

Alteronce Gumby | Charles Ross

February 24 - March 30, 2024

Opening reception Saturday, February 24, 6-8p.

"I'm chasing the merest sliver of color. It's my own fault, I want to grasp the intangible. It's terrible how the light runs out, taking color with it. Color, any color, lasts a second, sometimes three or four minutes at the most."

- Claude Monet, c. 1918

parrasch heijnen is pleased to present *Alteronce Gumby | Charles Ross*, a cross-generational exhibition of new works by Bronx, NY-based painter Alteronce Gumby (b. 1985, Harrisburg, PA) and select works by seminal New Mexico-based land artist Charles Ross (b. 1937, Philadelphia, PA).

This new body of work by Alteronce Gumby was created in direct response to his recent visit to Charles Ross' monumental earthwork, *Star Axis* (projected completion 2026) located near Ross' off the grid studio in northeast New Mexico. In the summer of 2023, Gumby spent an evening alone in *Star Tunnel*, an element of the complex constructed in alignment with the Earth's axis and the North Star Polaris. As one ascends the tunnel, the framing of Polaris shifts, revealing cosmic alignments of the past, present, and future. This experience directly inspired Gumby's two-panel, mixed media painting *Starry Night* (2024). Among gradations of color and texture, spiral galaxy formations populate the work, reflecting light and shifting perspectives through glass layered and tinted with acrylic paint.

Often referencing site-specific experiences, Gumby's paintings are embedded with natural elements such as metals and gemstones originating from mineral-rich areas, including quartz mined by the artist in Mount Ida, Arkansas and asteroid particles the artist recovered from Meteor Crater in Winslow, Arizona. Gumby sources materials to convey a cosmic perspective. Channeling the geological history of these minerals, his paintings contain energy, the metaphysical aspect of color and light.

In conversation with Gumby's new paintings are four select vintage works by Charles Ross: *Tapered Column* (1992/2004), a work from his 'prism series,' and three works from his 'solar burns series' are featured in the exhibition. Building upon artworks exploring light and perception that Ross created as early as the 1960s, *Tapered Column* is an acrylic sculpture filled with optically formulated liquid. Like a telescope, the column acts as an optical device, transforming one's perception of surrounding objects and space.

The painting *Fibonacci: 54 yellow, each the time it takes sunlight to reach the Earth, 8 minutes, 19 seconds* (1987) is a series of solar burns on treated wood created using magnified sunlight. Ross' solar burns are direct indexes of the relationship between the Earth and the sun. Next to Gumby's glittering and immersive surfaces, they speak of past events and spent potentialities. Both immense and concentrated, these micro- and macro-gestures are meditations on human scale within a cosmic universe.

Alteronce Gumby graduated from Yale University's MFA program in 2016 where he was awarded the Robert Reed Memorial Scholarship, after earning a BFA from Hunter College, New York, NY. In 2022 the Allentown Art Museum (Allentown, PA) organized *Dark Matter*, Gumby's first solo museum exhibition. In 2019 Gumby was a resident at the Rauschenberg Foundation in Captiva Island, FL. In 2017 he completed a yearlong residency as the Harriet Hale Woolley scholar at the Fondation des Etats-Unis in Paris, France. Gumby was granted the AAF/Seebacher Prize for Fine Arts as well as the Dumfries House Residency, Ayrshire, Scotland in 2015. Gumby's work has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions including parrasch heijnen (Los Angeles, CA), Nicola Vassell Gallery (New York, NY), Hauser & Wirth (Southampton, NY), Lehmann Maupin (London, UK), Gladstone Gallery (New York, NY), Jean-Paul Najjar Foundation (Al Quoz, Dubai, UAE), Long Gallery (New York, NY), Bode Projects (Berlin, Germany), Charles Moffett (New York, NY), and the Fondation des Etats-Unis (Paris, France). This is Gumby's third exhibition with parrasch heijnen. Alteronce Gumby is represented by parrasch heijnen (Los Angeles, CA) and Nicola Vassell Gallery (New York, NY).

Charles Ross is a 2011 Guggenheim Fellow and recipient of a 1999 Andy Warhol Foundation Grant. Ross received a BA in mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley in 1960, and an MA in sculpture from U.C. Berkeley in 1962. His works reside in the permanent collections of numerous institutions internationally including the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, France), the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, MN), LACMA (Los Angeles, CA), the National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC), and the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY). He is included in James Crump's 2015 film *Troublemakers: The Story of Land Art* alongside other earthwork artists such as Vito Acconci, Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer, Nancy Holt, and Robert Smithson. Most recently Ross' work has been shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA); Reina Sofia Museum (Madrid, Spain); Ludwig Museum (Koblenz, Germany); Palazzo Fortuny (Venice, Italy); Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles, CA); and the National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC). Ross has created twenty-five permanent site-specific solar spectrum artworks around the world, including *Solar Spectrum*, Dwan Light Sanctuary, United World College (Montezuma, NM); *Solar Spectrum*, Harvard Business School Chapel (Boston, MA); *Spectrum Chamber*, Museum of Old and New Art (Hobart, Tasmania); *Conversations with the Sun*, Meiji University (Tokyo, Japan); and *Spectrum 8*, Smithsonian Institution, NMAI (National Museum of the American Indian) (Washington DC). Charles Ross is represented by parrasch heijnen (Los Angeles, CA) and Franklin Parrasch Gallery (New York, NY).

Charles Ross' earthwork *Star Axis* is located in the New Mexico desert. It is both an architectonic sculpture and a naked eye observatory that stands eleven stories high and one-fifth of a mile across. The decades-long approach to constructing *Star Axis* has involved gathering a variety of star alignments in different time scales, and conveying them through sculptural forms. Walking through the construct's chambers, one can view star space in relation to human scale, and how the space of the stars reaches down into the earth. Ross conceived of *Star Axis* in 1971 and began building it in 1976, after a four-year search throughout the southwest to find the perfect site — a mesa where one stands at the boundary between the earth and the sky.

Charles Ross will be contributing a commissioned sculpture titled *Spectrum 14* to the Getty Center's upcoming exhibition *Pacific Standard Time: Lumen, the Art and Science of Light*, opening September 2024 in Los Angeles, CA.

Alteronce Gumby | *Charles Ross* will be on view at parrasch heijnen, 1326 S. Boyle Avenue, Los Angeles, from February 24 – March 30, 2024. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, February 24, 6-8p. Gallery staff are available to guide you through our exhibitions virtually via Zoom upon request. For more information, please contact the gallery at +1 (323) 943-9373 or info@parraschheijnen.com.