



Emma Webster
That Thought Might Think

March 7 – April 12, 2025
520 W 25th Street

Petzel



Petzel is pleased to present *That Thought Might Think*, an exhibition of panoramic paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Emma Webster, opening Friday, March 7, 2025. The show marks Webster's solo debut with the gallery and will be on view through April 12, 2025, at 520 West 25th Street. These new works are Webster's largest to date, and depict expansive, revelatory vistas of genesis and apocalypse. Painted amid the Los Angeles fires, her two paintings offer a front row seat into dramatic, fantastical maquettes of rupturing landscapes. Morphing light, space, and scale, Webster speaks to the precarity of the natural world and the role of artifice.





The Material World
2025

Oil on canvas
102 x 190 inches
259.1 x 482.6 cm
(EW 25/001)



The artist's duet of paintings plays with a shifting sense of beginning, end, and causation. *The Material World* evokes a cool, Proterozoic majesty. Verdant with foliage beneath eclipsed sunlight, the viewer faces a front of cut-out trees, scraggly and bare-boughed.





Era of Eternity
2025

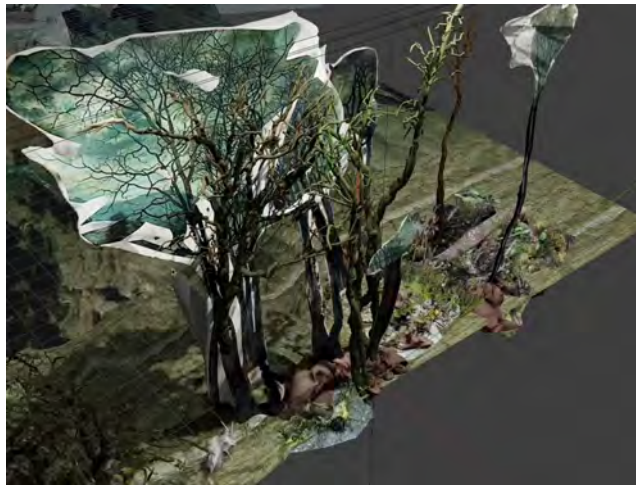
Oil on canvas
108 x 180 inches
274.3 x 457.2 cm
(EW 25/002)





Era of Eternity is a celestial rapture of a spiraling sunburst, with a flurry of geese cresting the canyon below. Webster casts tense atmospheres, placing her scenes in strange times of day, unclear if they represent daybreak or nightfall. Do these worlds unveil a beginning, a coming dawn, or the serene melancholy of twilight? And with it, an unraveling?





To create her paintings, Webster fuses virtual reality technology with scans of drawings, collages and hand-made sculptures. She enters their scanned spaces virtually and creates digital dioramas which she then translates to the canvas with various paintings techniques. With both digital and analog tools, Webster expands on the rich history of artists commandeering technologies, such as the Claude glass or camera obscura all the while advancing the genre of still life and landscape.



Webster's landscapes take on an immersive quality, like a proxy for reality, becoming avatars of the natural world. The unsettling panoramas in *That Thought Might Think* intertwine the material and the virtual, where the bounds of reality become increasingly elusive.

In an era where seamless technologies chase the knife's edge of sentience, Webster highlights the urgency of our relationship to the natural, the simulated, and the real.



About Emma Webster

Emma Webster was born in 1989 in Encinitas, California, and currently lives and works in Los Angeles. She graduated with her BA from Stanford University in 2011 and received her MFA in Painting from Yale University in 2018.

That Thought Might Think is Webster's first solo exhibition with Petzel, New York. Other recent solo exhibitions include Perrotin, Hong Kong (2025); Perrotin, Paris (2024); Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles (2023); Perrotin, Dosan Park, Seoul (2022); Stems Gallery, Brussels (2021); and Alexander Berggruen, New York (2021). Group exhibitions include Petzel, New York (2023); Max Hetzler, Berlin (2023); Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami (2022); Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego (2022) among others.

Webster's work is part of various public collections around the world, including the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, California; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, Florida; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego, California; Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, Florida; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio; Xiao Museum, Rizhao, China; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China; The Warehouse, Dallas, Texas; and the Groeninghe Art Collection, Bruges, Belgium.

In 2021, Webster published *Lonescape: Green, Painting, & Mourning Reality*, a collection of musings on landscape and image-making in an increasingly digital world. Both this artist book and her eponymous monograph, published by Perrotin in 2024, are available in the Petzel Bookstore.