

Joanna Borkowska: *Resonance*

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Joanna Borkowska is a shaman of color, material and light. There is something inconceivable going on in her paintings, more like the complex, shifting beauty found in nature, than in something human-made. Beholding the surfaces and depths of these works requires prolonged, focused observation.

What, then, are the implications for our encounter? These abstract works appear formal, but they are philosophical and, at times, spiritual. As the artist explores theories of consciousness and the Universe, each work is an invitation to receive something profound that can't be captured in signs and symbols.

In her "Resonance" series, Borkowska collaborates with nature's elements, combining her own conscious state with careful mixtures, elements of flow, and the law of gravity. This is her personal form of alchemy, her discrete relationship between self and matter. The desired outcome is reached only when she is fully in the zone — a state of pure presence combined with all of the right conditions to lay the paint on the canvas. When the gestures are complete, she steps back and waits for the processes to continue on their own and reveal the intricate interactions of elements at play outside of her control – unique patterns and luminescence.

When she explained to me how the result is always a surprise, I was reminded of my childhood wonder as a blank Polaroid turned into an image before my eyes, how I tried to fathom those invisible forces at work, like magic. Borkowska's "magic" is actually true mastery of process and materials refined over years of rigorous dedication. The result is her own complex conjuring technology — she is a human apparatus, tuning in frequencies from living and non-living entities, to moments where they coincide.

The above process is sensitive and highly responsive to context and environment. A painting created in the artist's Warsaw studio could never have the exact same appearance as one created in New York. Beyond the things we can't measure, there are the chemical differences between pigments and mediums available, the weaves of the canvas or linen, the particles and waves in the air. In this sense, each work is a true capsule of its moment, a kind of geode, making the invisible visible. These paintings embody the fact that there is more information in any given moment of perception than we can consciously observe. This information is not stagnant, just sitting there, but in constant motion, reverberating with everything around it, including us.

-Michelle Levy

Resonance is on view Aug. 28 – Sept. 9 at EFA RBPMW's 20 | 20 Gallery, 323 W 39 St, Fl. 5, NYC