

Galerie Project

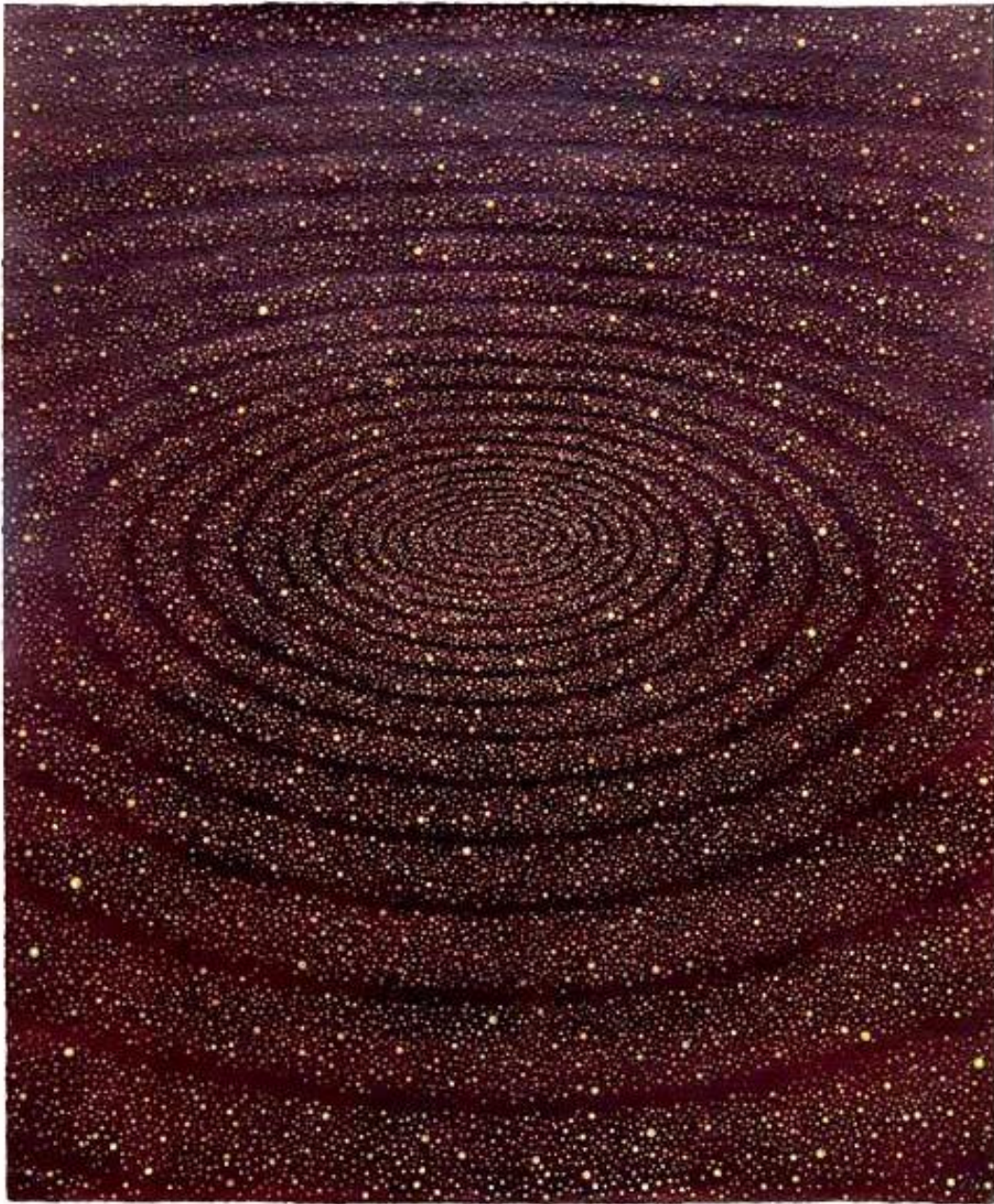
The Abstract Galactic Paintings of Karen Arm

Stephen Garriques

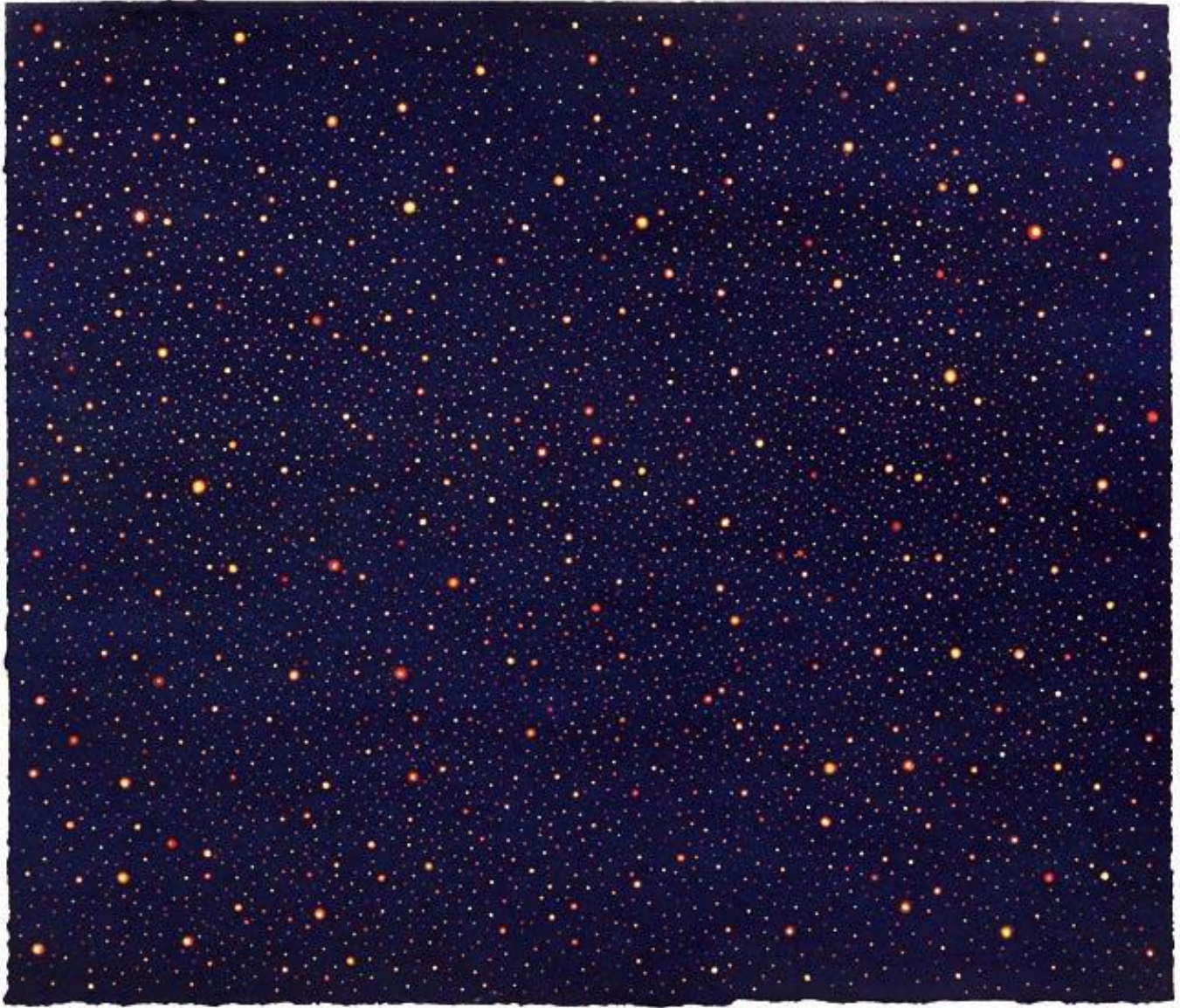
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Ever since I was a kid I've always had a deep interest in all things space. Being an Astronaut was something I dreamed of and the telescope my father bought me only fueled my curiosity more. There were many nights I'd spend peering into the night sky with the hopes of catching a glimpse of mystery in the stars above me. Maybe I'd see a comet, a satellite, a planet, or an extraterrestrial. Or maybe I'd see something else entirely that I wouldn't be able to explain. Either way the unknown and unexpected entertained me the same way as that of a magician. The sense of wonder, magic, and imagination would flood my thoughts, the very things we miss after growing up. Karen Arm's star paintings bring back those fond memories and make me feel like a kid again. It's almost as if I'm gazing through that same telescope I had over twenty years ago.



These particular watercolor paintings draw inspiration from constellations and astronomy. While most of Karen's works are indeed abstract, they all tend to be based on nature and are meant to challenge the viewer's perception of her art. She mentions in an interview with ARAS online, "They are paintings that are kind of on the cusp between abstraction and figuration. For instance, these star paintings that I'm making now – I intentionally leave the interpretation somewhat open. They are symbolic in a more open way. The viewer can come up with their own conclusion about what the symbolism might be." For me, just as important as the symbolism that takes place are the contrasting colors in each piece and how they all work together. Yellows bleeding into orange bleeding into reds, as well as the blue haze in some of her works that seem to mimic ones of that in an actual galaxy. Fantasy is in no short supply and is the perfect escape if you choose to take the journey.



Based out of Brooklyn and also working at Shelter Island, NY; Karen Arm has been showing her work nationally since 1993. She received her BFA from Cooper Union in 1985 and her MFA from Columbia University in 1989. In 2002 she received a New York Foundation for the Arts Award for Painting. Her paintings have been exhibited in numerous galleries and events such as Pierogi 2000, The Brooklyn Museum, P P O W Gallery, Pulse Art Fair, and Phillips de Pury & Luxembourg in New York. Also, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco and Gasworks in London.

Internationally her paintings can be found in collections at the Tate Britain in Australia, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, and the AXA Collection at the University of Melbourne to name a few. She mentions ARAS being a large influence to her growth as an artist over the last 20 years as it's not only been supportive place of employment but a key source of inspiration. To say that she is an accomplish artist is an understatement. Karen Arm's works are being exhibited at P.P.O.W. Gallery from May 26th to June 25th. If you happen to be reading this on the 26th, her opening is today from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.