

MONYA ROWE GALLERY

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For Immediate Release

LACEY BLACK

Cosmic Zoo

October 16 – November 15, 2025

Opening reception: Thursday, October 16, 6-8 PM

Monya Rowe Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new paintings by **Lacey Black** titled *Cosmic Zoo*. The opening reception for the artist will be held on Thursday, October 16, 6-8 PM.

Black's paintings are centered around a spiritual practice of going into the unknown, and searching for the unnamed connections within all living beings. Personal, fictitious and historical imagery are incorporated into works that are rooted in figuration, but explore lyricism, abstraction and surrealism. Black says: "I include a lot of different people, animals and things in my paintings, from different moments in time, and also unnamed things, more abstract forms. In Taoist and Buddhist writings, they call this "the ten thousand things" which represents all the material diversity of the universe."

In *Mother of Pearl, Cremation Ground Meditation /Indra's Net* (2025), the central figure, an elongated commanding angel, is immersed within a metaphorical net. The net creates a sacred ground, and alludes to a cosmic net that covers the entire universe, a Hindu and Buddhist Cosmology that describes interconnectedness and interdependence. As in most of Black's works, the components are laden with symbolic importance. A red ribbon at the top of the net is connected to a tree and hence the earth. Lady bugs, present throughout the painting, have been known as a symbol of protection since the middle ages, when they devoured insects. Symbolism is used to enrich narratives and add layers of meaning thereby inviting the viewer to make connections beyond the literal. The cycle of mortality, a spiritual concept of life, death and rebirth, is a recurring theme in the work.

Black aims to create a pictorial language that rests just below the conscious surface. The paintings resist a singular interpretation, preferring to leave some questions unanswered, as they are in life. Black unites the organic with the artificial, bringing together independent shapes, beings, and objects, to create a whole. Images rest within images, elevating simplicity to a more profound meaning with added depth. Alongside the painters Edward Hicks (1780-1849) and Horace Pippin (1888-1946), the artist takes inspiration from the world-building in the speculative fiction of Octavia Butler (1947-2006), Ursula K. Le Guin (1929-2018) and N.K. Jemisin (1972-). The imagery in the exhibition presents an otherworldly connection between earth and the heavens while searching for new futures within ostensibly fixed systems.

Lacey Black (b. 1992, Pittsburgh, PA) received a MFA from *Purchase College State University of New York*, Harrison, NY and a BFA from *Rhode Island School of Design*, Providence, RI. Recent exhibitions include *PS122 Gallery*, NY, NY; *Richard and Dolly Maass Gallery*, Purchase, NY; and *Monya Rowe Gallery*, NY, NY. In 2025, Black was awarded a fellowship at the *Fine Arts Work Center (FAWC)*, Provincetown, MA, and in 2024, a residency at the *Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture*, Skowhegan, ME. The artist lives and works in Mt. Vernon, NY, and is represented by Monya Rowe Gallery, NY.

Gallery hours

Tuesday – Saturday, 12–6 PM

For more information or images please contact the gallery at info@monyarowegallery.com

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