

A LABYRINTH LINE EXISTENCE

Amber Maida

The Gallery at Black Rock
2861 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, Connecticut

Through July 23

While The Gallery at Black Rock puts much emphasis on the inspiration of David Bowie in the work of artist Amber Maida's "Labyrinth" series, the artwork coming from the artist's Naugatuck, Conn. studio is all her own. Both large and small scale works speak to the music and lyrics of the rock icon, but this ghostly, feminine yet industrial imagery offers a world of Maida's own making.

"The title of my new body of work, 'A Labyrinth Line Existence,' is a quote from David Bowie's interview in the 1993 'Black Tie White Noise' film," Maida said. "His music and words played repeatedly during the creation of these paintings and inspired the resulting images. Bowie has been a strong influence on my work, which has developed into a visual vocabulary on the canvas."

It is Maida's voice we hear as she, like Bowie, juxtaposes unlikely elements within her work. All of these disparate elements have

meaning for the artist. Pointing out the dualities between fragility and strength, the ancient and the contemporary, the external and the internal, Maida skillfully fuses a variety of found materials; eggshells, vintage papers, feathers, skeleton keys, sand and silk successfully take residence upon the canvas. Highly textual, each painting becomes a world unto itself — a place where the viewer can escape into a netherworld of artful communication through a maze of mood and dance.





OPPOSITE PAGE: *Unveiling.*
ABOVE: *Mornings of Gold.*



Between the Stars.



Choice to be Made (detail).

Reoccurring themes appear. Imagery is pulled from the lyrics of Bowie but also from Maida's interest in biology, geology, string theory, quantum physics and, most prominently, astronomy. "Did you know that stars have a mate?" she asked. "When the one star begins to die, the mate star gives of itself to keep the dying star alive. This is a huge part of my art." And for Maida, her work is about connecting with ancient knowledge and bringing those ideas to a resolution with more modern influences on the canvas.

A stunning group of small mixed media works on heavy watercolor paper makes the show: "An Occasional Dream," "As the World Falls Down" and "Fountain" from "Aladdin Sane." Each piece is a direct visual interpretation of Bowie song lyrics and Maida makes them sing.

"When I view Amber's work, my mind becomes fully engaged," Portchester, New York sculptor, Mark Kilburn said. "A calm, curious awareness elevates me to a mindful place . . . usually only experienced through the internal techniques of moving meditation. Deeply internal, her work can be viewed for long periods of time without the complications of logical interpretation."

Maida's work has been featured in "Art World News Magazine" and "INK," and included in several juried exhibitions including AIRS in New Haven, The Housatonic Museum of Art in Bridgeport and Silvermine Guild in New Canaan (all in Conn.), and the Lazy Pear Gallery in Montpelier, Vt. A suite of her paintings were displayed in the 2009 Art to the Avenue exhibition at Richard's of Greenwich, Conn.

Kudos must also be paid to gallery owner Eileen Walsh. Through the near single-handed efforts of Walsh, Bridgeport has begun to transform itself into a hub of cutting edge contemporary art. Having provided a number of excellent exhibitions in the last year, Walsh now adds Maida to her stable.

"I am drawn to Amber's work for both it's ethereal visual appeal as well as her attention to process," Walsh said. "She has a strong ability

to visually communicate a story and a mood through her brush strokes and the materials she chooses to use in a piece."

Lisa Mikulski

YANA MOVCHAN
July 27th - September 4th, 2010 • Opening Reception: August 19th



Yana Movchan: *Summer Thunder*, Oil on canvas, 24 x 20"


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