing an enigmatic or abstract image, to engage their curiosity and how this image could be transformative for them. This idea has persisted, but the subject of the image has changed. I gradually moved away from aerospace and aeronautics and started to delve deeper into physics, the functioning of things, the matter that conceives and makes reality, and how physics describes it. This shift of interest resulted in new works on light or spacetime, where I try, through painting or sculpture, to reveal this invisible reality that eludes us, and perhaps incite the viewers to connect with this real world once they've left the gallery.

I am currently undergoing a new upheaval in my work, as I recently became aware that physics actually fails to describe one of the most fascinating phenomena in the universe, which was therefore completely absent from my work: life.

ROBIN:

Can you tell us a little bit about your work on display at the Mignoni and the theme behind the exhibition?

CYRIELLE GULACSY:

The exhibition at the Mignoni gallery is a continuation of my work on visible light.

This time, I decided to focus on a single color. The exhibition is entitled "a moving frequency" and this frequency is the blue. Each color of the visible light spectrum is related to a wavelength and has a specific frequency. When we observe the sky and the universe, we notice that celestial objects moving away from the Earth have a wavelength that shifts towards red, also known as redshift. When they move closer to us, this wavelength is shorter and then shifts towards blue. This is called blueshift. I really like the idea that what is approaching us is bluer. The photons that I paint also move towards Earth, towards us, towards our eyes, from the light of the sun. It turns out that these photons appear blue to us most of the time.

This idea of movement also interests me in its temporal dimension; it evokes change, a moment of transition. The exhibition is a representation of this suspended spacetime, the passage of light through the atmosphere, that place between space and Earth, but also the moment of transition from day to night, which is ultimately neither night nor day but a transitional moment rarely captured because it is rarely anticipated. This exhibition has, for me, an emotional dimension that was not present in previous exhibitions.

This "frequency" moves us personally, like an inward journey. It is a color that touches a specific sensory space that goes beyond the simple definition of a physical phenomenon. This blue is both personal and universal. This exhibition is special to me because it symbolizes my own return to Earth, like a suspended moment, just before landing.

ROBIN:

Can you describe some of the scientific principles that inspire your current collection? Are there scientists or thinkers that inspire your work? I know that [Stephen Hawking's A Brief History Of Time](#) lit a fire in you a long time ago. What does that for you today?

CYRIELLE GULACSY:

There is indeed a reading that has been particularly transformative for me recently and has led to a new series. It is the book "The most beautiful trick of light" by the French astrophysicist David Elbaz.

This reading arrived at an interesting moment, shortly after I realized that in my work, heavily inspired by physical and mathematical descriptions of the world, the idea of life was missing. A body in which life has faded away is still made of the same number of atoms, and physics seems to be unable to report or picture this moment, which is far from being a trivial matter. This idea troubled me, and I had the unfortunate sensation of seeing myself floating in space, detached from the ground.

To remedy this issue, I started to focus more on biology and sciences of life, while continuing my current research on light. One day, I stumbled upon this book where the astrophysicist David Elbaz highlights a quite astonishing reasoning: Since the origin of the universe, matter has been assembling thanks to light, forming increasingly complex objects, stars, galaxies, thereby generating more and more light. It turns out that what we observe as one of the most complex and therefore brightest forms that the universe has generated is life itself.

A human being would emit 200,000 times more light particles than the sun, in the infrared field, proportionally to their mass. This idea deeply moved me. We, the living, were ourselves tiny suns. These stars that I desperately gazed at in the distance were ultimately already by my side. I decided to observe this light by myself, using a thermal camera.

Originally, I wanted to observe plants, whose photosynthesis also emits thermal radiations in the infrared field. With my camera, I went to gardens before sunrise and at dusk. One day, a bee entered the camera's field, and what I saw on my screen strangely looked like a star in a cloud of gas and dust. This journey gave birth to a series of photos printed using the cyanotype technique, in which one can distinguish a multitude of light points spread out in space like the constellations of a starry sky. These sources of light are, however, much closer to us, on Earth. They are the thermal signature of bees. The heat they emit radiates in infrared light and is then captured by my thermal camera.

I sought to get closer to the living, and all I had to do was to follow light, but this time, the terrestrial light.



Terrestrial Light by Cyrielle Gulacsy, Polyptych, Cyanotype Print on Paper, 2024

ROBIN:

Are you keeping an eye on any future exploration missions?

CYRIELLE GULACSY:

I am following the Euclid mission with great interest, and anything related to dark matter and dark energy particularly interests me. The upcoming discoveries and also the absence of discoveries on this subject could completely challenge the physics we use, relativity, and the standard model. I think this is a period that will be significant for the history of science. It's still amazing to think that 95% of what makes our universe is still beyond our grasp; in fact, the same can be said of the ocean as well.

ROBIN:

How have you grown as an artist in the last 7 years?

CYRIELLE GULACSY:

As an artist, I feel like you are constantly questioning and challenging your practice. My work has been in constant evolution and I don't think it will ever stop. What has changed is that I have gained confidence. It's not about being satisfied or not, but rather knowing, with more certainty, that I am doing what I love and that is a sufficient reason to keep going. I have also started exhibiting in other countries, which is also encouraging, but as this is a variable factor, I try to focus on how my work is growing and how to remain true to myself.

ROBIN:

What's next for you?

CYRIELLE GULACSY:

First of all, to land. I want and need to come back down to earth, and this started with the idea of integration of life into my work with this new series on the light of bees that I mentioned earlier.

I also want to change the medium of painting and switch from acrylic to oil paint. This will probably completely change the outcome of my works; it will no longer be about matter and accumulation but more about transparencies and overlays. It's a challenging perspective for me to make both my painting and its concept evolve. Up to this present moment, I had confined myself to the corpuscular aspect of light, photons as particles, represented with colored spots. But this representation is reductionist because photons are indeed neither waves nor particles; these words are actually quite obsolete to describe what light really is. Perhaps the best way to describe light would be to consider it as a density of energy, which is neither localized nor delimited.

Thus, oil can be stimulating because with a much longer drying time, I will be able to work my brushstrokes with a more blurry aspect, as if each point of color is connected with the others around it. Lastly, I want to think of my next work more as sensory experiences.

These upcoming works will be the subject of an exhibition in Europe in 2025.



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