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Enter The Universe

Matthew Blong

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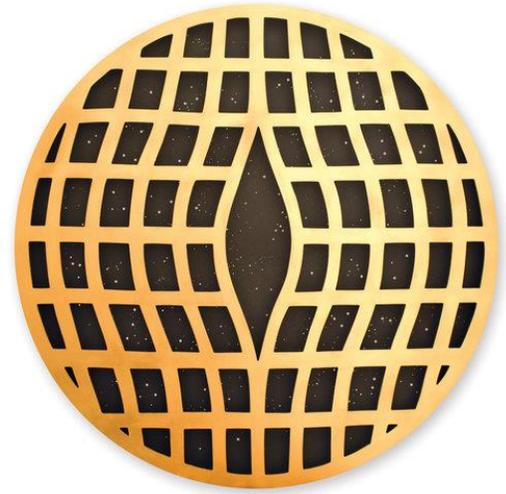
Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART

October 16 — October 22, 2018

Sotheby's Institute of Art, New York

Opening Reception: Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 6 – 8 pm

Curated by Matthew Blong, candidate, M.A., Contemporary Art



Sotheby's Institute of Art is pleased to present ***Enter the Universe***, a monographic exhibition of recent work by New York City-based visual artist and poet Maria Dimanshtein, curated by Matthew Blong, candidate, Master of Arts in Contemporary Art, class of 2019. The exhibit will be held at the New York campus of Sotheby's Institute of Art on the sixth floor of 570 Lexington Avenue. The exhibition is free and open to the public, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm, and requires preliminary registration.

Expressed within the framework of two major conceptual methods—the grid and language—***Enter the Universe*** features excerpts of the artist's own poetry, inscribed with white ink onto a series of delicately crafted black square drawings, which confront the viewer as potent objects that speak in an idiosyncratic and intimate voice. Complementing these on the gallery wall are several large three-dimensional gold-over-black wooden wall pieces from the artist's Space Pussy series, which evoke mystery, escape and sexuality.

An artificial form that promotes order, predictability and routine, the grid is a beautiful and balanced structure that provides the basis for innumerable modern-day visual schemes from window panes to city blocks to pixels on computer screens. Reluctant to accept the ambiguity of what we do not understand, we create and inhabit these grids to comfort and protect us from the anxiety and the uncertainty of the irrational and unknown.

Language is both a gift and a tool that amounts to art's most privileged form of creative expression. Although neither manmade nor entirely rational, our ability and desire to communicate with words and phrases are innate and unique to all of us. Poets and artists alike fashion worlds out of it as they strive to make sense of the universe's complex interplay of what reason can grasp and what the mind and heart can only wonder at.

So what if, when looking up at the stars in the night sky as poets and artists have done for ages, we could imagine an opening in the grid, a portal that beckons us towards mystery, away from finite possibility and into an infinite feeling of boundless space? Word and image, thought and feeling possess us, leading us out of the banality of the everyday into the ecstasy of transcendence: an invitation to ***Enter the Universe***.

MARIA DIMANSHTEIN (b. 1981, Riga, Latvia) skillfully blends her passions for language and painting in her unique practice as a Brooklyn-based poet and visual artist. Her work has been shown in exhibitions nationwide, including at Arcilesi | Homberg Fine Arts in New York, Local Project in Queens, Trestle Gallery and Gallery 440 in Brooklyn, and Woman Made Gallery in Chicago, among others. She has participated in artist residency programs such as Studioworks in Eastport, Maine, as well as abroad. She holds a BFA in graphic design from the University of Illinois at Chicago (2004) and an MFA in painting from Northern Illinois University (2013).

For images and more information please contact: matthew.blong@sia.edu

RSVP is mandatory. Please bring photo identification to gain entry to the building. **#entertheuniverse2018**