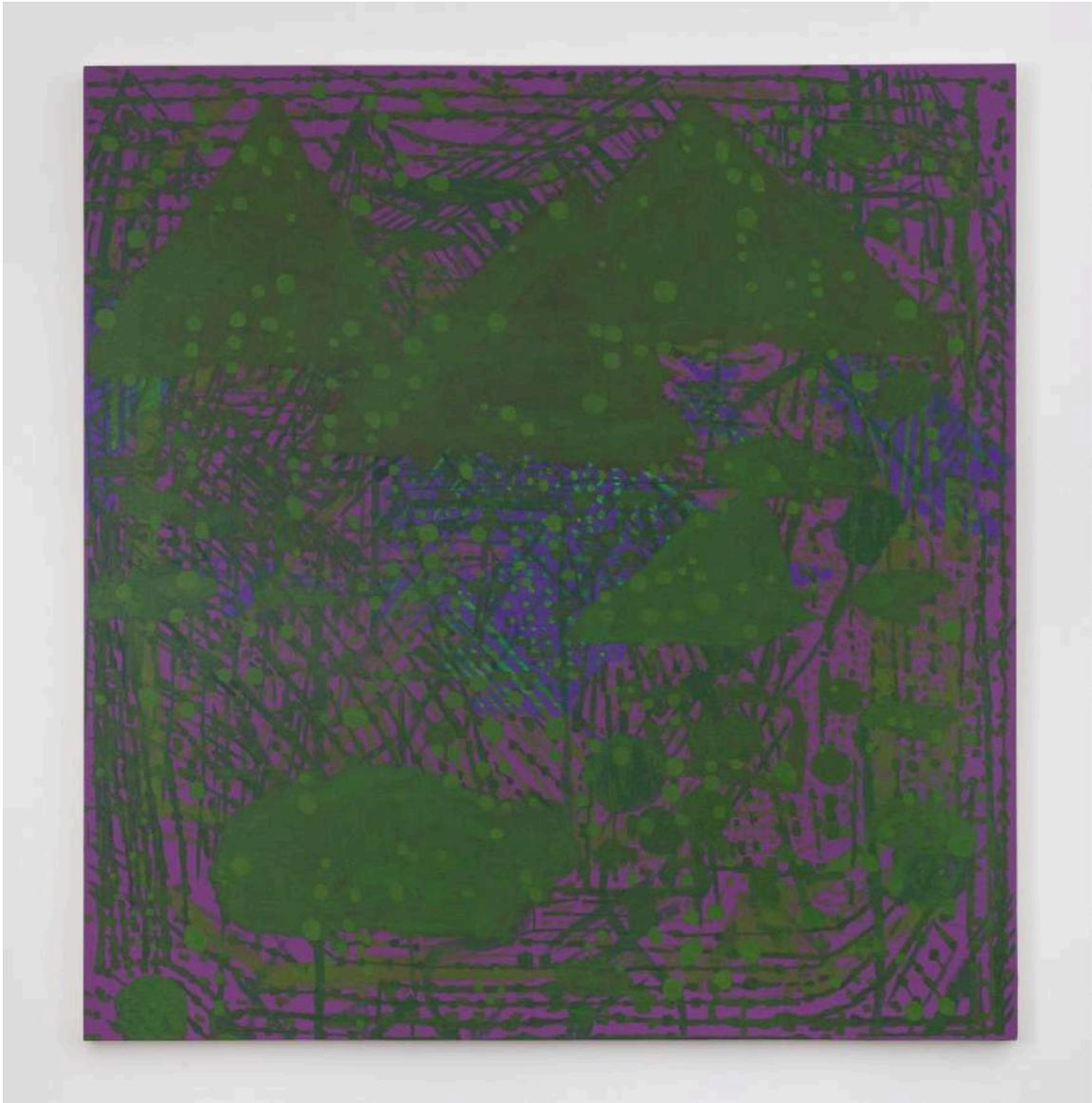


EJ Hauser is The Forge and The Crucible

Wells Chandler March 5, 2024



EJ Hauser, "Cosmic Collision" (2023-2024) acrylic on canvas 63 x 60 inches

EJ Hauser is a smith fortified in the alchemist's flask. The nomadic condition of the smith and their quest for raw material for work, dislocates, allowing for encounters with myths, rites and metallurgic mysteries. This ensemble allows for a vast new mental world to access the anthropocosmic.

Mineral substances from the earth that compose paint are sacred. Painting as metallurgy is not dissimilar to gardening. Like seeds, ores grow in the belly of the earth. It is from the molten core that the creation of the world starts. Every construction or fabrication must operate from their center. The ritual production of fire reproduces birth. The grow room knows that the smith is a miner unfolding an ancient subterranean embryology. Ecosystems expand from their borders where novelty reigns supreme. What are the lambic conditions necessary for life? What kinds of inner looking is required for growth? What do the edges of our traces feel like as we expand?



EJ Hauser "Cherry Haze" 2023-2024 acrylic on canvas 20 x 16 inches

It snowed today. Atmospheric conditions cultivate an auspicious set and setting for a pilgrimage to the gallery. In the grotto shrine at Derek Eller, I find myself standing in the center of the range; rainbow mountains majesty as far as the eye can see. Morse code ticks across the glyphic compositions like staccato notes of icaros sung in polysymphonic union. The hills are alive.

Mountains are ancient. They connect us to the infinite continuum of time. They are cairns of the temporal. As natural borders they delineate boundaries and are destinations for the seeker. Van Gogh's queer hay bales swaddled in pulsating aurora borealis light, crystalline talismans protect and heal, here we are safe and surrounded by ancestors. In *Golden Ticket*, a shield opens to the heavens. Up is the way out.



EJ Hauser "Golden Ticket" 2023-2024 acrylic on canvas 70 x 55 inches

Looking below is aided from above. Charged with the celestial, aeroliths fall to earth. Cross culturally, meteorites were worshiped and associated with the divine. Prior to smelting ferrous ores, gazing to the cosmos for tools was the standard. Meteoric iron is suggested in the Sumerian word AN.BAR, the oldest word to designate iron is composed of the pictographs *sky* and *fire*. *Celestial metal* and *star metal* are common translations.



Installation view of *EJ Hauser: Grow Room* at Derek Eller Gallery, New York (courtesy of Derek Eller Gallery, photo Adam Reich)

The longer one quests, the softer the edges of once nameable things become. Outdated maps fail us. Hazy elemental forces float suspended in veils. Finding ourselves in the quiet places, the ability to point concretely to what was once absolute shifts. Geography can be used to map change. That is why we sojourn to far off places. Retracing breadcrumb trails to our origins inevitably leads us to discovery.

Edges are places where opposites meet. External landscapes signify internal expansive realities. The simultaneity of the latin phrase the *coincidentia oppositorum*, translates as the union of opposites. It is in this deeply queer and mystical structure that Hauser forges a vision for our place in the cosmos.



EJ Hauser Untitled (Grow Room Series #4, #5, & #6) 2023 permanent marker on paper 11 x 8.5 inches

*EJ Hauser: Grow Room continues at Derek Eller Gallery (300 Broome Street New York, NY 10002) through March 9. Be sure to pick up their book published on the occasion of their Fall 2023 exhibition, *Song of Summer*, at Haverkampff Leistenschneider in Berlin.*