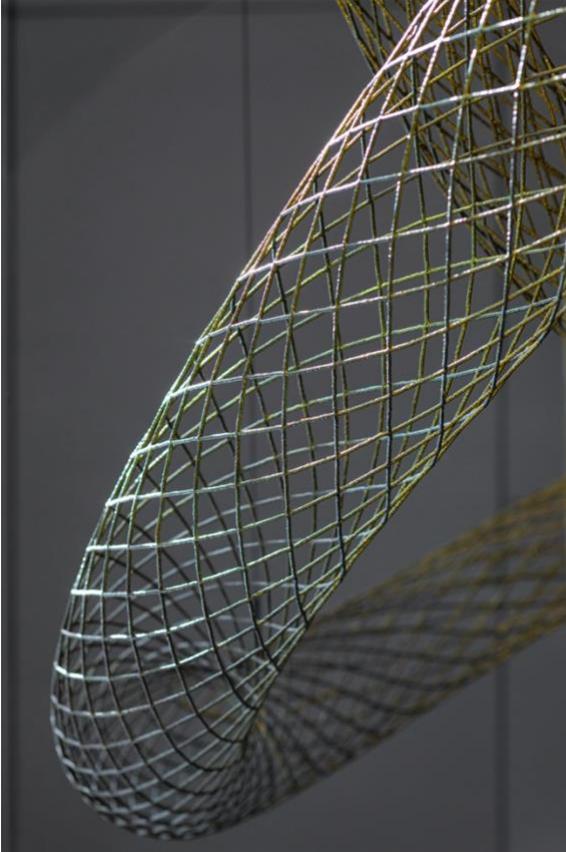


DEREK ELLER GALLERY



ALYSON SHOTZ

Alloys of Moonlight

February 9 – March 18, 2023

**Opening Reception: Thursday, February 9,
6–8pm**

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present *Alloys of Moonlight*, an exhibition of recent sculpture by Alyson Shotz.

Featuring a monumental polychromatic steel sculpture and luminescent three-dimensional aluminum wall works, *Alloys of Moonlight* delves further into questions that Shotz has been exploring throughout her nearly 30-year career: how do we grasp the mysterious forces that shape the universe, and how do we reconcile observable reality with the noumenal reality of environmental phenomena? This new body of work explores the dialectic between these axes, as Shotz refines a sculptural language to visualize the unseen and the sublime forces that frame the natural world. The works in *Alloys of Moonlight* act as instruments by which to measure and reflect the ineffable forces of nature.

In the center of the gallery is *Aphelion*, a looped steel sculpture that turns and twists in ways that seem to defy nature, leading the eye in an endless serpentine path around its undulating curves. The sculpture transforms as the viewer moves around the piece, its colors shifting from gold to green to blue. Changes in light and time of day are registered by the changing colors of *Aphelion*'s surface, a phantom quality mirrored in the spatial nature of the work. Made of the least amount of material to hold its shape, *Aphelion* constitutes a delicate synthesis between positive and negative space. It is as much composed of a mesh-like steel as the air that flows through it. The form, which is born of the artist's longstanding interest in knots and non-orientable surfaces like the Mobius Strip, is similarly fugitive and beguiling. Comparable entangled structures serve a fundamental role in the quantum-mechanical foundations of nature itself, and knot-like forms likewise have appeared as cultural signifiers throughout art history in Roman, Byzantine, Chinese, African and Islamic art.

The walls of the gallery feature a series of crumpled aluminum sheets, painted in a hazy spectrum of light-reflective mineral colors. Rather than the two-dimensional geometry of a flat plane, these pieces are spatial objects that delineate the magnitude of a prior impact. Named *Alloys of Moonlight* after the title of the show, each piece has a particular form, a shape that quantifies the exact nature of an individual collision. Conversely, the folding also embeds the aluminum sheets with a degree of potential energy and the suggestion of an incomplete natural process: the unfurling of a leaf or the folding of a wing. As representations or diagrams, these works define form through a negative logic—rather than creating sculptural volume through physical material, thin walls of aluminum outline the shape of an interior void. *Alloys of Moonlight* subverts the expectation of concrete immutability, instead using space as a sculptural medium. This language of spatial ambiguity is paralleled by the striking luminescent surfaces of

the works, which are similarly variable. Like the orbits of moons around planets, each piece is in constant flux, registering changes in sunlight as well as the shifting position of the viewer.

The sculptures in this exhibition exemplify the interplay between what is visible, concrete, measurable, and a more ethereal subtext that structures the natural world. *Alloys of Moonlight* renews and deepens Shotz's exploration of the delicate and sublime space between these realities.

– Elana Kates, 2023

Alyson Shotz (b. 1964, lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) had a recent solo project at Grace Farms Foundation in CT, and was included in the 2022 exhibition *Line of Wit* at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. She has also been included in exhibitions such as *The More Things Change*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; *Art and Space*, Guggenheim Bilbao; *Contemplating the Void and The Shapes of Space*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; *Light and Landscape*, Storm King Art Center; *Living Color*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; and *Taking Space: Women Artists and the Politics of Scale*, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts Museum, Philadelphia. She has had solo exhibitions at Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH; MSU Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; Wellin Museum of Art, Hamilton College; Indianapolis Museum of Art; and Espace Louis Vuitton, Tokyo, among others. Her work is included in numerous public collections, such as the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Guggenheim Museum Bilbao; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, AR; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum; San José Museum of Art; Storm King Art Center; and Yale University Art Gallery, among others. This will be the artist's ninth solo exhibiton with the gallery.