

A.I.R.

Anywhere Out of the World New Paintings, 2017-2020 Susan Bee

September 12 - October 11, 2020

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to present *Anywhere Out of the World*, an exhibition of new paintings by Susan Bee from 2017 to the present. Bee's mythological paintings use archetypes as iconic flashpoints for contemporary social and personal struggles. Women appear as monsters and romantic heroines, angels ascend a ladder to a place beyond the picture frame, crowds attend a hallucinogenic rally for voting rights. The fantastical and historical are put in direct dialogue with the visionary art of the expressionist sublime.



Susan Bee, *Demonology*, 2018. Oil on linen. 30 x 24 inches.

The paintings in this show—whether art historical or fictive in subject matter—examine the place of the artist in relation to a larger context. *Anywhere Out of the World*, 2019, re-interprets a 1914 self-portrait by Chagall, which, in turn, was inspired by a line by Baudelaire—*N'importe où hors du monde*. For Bee, the painting speaks to the artist's sense of entrapment within the fragmentation and alienation of our current moment, with only a giant paintbrush as a tool of defense. Emerging from a similarly art-historical lineage, *Demonology*, 2018, is based on a lithograph by James Ensor but could also be read as a self-portrait, reconfigured to include a female figure and to provoke a feminist reading of the image.

Other paintings illustrate the dystopian dreamscapes and heroic journeys of the present. In *Under Water*, 2019, a shark and sailboat are tossed by a rising seascape while affective abstractions and huddled female figures look on, confronting the ecological disasters that characterize our era. *Votes for Women*, 2018, painted in honor of the centennial anniversary of women's suffrage in 1918, both commemorates this momentous movement while also suggesting the long and uncertain road ahead for equal rights for women.

Expressionist and idyllic elements explode, with a riot of pop imagery, linear gestures, and layers of paint. This syncretic blend of the remembered and remade turns historical monumentality on its head. These works are homages, but also confrontations.

In conjunction with the exhibition, A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to host *Tangled Tango*, which will feature Bee in conversation with essayist and novelist Siri Hustvedt. Date to be announced.

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Susan Bee has been a member of A.I.R. Gallery since 1996. This is her ninth solo show at the gallery. She has had solo shows at Southfirst Gallery, Lisa Cooley Gallery, Accola Griefen Gallery, University of Pennsylvania, Odetta, Belmont University, Kenyon College, Columbia University, William Paterson College, the New York Public Library, Pratt Institute Library, Virginia Lust Gallery, and her work has been included in numerous group shows.

Bee has published sixteen artist's books. She has collaborated with poets Susan Howe, Charles Bernstein, Johanna Drucker, Rachel Levitsky, and Jerome Rothenberg. Bee is the coeditor of *M/E/A/N/I/N/G: An Anthology of Artist's Writings, Theory, and Criticism*, Duke, 2000, and the coeditor of *M/E/A/N/I/N/G Online*. Her artist's book archive and the *M/E/A/N/I/N/G* archive are at the Beinecke Library, Yale University. Bee's paintings are on over 50 book covers and her artworks, interviews, and writings have been included in many publications.

Bee has been reviewed in *Art in America*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *ArtNews*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Artcritical*, *ArtSlant*, *The Forward*, *Huffington Post*, *Art Papers*, and *Hyperallergic*. She has given presentations at the Whitney Museum, Reina Sofia, Brooklyn Museum, MoMA PS1, College Art Association, Queens Museum, NY Public Library, Parsons, Pratt, School of Visual Arts, M.I.T., University of Pennsylvania, and in Paris, London, Amsterdam, Belgrade, Berlin, Portugal, Spain, Scotland, Sweden, Israel, Cuba, New Zealand, Korea, and China.

Bee's artwork is in many public and private collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery at Reed College, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Getty Museum, and the Victoria & Albert Museum.

She has a BA from Barnard College and a MA in Art from Hunter College. She won a Guggenheim Fellowship in Fine Arts in 2014 and has had fellowships at the MacDowell Colony, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and Yaddo. Bee has taught at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Visual Arts, and Pratt Institute.

Siri Hustvedt is the author of a book of poetry, three collections of essays, a work of non-fiction, and six novels, including the international bestsellers *What I Loved* and *The Summer Without Men*. Her novel *The Blazing World* was long-listed for the Man Booker Prize and won The Los Angeles Book Prize for fiction. In 2012 she was awarded the International Gabarron Prize for Thought and Humanities. She has a PhD in English from Columbia University and is a lecturer in psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York. Her work has been translated into over thirty languages.

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains are the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact info@airgallery.org for more information.

A.I.R. GALLERY | 155 Plymouth Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201 | airgallery.org | info@airgallery.org | (212) 2556651 | Wed - Sun 12-6pm



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