

## *Invisible Attraction*

**Undercroft Gallery, Church of the Heavenly Rest, NYC**

**on view from September 4 through October 23**

**reception: TUE September 13, 6-8pm**

Many casual art viewers gravitate towards art that shares at least a passing resemblance to photographic reality. Images of things, people, landscapes are pictures of things *seen*. But what of all the undeniably real yet unseen things in this world? The artists in the exhibition share a focus on abstraction and the challenge of making work that is informed by invisible phenomena: notions of memory and consciousness or the webs of relationships among things and individuals. While many of them also look to the natural world or human-made built environments and systems for inspiration, it is a desire to tap into the experiential quality of being present in a moment of discovery that drives these artists to create.

Emotion can be hard to pin down so it is often played down when discussing or writing about art. Rather than any academic thesis though, it is the fundamental animating force behind this art and these artists. The setting and influence of sacred space helps provide an opportunity to consider their works as conduits through which a dialogue concerning belief and trust—a sort of reciprocal generosity between artist and viewer—can be made. With over forty works by twenty five artists whose practice centers on abstraction, this exhibition makes a case for how artists attempt to communicate seemingly inexpressible ideas through physical form and ultimately visualize the invisible.

Artists in the exhibition: Nils Folke Anderson, Inna Babaeva, James Bills, Jimbo Blachly, Rick Briggs, Vince Contarino, Linda Ganjian, Sue Havens, Elana Herzog, Erick Johnson, Todd Knopke, Elisa Lendvay, Abraham McNally, Ryan Sarah Murphy, Keiko Narahashi, Erin O'Brien, Jim Osman, Gary Petersen, Taney Roniger, Christopher Saunders, Karen Schifano, Marjorie Van Cura, Sarah Walker, Rachael Wren, Daniel Zeller.

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All of these artists have participated in the Artist Lecture Series, a project conceived in 2011 as part curatorial showcase, part community building exercise, and part show-and-tell by New York City based artists Michael Lee, Christopher Schade and Zoe Pettijohn Schade. On a near-monthly basis two related artists were asked to share their work through in-person digital slide shows. Over a decade and 130 artists later, the project was put on indefinite hiatus by COVID just prior to its March 2020 offering. At present the trio is attempting a series re-boot as the world slowly attempts to recover from the pandemic and repair so much more.

Michael Lee is an artist based in New York City. He holds a BFA from the University of Texas, Austin and an MFA from Hunter College (CUNY), New York City. Lee has shown his work nationally and internationally, most recently in the exhibition *Confluence: Tradition in Contemporary Art*, which traveled to the Luo Zhongli Museum in Chongqing China and will continue on to the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art Museum at the University of Dundee, Scotland later this year. In 2021 Lee began a new project, *Hudson Presents: Conversations with Contemporary Artists*, a one-on-one interview series that is live-streamed by Hudson County Community College. He is an adjunct professor of art at Hudson and Montclair State University (both in New Jersey).