

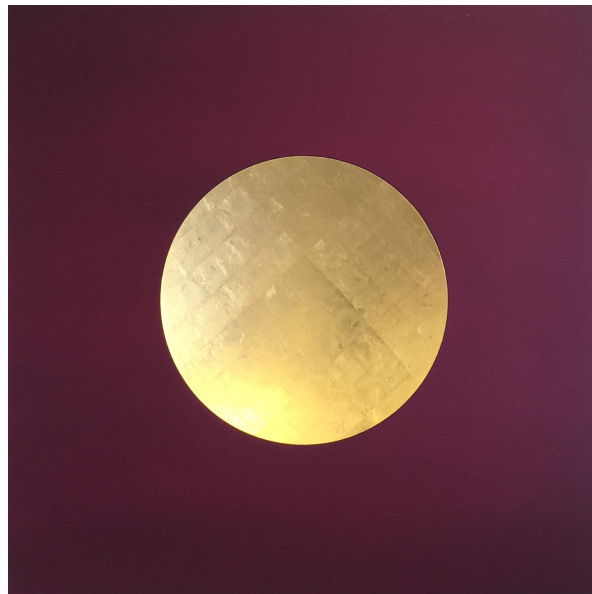
KOHN GALLERY

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LITA ALBUQUERQUE

EMBODIMENT

Opening Reception: January 9, 2016
Exhibition on view through February 20, 2016



What is that color at the Particle Horizon, at the furthest point that we can see? Between Heaven and Earth? And what is that color that embodies my being? I think of my body in relationship to the Earth's surface and of the planet in relation to the cosmos. What I am interested in starts with the surface of the earth, a horizontal surface, something flat to inscribe on. So I started by pouring pigments on the earth, and from that to a sculptural space, the earth as a sculpture moving in space. – Lita Albuquerque

Los Angeles, California – Kohn Gallery is pleased to present a new body of work by Lita Albuquerque – composed of new pigment paintings and salt installations, *Embodiment* continues her investigations into space, color, materiality and the body. For decades, Albuquerque has been working in remote locations and deserts as sites to execute artworks that

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mark time and space, and in so doing our relationship to light, matter and one another. Often working with materials as raw and essential as her subject matter, Albuquerque's work, whether on the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica, the Pyramids at Giza, or taking her graduate students to the ancient Mayan temples and sacred cenotes, elucidates an intense participatory experience.

In response to research on pigments and an obsession with the vibratory quality of color on the perceptual system and the body, Albuquerque's choice of color for the exhibition embarks upon a new horizon for the artist. Subtle variations of rose madder (taken from lake roots), soft purple vesuvianite (originally found on Mt. Vesuvius) and pigments used in centuries-old Japanese painting technique called Enogu form the main gallery's palette. Executed on layers of black and white pigment backgrounds, the paintings' top layers of colorful pigment begin to vibrate and form a tonal language. Light is at once absorbed, reflected and refracted – perhaps metaphors for light as consciousness. And if we can consider light equivalent to consciousness, than these paintings highlight our collective awareness so that perception is made possible. It is no surprise that Albuquerque's choice of pigment takes us from lake waters to volcanoes, from the roots of plants to the roots of the earth's core, materials that are at once below and above the earth's surface. A small gallery holds a singular indigo blue painting – a color that embraces its own transitory position between blue and violet – highlighting the artist's fascination with the 'in-between' space.

Further accentuating the exhibition's vibratory sense of space are three long parallel deposits of salt. Salt, a mineral coming from the sea and sediments of dry lakebeds possesses a different quality of light than those particles of pigment in the paintings. These installations are navigational, not only for the viewers but also for the light particles that have entered Albuquerque's metaphysical playground – they are bridges that possess and distribute fractal information.

About Lita Albuquerque:

Beginning in the 1970s, Lita Albuquerque (born 1946, Santa Monica) started working in remote locations and deserts as sites to execute large-scale, ephemeral sculptures composed of rocks and pigments. These installations incorporated other natural elements such as the horizon line, alignment to stars, wind and light that situated her alongside contemporaries and the Land Art and Light and Space movements, but also established her as a unique visionary. Albuquerque's continued development of these elements concurrently materialized into performance, with Albuquerque recently gathering several hundred participants to engage in what she calls, "performative sculpture" – most recently, *Spine of the Earth 2012*, for the Getty's Pacific Standard Time Performance and Public Art Festival and, *An Elongated Now*, for the Laguna Art Museum's 2014 Art and Nature festival. Albuquerque represented the United States at the Sixth International Cairo Biennale, where she was awarded the Cairo Biennale Prize. She has also been the recipient of a National Science Foundation grant for *Stellar Axis: Antarctica*, which culminated in the first and largest ephemeral artwork created on that continent; three NEA Art in

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Public Places awards; an NEA individual fellowship; a fellowship from the Civitella Ranieri Foundation; a Santa Monica Artist Fellowship for writing and performance work and MOCA's Distinguished Women in the Arts Award. Her work is held in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Getty Trust, the Whitney Museum of American Art, LACMA, and MOCA, among others. Albuquerque's exhibition, *20/20: Accelerando*, opens January 24th 2016 at the USC Fisher Museum of Art with a performance from 4-6pm and will run concurrently with *Embodiment*. *20/20: Accelerando* will continue through April 10th 2016.

About Kohn Gallery

Since its establishment in 1985 by former Flash Art editor Michael Kohn, Kohn Gallery has presented historically significant exhibitions in Los Angeles alongside exciting contemporary exhibitions, creating meaningful contexts to establish links to the greater art historical continuum. Significant exhibitions include Andy Warhol's Campbell's Soup Boxes in December 1986, which opened just weeks before the artist's untimely death; *She: Works* by Richard Prince and Wallace Berman which brought together—for the first time—two generations of leading artists from different coasts; *Bruce Conner: Work from the 1970s*, which inspired the artist's first solo retrospective in Europe at the Kunsthalle Wien and Kunsthalle Zurich (2010). Exhibitions of important New York-based artists have included new works by Christopher Wool, Richard Tuttle, Mark Tansey, Kenny Scharf, and Keith Haring. Kohn Gallery represents important West Coast artists with long careers and rich histories such as Larry Bell, Joe Goode and Lita Albuquerque, as well as the Estates of Bruce Conner, Wallace Berman and Charles Brittin. Finally, Kohn Gallery boasts an exciting roster of emerging and mid-career artists including Simmons & Burke, Ryan McGinness, Rosa Loy, Dennis Hollingsworth, Mark Ryden, Eddie Martinez, Tom LaDuke and Troika. Visit kohngallery.com for the latest information on upcoming exhibitions.

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Gallery Contact: Kohn Gallery
Samantha Glaser
samantha@kohngallery.com
(323) 461-3311

Media Contact: FITZ & CO
Taylor Maatman
taylor.maatman@fitzandco.com
(646) 589-0926

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