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Gagosian to Exhibit Sculpture, Painting, and a Video Installation by Sarah Sze in Athens



Sarah Sze, *The Night Sky Is Dark Despite the Vast Number of Stars in the Universe*, 2022, oil, acrylic, archival paper, acrylic polymers, ink, diabond, and wood, 40 × 50 inches (101.6 × 127 cm) © Sarah Sze. Photo: Sarah Sze Studio

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ATHENS, August 12, 2022—Gagosian is pleased to present new and recent works by Sarah Sze. Opening on September 8, this is her first solo exhibition in Greece and her fourth exhibition with the gallery.

Following her presence in *Ruins and Fragments* at Gagosian Athens earlier this year, this exhibition introduces many additional aspects of Sze’s diverse practice, a spectrum of sculptural propositions and the latest of her oil-and-collage paintings. In employing the full potential of her processes, Sze represents the ephemeral and immaterial in different time scales and durations—from light projections programmed to imply shift and change, to sculptures made of pure paint, fired clay, or stainless steel.

Sze gleans from the physical and digital worlds to create art in two and three dimensions of great intricacy and diversity, inviting minute observation while evoking a macroscopic perspective on the infinite. Limning the borders that separate mediums and activating the space between, she reflects on the overload of virtual experience as a contemporary condition and consequently proposes how we might negotiate real experience in physical space.

Travelers by Streams and Mountains (2021), the latest of Sze’s mysterious and mesmerizing *Timekeeper* video installations, takes its title from Fan Kuan’s famous Song dynasty painting with its three-plane perspective—near, middle, and far. In Sze’s interpretation, fleeting, disembodied video images track around the room, like searchlights; a pendulum swings from a scaffold in an arc, perpetually marking time and space across a salt-covered arena ringed by process-related flotsam and jetsam, while a Foley score of micro-sounds underscores the live quality of this robotic kinesis.

In recent years, Sze has returned to painting, adapting her processes of sculptural accumulation to the picture plane. In these highly intricate and richly textured paintings, she fuses multiple approaches—some drawn from her active engagement with printmaking—into a dynamic whole. Sze layers oil paint and scraps of images, whether silkscreened or visibly fixed to the surface, into frenetic yet highly nuanced compositions. In freely combining photographically generated imagery and painterly mark making, these restless and errant tableaux evoke the fluidity of the digital realm while retaining the aura of the analog and handmade.

Emily Dickinson’s precociously modern poetry is a source of perpetual inspiration for Sze’s art, which embodies the moment between cohesion and dissolution. The sculptural series *Proportioned to the Groove* (2019) consists of standard raw clay blocks, sliced, glazed, and fired, then regrouped on top of torn paper fragments of the sky photographed at different times of day or night and resting on low wooden supports—a composition as elemental yet profound as Dickinson’s own poem on the nature of love from which Sze’s title is derived. “Wider than the Sky” is how the poet once described the infinite capacity of the human brain; in Sze’s sculpture from 2021, a parabolic ring of mirror-polished stainless-steel fragments cast from an original clay form via a digital scanning process recalls the language of ancient architecture and ruins. The sculpture catches and reflects light, appearing as if already disintegrated. As subtle as Dickinson’s own parsing, Sze’s barely perceptible “wishbone” sculptures (2020–)—pours of acrylic paint, dried and suspended on delicate silver chains—punctuate the exhibition.

Sarah Sze was born in 1969 in Boston and lives and works in New York. Collections include Fondation Cartier pour l’art contemporain, Paris; Tate, London; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and M+, Hong Kong. Exhibitions include *Triple Point*, United States Pavilion, 55th Biennale di Venezia (2013, traveled to Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, in 2014); *Timekeeper*, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA (2016, traveled to Copenhagen Contemporary, in 2017); *Centrifuge*, Haus der Kunst, Munich (2017–18); and *Night into Day*, Fondation Cartier pour l’art contemporain, Paris (2020–21). Sze participated in the 56th Biennale di Venezia (2015) and the ARoS Triennial, Aarhus, Denmark (2017). Recent permanent commissions include *Blueprint for a Landscape*, Second Avenue Subway, 96th Street Station, New York (2017); *Shorter than the Day*, LaGuardia Airport, New York (2020); and *Fallen Sky*, Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, NY (2021).

Sze is currently preparing a solo exhibition at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 2023.

#SarahSze

SARAH SZE

Opening reception: Thursday, September 8, 6–9pm
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22 Anapiron Polemou Street, Athens

Press

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