



Energy Fields

CHRIS BATHGATE
GARY S. MEDOVICH
FRITZ WAGNER



Sarah Tanguy, Guest Curator
May 6, 2010 – November 5, 2010
Reception May 6, 2010
5:30 – 7:30 pm
Gallery Talk & Presentations 6:30 pm

The American Center for Physics
One Physics Ellipse
College Park, MD 20740
For viewing information,
call Eva Adams at 301.209.3125

ABOVE TOP: Gary S. Medovich. (detail) *Aurascape 1*, 2010, archival inkjet on canvas, 40 x 96"; courtesy of the artist.
ABOVE: Fritz Wagner. *Poppy Field*, 1996, oil on canvas, 31.5 x 47.24"; courtesy of the artist.
COVER: Chris Bathgate. *Sp683343447521*, 2009, aluminum, bronze, and stainless steel, 4.5 x 6 x 4.5"; courtesy of the artist.

DIRECTIONS
To reach ACP from the Capital Beltway: Take Exit #23-MD 201 southbound (Kenilworth Ave.); follow MD 201 for about 3 miles; turn right onto River Road at light; follow signs on River Road to ACP and Physics Ellipse; will see building on left.
To reach ACP from D.C.: Follow Rhode Island Avenue northbound; turn right onto MD 410 (East-West Highway); turn left onto MD 201 (Kenilworth Ave.); turn left onto River Road at 2nd light; follow signs on River Road to ACP and Physics Ellipse; will see building on left.
Metro: College Park - U. of Md stop on the Green Line.



THE AMERICAN CENTER FOR PHYSICS
One Physics Ellipse
College Park, Maryland 20740



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“In the history of physics, every time we've looked beyond the scales and energies we were familiar with, we've found things that we wouldn't have thought were there.” —Lisa Randall, PhD, Harvard University

What drives the artistic search of Chris Bathgate, Gary S. Medovich and Fritz Wagner is the need to visualize the essential forces and dynamics, both known and unknown, which drive the universe. Each comes up with a strikingly different interpretation of the world, guided by an insatiable curiosity, careful observation and ongoing experimentation.



Gary S. Medovich, *Brane 1*, 2010, archival inkjet on canvas, 45 x 60"; courtesy of the artist.

In Gary S. Medovich's abstractions, we experience the rush of traveling to seemingly impossible spaces that transcend normal capacities. To create his atmospheric and illusionistic topographies, he adapts many aspects of photography, including depth of field and focus, and finalizes the color and shapes of his images on a computer. Inspired by recent breakthroughs in theoretical physics, he trolls his mind's eye for hidden dimensions, giving form to such phenomena as dark matter, branes and wormholes. In *Wormholes*, interpenetrating fields of varying densities appear to pass through or around a sphere on a rectangle while in *Brane 1*, the central object is a cube shown in diagonal perspective. Of related interest is incorporating alternative modes of understanding. The panels, entitled *Aurascape 1* and *Aurascape 2*, depict the warping that an illuminated sphere on a two-dimensional plane might undergo as it is affected by gravity, and at the same time,



Chris Bathgate, *NT793323462242642*, 2009, aluminum, copper, brass, and stainless steel, 4.5 x 4.5 x 21"; courtesy of the artist. convey the luminous fields of radiation surrounding a person or object, posited by parapsychology and many forms of spiritual practice.

By contrast, Chris Bathgate constructs intricate machined sculptures out of aluminum, brass, bronze, copper, and stainless steel that draw on modern manufacturing machine design. Shiny and hard-edged, they suggest extraterrestrial entities with hidden powers. Their serial titles cleverly thwart a narrative projection while acknowledging the manufacturing process. Some like *CN451713302951882543* assume anthropomorphic appendages. Others, including *Sp683343447521*, anticipate movement through cylindrical helix shapes. Still others evoke weapons such as *NT793323462242642* with its rounded spikes and pointed terminals. Bathgate makes many of his own machine tools in his studio/workshop, often using scrap materials like the copper cores from a linear accelerator found in cancer radiation therapy. More recently, he has added computer-operated machines to achieve the required precision in cuts and finish. This passion to understand underlying principles of science, mechanics and math leads him to set up evermore complex experiments within tight parameters. It is the resulting technical solutions and practical applications that guide his aesthetic development.

Fritz Wagner, an internationally recognized experimental physicist, has been making art for as long as he can remember. Drawn to nature's multi-faceted

beauty as well as her inherent laws and symmetries, he treats each white canvas as a fresh inquiry and touchstone for his emotive response. Often the immediate subject of his landscapes is seasonal change. In *Dancing Trees in Winter*, dark trunks emerge from a deep bed of snow against a pale blue sky. By contrast in *Poppy Field*, a meadow, radiant with the summer sun, recedes rapidly into the distance to form a pointillist composition of red, yellow and green. A comparison between *Gusty Sea* and *Silent Ocean* counterpoints the effects of a raging storm, with white caps and a darkened sky in the former, and its aftermath, where in the latter, a calm ocean becomes a shimmering, reflective surface and the horizon, a barely perceptible sliver. Here as elsewhere, Wagner's acute powers of observation reveal an unfolding display of diversity in transition.

Energy Fields rises to the challenge set forth by Lisa Randall, "The fact that you can't picture it doesn't mean you can't imagine it." All three artists make use of geometry to express visual complexities and hidden phenomena. Through their artworks, we come to realize that we are part of a vast energy network of a multi-connected space, and as our imaginative powers unleash, we intuit that form cannot be created or destroyed but instead, can change manifestation.



Fritz Wagner, *Gusty Sea*, 2008, oil on canvas, 47.24 x 55.12"; courtesy of the artist.