

## The Creator Has A Master Plan

October 30 – December 26, 2020

Gallery hours by appointment: Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

### “The Creator Has A Master Plan”

There was a time, when peace was on the earth,  
And joy and happiness did reign and each man knew his worth.  
In my heart how I yearn for that spirit's return  
And I cry, as time flies,  
Om, Om.

There is a place where love forever shines  
And rainbows are the shadows of a presence so divine  
And the glow of that love lights the heavens above  
And it's free, can't you see, come with me,

The creator has a master plan,  
Peace and happiness for every man  
The creator has a working plan,  
Peace and happiness for every man  
The creator makes but one demand,  
Happiness through all the land

— ©Pharoah Sanders / Leon Thomas (1969)

Diane Rosenstein Gallery is pleased to announce *The Creator Has A Master Plan* — a thematic installation inspired by Pharaoh Sanders' epic spiritual jazz recording from his album “Karma” recorded in 1969. Our group exhibition includes sixteen artists who engage the mystical energy and power of the natural and often supernatural world.

The phrase — “The Creator Has A Master Plan” — is drawn along the bottom edge of **Sean McGaughey's** vibrant painting *Pharoah Sanders: Karma* (2020) which greets visitors as they enter the gallery.

McGaughey's portrait presents the jazz saxophonist in full motion, with bird feathers embedded into the fluorescent palette. McGaughey (USA, b. 1974) also shows his portrait of Sun Ra, and his *Healing Plants*, a series of works on paper. **Farrah Karapetian** (USA, b. 1978) will show unique chromogenic photograms of musical instruments from her *Stagecraft* series (2014-15). Having recognized that her process consistently dealt with performativity (but always in the dark), Karapetian began to observe the trappings of actual stagecraft. Using multiple light sources, she created images of musical instruments: a saxophone — *You Don't Know (Shortly)* (2014) — and a cubist-inspired double image of an electric guitar in red and blue, *Soundscape 36* (2015).

Inspired by icebergs as monumental sculpture, ceramicist **Jay Kvapil** (USA, b. 1951) will present his *Floe* series, a suite of glazed clay vessels that honor the idea of constantly changing glacial forms, luminescent with a blue-white glaze. **Liza Ryan**'s (USA, b. 1965) painted photographs of icebergs from her *Real, Unreal* series were created in Antarctica, where she was inspired by the otherworldly environs to create *Blue/Black* (2015), *Glass* (2017), and *Light Ice* (2016), the photo-based works on view here. Through a process of drawing on these prints and following parts of the land's contours with charcoal ink and graphite, her work became a collaboration with the real, unreal place. Ryan emphasizes the symbiotic relationship between the human and natural worlds. She recently began interacting with octopuses for a new body of work, and we are happy to debut *Darwin Waiting* (2020).

**Joe Ray** (USA, b. 1944) explains that he is "into outer space and inner space. I want the inner space of a human individual and the largeness of the cosmos." His *Nebula* series of intergalactic landscape paintings began in the late 1970s. Using acrylics and aerosol paint, these abstract skylscapes continue his exploration of outer fields of vision with an affinity for early 20th Century Impressionism. Ray is showing two *Nebula Paintings* (from 1993) as well as a new work created for this show. *Red Yellow Black White and Burnt Sienna* (2020) is a blue skyscape with five vinyl discs painted in the titular colors, each a metaphor for the global spectrum of racial identity.

**Brian Wills'** (USA, b. 1970) art adopts a meticulous approach that is illustrated by the painted and varnished wooden panels that are crisscrossed by spoke-like motifs of colorful threads. The colors are gradually revealed as the viewer moves around the work, creating an interplay between the subtle forces of perception and dance of color and form. His triptych *Untitled (Spectrum)* (2019), optically vibrates, defying space and fixed color. **Roland Reiss** (USA, b. 1929) will show *Universal Language* (1967) and *Mirage* (1968) — two important early resin paintings. As new materials became available to artists in the early 60s, Reiss began work with acrylics and plastics (notably Plexiglas), foams, and resin and created the breakthrough paintings exhibited here. These pivotal works are among the first sculptural resin paintings: produced in Boulder, Colorado, in synchronicity with both the Light and Space and Finish Fetish movements in Southern California.

**Charles Fine** (USA, b. 1951) is a painter and sculptor who has created a visual language to express a collective psychological state regarding humankind's interaction with (and imprint on) nature. Inspired by Constantinos Doxiadis' theories of *Ekeistics*, Fine studied illustrations of population settlements and their spatial impact on the landscape. His new painting, *Centripetal Forces* (2020), derives from his sense memory of studying these illustrations encountered decades earlier. His presentation in our exhibition includes colorful works on paper from his *Inflatables* series (2019), and a totemic bronze — *Parallel History I* (2014) — that depicts the circular rhythms of the cycle of life. **David Hicks** (USA, b. 1977) is an artist based in Visalia, in the Central San Joaquin Valley of California. His ceramics draw inspiration from nature and local agrarian life, and he examines organic forms common to the American landscape. Hicks is showing sculptures, including *Poly Panel* (2020), a large wall work of his glazed Terracotta objects flowering from a steel fence.

**Ilona Szwarc** (Poland, b. 1984) uses photography to play with the surfaces we construct to produce and affirm our identity. By taking apart the language of identification, she gives birth to hybrid identities and turns to fantasy to understand what it takes to shape a self. Her large photograph *She was neither in a state of innocence nor in a state of grace* (2018) is a portrait of a model whose face is covered in flower petals; but whose appearance is dually transformed as if feathered. **Vanessa Prager** (USA, b. 1984)

makes paintings that nearly obscure her subject from view under a “furry” impasto style. In *Wishful Thinking* (2020), a woman’s face emerges from the spikey and textured surface, as if conjured from distant memory. Her intimate paintings in this show include a floral still life — *Red Vase* (2020) — whose elements emerge then recede from view, as if beckoning us to sense rather than see what is hidden in the work itself. **Sarah Mikenis** (USA, b. 1986) makes sculptural paintings, manipulating canvas to suggest an interaction between body and textile. Her work brings a Baroque sensibility to geometric abstraction, a balance between the surface and the subliminal. The soft billowing pink *Dream On* (2019) considers the conflict between the surface of a composition and its form and challenges the relationship between the physical and the optical. *Dream On* is seemingly draped and gathered over a skeleton of stretcher bars, as if the painting itself is a loose garment in zero gravity.

**Daniel Gibson** (USA, b 1977) grew up in El Centro, California and other surrounding towns that border Mexicali. He was inspired as a young artist while growing up next to a sheet rock factory in Plaster City, CA where his father worked. The vast desert horizon and emptiness lent its path to imagination and wander. Gibson's practice is bred by his indispensable draw towards creation, something he views as a therapeutic and expressive flow of visions and beliefs. His painting, *July 10, 2020, Man walks into desert* (2020), is a blue, black, and yellow figurative portrait of a migrant sprawled under the desert sun, one hand thrust against a seemingly closed door, the other pressed against the dry, unwelcoming earth. His face is twisted in agony and the composition recalls José Clemente Orozco’s 1939 mural, *Man of Fire*. “Art is Knowledge at the service of emotion,” wrote Orozco, and Daniel Gibson’s expressive paintings in this exhibition connect man to his emotional and spiritual environment.

**Gail Stoicheff** (USA, b. 1976) is a painter whose work always begins with a character from Hellenic mythology, usually female. The paintings on view are rooted in mythological figures: Asterion (the Minotaur), the goddess Athena, and Pasithea, one of the three graces, who is the personification of hallucination and altered states. Stoicheff explores the mysterious, psychological, and symbolic presentations of myth; those that celebrates the Dionysian qualities, typically mistrusted and maligned, ascribed to women throughout history and that still permeate current ideology. **Matthew Sweesy** (USA, b. 1974) is a Los Angeles-based painter who is influenced by literature such as Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, the Romantic poets and Fernando Pessoa’s inventive maze of heteronyms. His drawings and paintings battle for new perspectives and sensory experiences which take place along boundaries of nature and ideas of self. The stories of transformation in these works, especially when a character’s consciousness is transferred to that of a tree, a bird, a cloud or other animal, serve as a starting place for the artist to find new spaces of thought away from habitual notions of identity. His *Supper Time* (2020) and *A Near Afternoon Assemblage* (2020) are two recent works on paper that balance the bold color of oil pastels with dream-state sensibilities. **Birdie Hall** (USA, b. 1994) is an artist based in Montana and New York. She is finishing her MFA in printmaking at NYU, and her paintings, etchings, drawings, and soft sculpture reimagine familiar archetypes and landscapes with a sly sense of humor, while touching on themes of spirituality, psychedelics, nature, visionary poetry, modernist literature, epistemology of science, theories of the New Age, ethnobotany, reproductive history, and the afterlife. We are pleased to debut Birdie Hall’s recent gouaches, *Nightlife in Pompeii* (2020) and *Kundalini Contradiction Cowgirls – I Kill and I Make Alive, I Wound and I Heal!* (2020) in this exhibition (which is her first major group show.) Hall’s work, which often combines visual and textual elements, is born of an interest in a return to bodily experience (with “that dark involvement with blood and birth and death” to quote Joan Didion) amid the alienation of modernity and technology.

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