

Trisha Baga

Contact

April 26 – July 6, 2024

Preview: April 25, 6-8pm

Société is pleased to announce *Contact*, Trisha Baga's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery. In this new body of work, Baga combines personal imagery with dazzling starscapes culled from deep space photography. Articulating an intimate connection between human existence and the celestial realm, Baga's recent paintings echo the sentiments of Carl Sagan, who famously wrote in his 1980 book *Cosmos*, "The cosmos is within us. We are made of star stuff. We are a way for the universe to know itself." Similarly, the New York-based artist contends that casting our imaginations into outer space offers myriad ways to delve into interior worlds. "I paint images from outer space because they are the shapes of the way the world works, and they are the shapes of our own consciousness," Baga explains, "Painting them brushstroke by brushstroke offers an access point to my own subconscious."

In both painting and intricate multi-media installations, Baga consistently expresses empathy towards technology, often assuming the viewpoints of objects such as camera lenses or printers, where machinic actions such as zooming, focusing, scanning, and searching intertwine with intrinsic human desires for connection and community. In these new paintings, Baga casts herself as an extension of the James Webb Space Telescope. Building upon the legacy of Impressionist explorations of light, they zoom outwards into the depths of space, a dizzying abyss now brought dramatically "closer" through advanced technology, while at the same time turning inwards towards the minutiae of their daily life. Intimate traces of beings, objects, devices, and spaces bound to earthly gravity appear throughout these works: Baga's studio, the back of their sleeping child's head, knick-knacks, and the various accoutrements used to tend to an infant. "Through hand painting these high-tech images," Baga says, "I'm behaving as yet another layer that re-enacts and interprets the information generated from that whole sublime global project, and all the personal imagery and studio reflections are just the local aberrations of my own particular lens." Baga's paintings are full of nested images, reflections, and holes that posit relations between different realms—portals to other dimensions at once profound and ordinary. Within the context of outer space, the term "contact" typically refers to communication or interaction with extraterrestrial intelligence or civilizations, to making connections with entities beyond Earth. In Baga's case, it also refers to radical intimacy: the care and closeness essential for the reproduction of our species, connections between bodies, and the support structures needed to maintain a home.

Trisha Baga (b. 1985, Venice) lives and works in New York. Baga's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan; CCC, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard College, Cambridge; Zab-ludowicz Collection, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Their immersive large-scale painting installation *BODY CLOCK*—a constellation of painting, light projections, staged objects, and sculpture—was exhibited at Art Basel Unlimited in 2021. That same year, their video installation *HOPE* illuminated the façade of Kassel's Fridericianum on the United States election day. Their work was recently included in the exhibition *HOPE* at Museion, Bolzano curated by Bart van der Heide and Leonie Radine; and they recently participated in Louisiana Museum of Modern Art's group exhibition entitled *The Irreplaceable Human* in November 2023. They have also participated in group exhibitions at ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Aarhus; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie, Ludwigshafen am Rhein; PS1, New York; Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva; European Biennial of Contemporary Art, Zurich; and Julia Stoschek Foundation at ZKM, Düsseldorf, among many other venues.

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