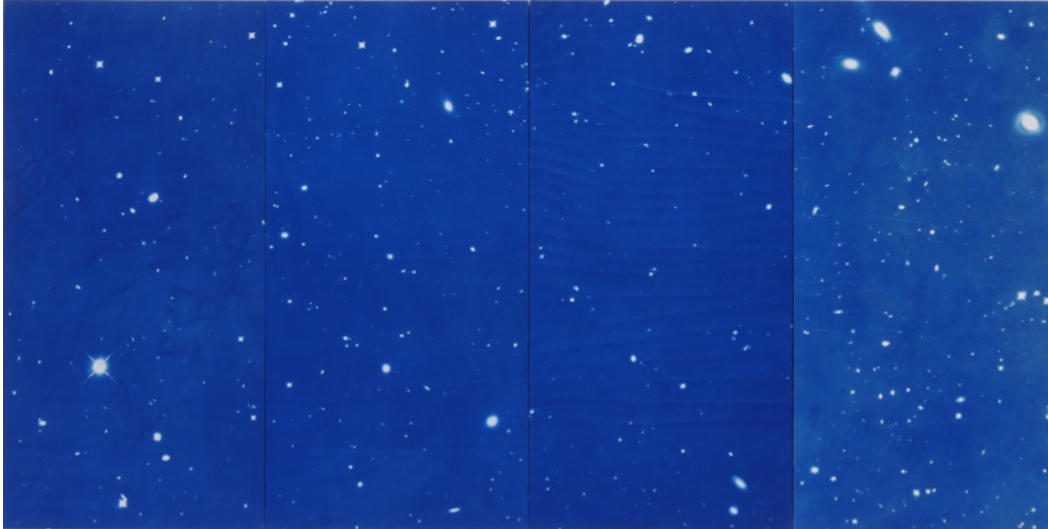


Safina / سفينه

Ala Ebtekar

November 12 - December 27th, 2018

The Third Line is pleased to present *Safina*, the final chapter of Ala Ebtekar's solo exhibitions trilogy. This project continues Ala's commitment to folding space and time onto itself through painting, drawing, and premieres a new installation that shifts harmonies of landscape and horizon.



Ala Ebtekar, *Azimuth (12 billion years, 80 minutes)*, 2017, Cyanotype exposed to sunlight on canvas, 155 x 305 cm

In the titular work *Safina*, the book is examined not only as an art object, but as a vehicle to complicate notions of inertia and travel between space and time. *Safina* is an oblong shaped manuscript, containing a compendium of potent knowledge fields: history, philosophy, astronomy, and most often, poetry.

Safina's etymology and current linguistic use leans towards several variants of a vessel designed for transportation: a ship, aircraft and even spacecraft. The centerpiece of the exhibition is an asymmetrical heptagonal platform that serves as topography for a suite of *safinas*—newly produced artist books, and never before seen reclaimed materials. Arranged in a manner to form new taxonomies and constellations of meaning, this *Safina* revisits the existing model, now displaying a new terrain.

As a central contour, with peaks and valleys, *Safina* gently displays Ala's long-standing interest in the depiction of space and time. The structure easily could be both fifteenth and twenty-fifth century, as a spaceship simultaneously landed and moving. Culminating altogether past and future, speculative and impending, *Safina* presents new portals to understanding the potentials of these vessels, as they were physically kept close to the heart, and here an object that travels in and between the most potent of landscapes.

About Ala Ebtekar

Ala Ebtekar (b. 1978) is an artist who works between his native San Francisco Bay Area and Tehran, Iran. Born in Berkeley, California to Iranian activist/artist/architect parents, from an early age, he developed an affinity towards various notions of in-between-ness, which has led him to explore the many spaces amongst the two cultures, both shared and separated, momentary and boundless. Such experiences have evolved into a dynamic practice that disquiets dominant notions of identity and complicates cultural difference. For the past twenty years, he has situated his art practice as a multitude of spaces between, and even above.

Ala's recent investigations have created liminal experiences to longer notions of scientific duration beyond human timelines, cosmic travel and the phenomenology of light. These

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projects bring forth sculptural and photographic possibilities of the universe gazing back through endless collapses of time and physical reworking of centuries old processes of image making. Ala's practice extends how our contemporary moments both live together as minuscule and paramount amidst an infinite score of skies and stars.

He currently teaches at Stanford University in the Department of Art & Art History, Institute for Diversity in the Arts at Stanford, and Global Studies at Stanford. He is the founder and director of Art, Social Space and Public Discourse, a Stanford global initiative on art that investigates the multiple contexts that shift and define changing ideas of public space. This ongoing critical framework of conversations, newly commissioned art projects, and exploration of various cultural productions and intellectual traditions looks at recent transformations of civic life.

Ala holds an MFA from Stanford University and a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. His work has been widely exhibited internationally. His solo shows include *Nowheresville*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2015); *Elsewhen*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2012); *1388*, The Third Line, Dubai UAE (2009); and *Emergence*, Richmond Art Center, Richmond, California, USA (2006). His work was featured in such group exhibitions as the 2014 Xinjiang Biennale; *Migrating Identities*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (2013); *The Beginning of Thinking is Geometric*, Maraya Art Centre in Sharjah, UAE (2013); *The Global Contemporary: Art Worlds After 1989*, ZKM – Museum for Contemporary Art in Karlsruhe, Germany (2011); *One Way or Another: Asian American Art Now*, a touring exhibition originating at the Asia Society, NYC (2008); and the California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art (2006).

Ala's works are in public and private collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA; Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt, Germany; Devi Art Foundation, India; Orange County Museum of Art, CA, USA; de Young Fine Arts Museum, San Francisco, USA; Crocker Art Museum, CA, USA; Microsoft Art Collection, Redmond, WA; Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, CA, USA; among others. Ala has been awarded residencies at ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany, Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, France, 18th Street Art Center in Los Angeles, Sazmanab in Tehran, Iran, and the San Francisco Center for the Book.

About The Third Line

The Third Line is a Dubai-based art gallery that represents contemporary Middle Eastern artists locally, regionally and internationally. The Third Line also hosts non-profit, alternative programs to increase interest and dialogue in the region.

Represented artists include: Abbas Akhavan, Ala Ebtekar, Amir H. Fallah, Arwa Abouon, Babak Golkar, Farah Al Qasimi, Farhad Moshiri, Fouad Elkoury, Golnaz Fathi, Hassan Hajjaj, Hayv Kahraman, Huda Lutfi, Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, Laleh Khorramian, Lamya Gargash, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Pوران Jinchi, Rana Begum, Sahand Hesamiyan, Sara Naim, Sherin Guirguis, Shirin Aliabadi, Slavs and Tatars, Sophia Al-Maria, Tarek Al-Ghoussein, Youssef Nabil and Zineb Sedira.

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