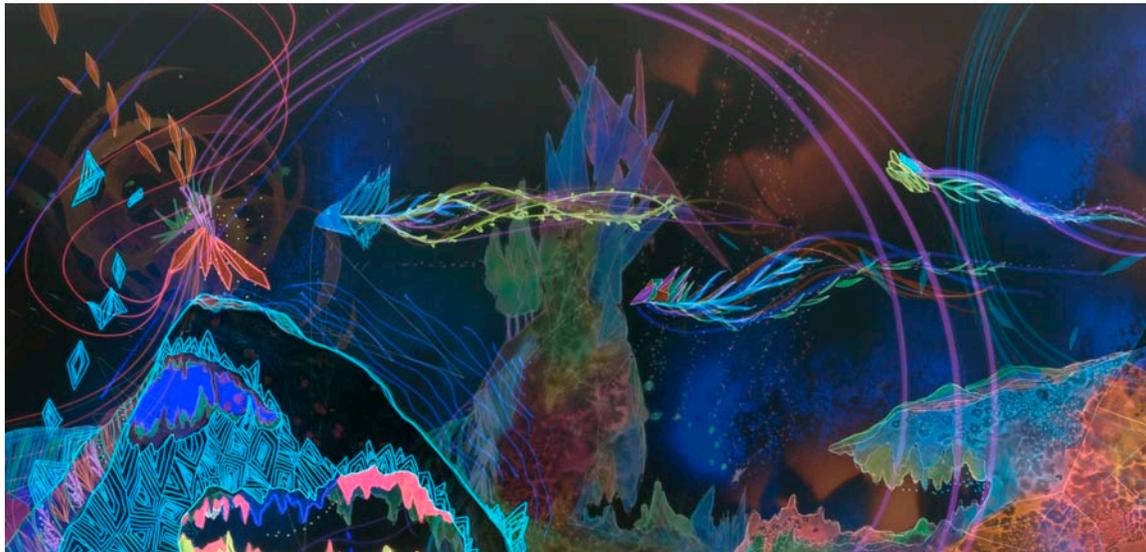


Press Release

Christine Nguyen, Powers of the Cosmic Dusty Seas

Exhibition Dates: January 14 through February 25, 2011

Opening Reception: Friday, January 14 from 6 until 9pm



The Crisp-Ellert Art Museum is pleased to present *Powers of the Cosmic Dusty Seas*, works by Los Angeles-based artist Christine Nguyen. The artist works in a variety of media, and the exhibition will include smaller photo-based works as well as a large, photographic wall mural and an installation of sculptural objects, both created specifically for this exhibition.

Nguyen created the wall mural for the Crisp-Ellert's west gallery using a process she has been perfecting over the past 10 years. She begins by drawing on sheets of transparent mylar with pencils, color pencils, acrylic ink, watercolor, markers, spray paint and salt, and sandwiches the sheets into one. In addition to the aforementioned materials, she also incorporates other objects between the layers such as seaweed, crystals, and seedpods. From there she makes a color negative of the drawing which in turn is exposed on larger sheets of photo paper. These "photographs" are installed in a grid pattern becoming the wall mural – a large-scale reconstruction of her original drawing. Nguyen's process demonstrates a playful attitude toward making work and a never-ending curiosity in exploring how to push a medium beyond its traditional uses.

The artist's fondness for experimentation informs not only her process, but the subject matter as well. Nguyen has long been captivated by the sciences, claiming to have always wanted to be an astronomer, chemist, and marine biologist, et al. These daydreams have given birth to the fantastical worlds the viewer gazes upon in her murals and smaller photo-based works and drawings. In these, underwater worlds intermingle with day-glow mountain landscapes: ghostly islands with undiscovered flora and fauna, stalactites and stalagmites, and unknown organisms float through space amidst other celestial bodies.

This science-experiment-cum-artistic-practice is furthered by her long-time interest in making cyanotypes, as well as explorations into growing salt crystals on objects gathered in her native



Los Angeles. In addition to the wall mural, the exhibition will include several cyanotypes, or “sun prints,” that Nguyen makes by leaving paper coated with photographic emulsion in the sun. Anything that she layers on the paper, leaves, salt crystals and flowers are captured in the image. These same materials become sculptural pieces in their own right, as a group of crystallized objects that will be included in the installation. The piece is comprised of foliage and other detritus foraged from in and around St. Augustine by the students in Flagler College’s Art Department that has been subject to Nguyen’s experimentation with growing salt crystals with borax.



Christine Nguyen received her BFA from California State University Long Beach and her MFA from University of California at Irvine. Over the past 10 years she has exhibited widely, including solo exhibitions at the Huntington Beach Art Center in Huntington Beach, California and the Hammer Museum at UCLA in Los Angeles. Her work has also been included in exhibitions in New York, Germany, Hong Kong, and Vietnam among others.

The exhibition will be on view from January 14 through February 25, 2011. Please join us for an opening reception on Friday, January 14 from 6 until 9pm. For further information about the exhibition, please contact Julie Dickover at 904-826-8530 or jdickover@flagler.edu.

The museum is located at 48 Sevilla Street at Flagler College and open Monday through Friday, 10am to 4pm, while classes are in session.

