

# BOLINAS MUSEUM

NOVEMBER 2020 NEWS & EVENTS : Updated

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



Johanna Baruch, *Symphonia*, 2019, Oil and alkyd on aluminum panel, 48 x 48, inches, courtesy of the artist

# JOHANNA BARUCH



Inspired by photographs taken by the Hubble Space Telescope, Johanna Baruch explores realms where science and imagination intertwine. Painting directly on aluminum, Johanna creates an incredible sense of depth by applying layer upon layer of translucent oil glazes to the surface; building up areas of the deepest darks or glowing with a sense

of light, infusing the painting with luminosity and a sense of boundless space.

Raised in New York City, Johanna studied at the Art Students League, and after moving to California, at the Academy of Art in San Francisco and SF State University. She studied Plein Air painting in France, and took workshops in the Old Masters Techniques. Her art is in galleries and museums around the nation and in private and corporate collections. Her family divides their time between San Francisco and Inverness.

## Is there a particular work of art that is an inspiration to you? If so, what?

*There is a period in art history that influences me. It is the European Renaissance, a time of great exploration, internally and externally, psychologically and scientifically. In art, there was a birth of expression, exploring humanity, a reconnection with mythology, nature and spirit. It also saw the invention of oil paint, whose properties and effects are essential to my own art practice. Studying the Old Masters, I work slowly, building up layers of translucent glazing, which allows for jewel tones to glow, illuminating lights and deepening darks.*



Giovanni di Paolo, *Paradiso*, ca 1445, Metropolitan Museum of Art

## What do you turn to for inspiration?

*I am inspired by the majesty of deep space. The images from the Hubble Space Telescope beckon to me and are the launching off point for my current series. The beauty and mystery, along with the astounding science combine inside me to create an infinitely fertile place to explore in painting. These feelings are integrated with my other passion of Jungian psychology. I believe the cosmos is a place we intuitively know, an ancestral recognition that we are connected to something so much greater.*



Star Birth in the Carina Nebula, Photograph from the Nasa/ESA Hubble Space Telescope

## How does coastal Marin or the Bay Area influence you as an artist?

*Living in Inverness is a gift. The wide open spaces, the wildness, the big sky, being connected to the earth's fertility, and feeling how we are integrated with the cycles of life. I grew up in New York City, and it was a revelation for me to discover that my own nature came alive when I moved here. It was this insight that allowed me to accept my vocation as an artist. And it is this deep affinity with nature that has put me on the path to my current cosmos paintings, inspiring me with its eros and beauty.*

1

## How is COVID-19 affecting your creative process and your art?

*I have always been an introvert, so working in solitude has been my comfort and renewal. But I've also needed contact with the world as a way to complete my work. To have it seen and experienced feels like it fulfills the ecology of the creative process. So many artists are in this position, looking to invent new ways to open meaningful connections with others.*



Johanna Baruch, *Shekinah*, 2019, Oil and alkyd on aluminum panel, 46 x 46 inches, courtesy of the artist