

NICOLE ETIENNE

Afterglow (Submerged)

in collaboration with Dr Deborah Brosnan

Curated by Natalie Clifford

Presented by

space  SBH

GAYO
GALLERY

NICOLE ETIENNE

Afterglow (Submerged)
Curated by Natalie Clifford

June 2014

Naval Heritage Museum
Porto Montenegro
Adriatic Marinas, Montenegro

Opening hours 3 – 10pm daily

Admission is free

Opening cocktail in the presence of the artist Friday 20th June 2014, from 7-9pm

This show has been made possible thanks to the generous support of:

Gayo Gallerie, Montenegro

Space SBH – Contemporary Art Gallery, St Barth

Porto Montenegro

Frenkel and Company

We would sincerely like to thank the following for their engagement in the development and realization of the show:

Porto Montenegro and the Naval Heritage Museum and its staff

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US Ambassador Mrs Sue Brown

British Ambassador Mr Ian Whiting

Clifford A Wolff

Mariangela Ventura

Victor Verdugo

Hope Sawides

And additionally, thanks to all friends and collectors who have travelled to see this exhibition which is part of an ongoing project now in its inaugural edition, which will travel internationally next to Monaco (date to be confirmed) and then onwards.



Nicole Etienne

Buried Treasure
2014

Oil and mixed media on canvas
30.5 x 30.5 cm / 12 x 12 inches

About this exhibition...

Artist Nicole Etienne and scientist Deborah Brosnan met on St Jean Bay in St Barths, FWI. Nicole had been invited to St Barth by gallerist/ curator Natalie Clifford for her first artist residency. Deborah was researching the reefs and beach. Emerging from the sea after a science dive, Deborah literally walked into Nicole's studio attracted by the art she saw hanging on the wall.

A late night bottle of wine and conversation at the waters edge soon followed. The two women discovered they shared a passion for life and the natural world. Each was driven by a desire to express its wonder and beauty. But the women had taken different paths, with Nicole's expression through art and Deborah's through science.

Nicole was inspired by Deborah's passionate and accessible description of her ocean science. Deborah was inspired by the beauty of Nicole's art which she felt captured the essence of the natural world that scientists so often seek to share with people. The collaboration was born. Then gallerist Natalie Clifford, the third member in this team worked with both parties to coordinate the details of this show and ongoing collaboration.

Afterglow (submerged) represents the shared elements of science and art and the divergent creations that result.

A selection of images from Brosnan's extensive archive have served as inspiration for this series of underwater landscapes and thus are referenced in this catalogue and exhibited alongside this body of work by Nicole Etienne.

Montenegro's coastline is dotted with *submerged* reefs, like many other coastlines globally. We depend on these living submerged reefs to protect us, for fisheries and for the beauty and biodiversity that inspires us. The seascapes shown here capture a hidden world that we all share and have a responsibility to protect for future artists, tourists, divers, fishermen and everyone.

A percentage of sales will go to support ocean and reef conservation.



Nicole Etienne

Skyfall
2013

Diptych

152 x 102 cm per panel / 60 x 40 inches per panel

152 x 204 cm total size / 60 x 80 inches total size

Oil paint, crystals, metallic pigments, mica chips, stones on canvas



Nicole Etienne

Sanctuary

2013

*Oil, copper leaf, metallic pigments, mica chips and vintage glass on canvas
101 x 152 cm / 40 x 60 inches*

Art and Science: The Conversation

Art and science are human endeavors that start from a common place, an observation, a curiosity, a sense of wonder and an intuition of a deeper story. From that shared beginning, they diverge. Each embarks on a different path of exploration and expression. They differ and their unique journeys allows the conversation between them - a dialogue that has been silent for too long.

Science seeks to objectively understand the forces that drive our world. Scientists always ask what and why and then search for the answers. Art expresses the world without needing to understand it all. The artist captures and articulates the beauty and the emotions that each of us, including scientists, feel in all that we witness. Science too is a voice through which nature tells its tale. Wonder beauty, and delight at each new discovery are part of a scientist's life.

Ocean swells sweep across thousands of kilometers of open water often at speeds of 120km/hr. These liquid world travelers approach the coast brimming with power and energy. But before they surge onto land they encounter submerged reefs that fringe the coasts of Montenegro and much of the world.

These photos capture the interplay between waves and reefs that takes place in a hidden undersea world. The moment when wave touches reef represents one of the most scientifically complex and highly evolved events on earth. Millions of creatures depend for life, food, and sex on the constant repetition of the reef wave-break. Explosive, yet life-giving, the convergence of reefs and waves nurtures and protects us too.

I took these underwater images late in the day at some of my research sites. Corals were just emerging to feed, rays cruised by surveying the seascape, spiny sea urchins strolled the rocky surface, and large predatory fish darted about trying to grab a quick meal. I hovered on the reef crest poised in anticipation, waiting to feel the tug on my body that signals an approaching wave. I wanted to experience and document the explosive second when the wave releases its energy and white water dips down to caress the corals, animals and seaweeds that stretch upwards to greet it. The photos capture the reefs' protective role and the waves' life-giving force.

These images of reef and wave, two recognizable and different forces, are the beginning moment in a conversation between art and science.

Dr. Deborah Brosnan
St Barth, May 2014



Sea Rod, Courtesy of Dr Deborah Brosnan

Stately gorgonian coral or sea rod is an ancient life form that lives in high-energy reef environments. The coral lives in currents that are too strong for most other creatures. The secret is its flexibility which is like that of a willow tree. It allows the sea rod to be tugged through 180 degrees by the surge. The sea rod has traded a life of being constantly battered by waves for the benefits of access to food and less competition for sunlight.

I took this image in a rare moment of stillness in between waves. Moments later the rod was stretched horizontally by the incoming wave, as was I.



Nicole Etienne

Hidden World
2014

Oil and mixed media on canvas
150 x 119.5 cm / 59 x 47 inches



Nicole Etienne

**Montenegro
2014**

*Oil and mixed media on canvas
150 x 124.5 cm / 59 x 49 inches*

***Submerged* – a word from the curator**

Space SBH is delighted to present *Afterglow (submerged)* - an exhibition of new paintings by leading international artist Nicole Etienne.

The scientific world holds the secrets to the visual world it creates and what we see around us. The natural world and the beauty of the sky and the ocean and mountains have inspired artists for as long as art has existed.

Scientist Dr Deborah Brosnan has been studying and photographing the underwater world throughout her career. The sumptuous hidden landscapes that remain unknown to many, have frequently been captured by her persistent camera lense.

Etienne's landscapes are opulent. They are as rich in colour as they are in texture. They are built up layer upon layer of oil paint mixed with mica chips, copper, silver and white gold and occasionally scattered with crystals and semi precious stones. More than being works of art, her pieces are like veritable bijoux.

This exhibit unlocks the secrets under the sea – Etienne's canvases indulge our fantasy of sunken treasure. Some like little portholes serving as windows onto an unknown world. A glint of something shiny, sparkling catches our eye, the textures allure us. Like little treasure troves we feast on the gems created in these paintings.

Etienne's seascapes are very ambiental. They capture the movement and energy of the ocean. Her canvases emote. Her practice probes the beauty inherent in the atmosphere and the interplay between the sky, land and sea; exploring the play of light upon water in an aesthetic, emotional, and visceral way. She does this by appealing to our senses and our intuition, and by drawing on earthy materials like aluminum, stones and metals. The finished work has an illuminated, romantic, powerful yet delicate presence which captures the shift between reality and paradise.

This show is a marriage and appreciation of the worlds of science and art – two worlds very intricately linked but absolutely different.

In celebrating the beauty of the natural world, so wonderfully captured in Nicole Etienne's paintings we take the opportunity to explain the story behind what we see and draw attention to the ecological issues and our environment. We must protect our oceans, our reefs and marine life to preserve the beauty they present us. A portion of proceeds from sales will be donated to the Brosnan Center for conservation of the world's reefs and oceans.

This exhibition is the first step in an evolving and ongoing unique international project and exhibition which through celebrating artistic creation aims also to create ecological awareness and the need for us to protect and preserve our natural environment. *Afterglow (submerged)* will next travel to Monaco.

Nicole Etienne's work can be found in important public and private collections and she exhibits all over the world.

Natalie Clifford - Curator
St Barthélémy, May 2014



Left: ***Surge line on the Reef***

Right: ***underwater 2 - Sea Turbulence***, Courtesy of Dr Deborah Brosnan

For many reef creatures, a wave breaking over them is similar to the arrival of the pizza delivery service. Waves carry plankton and nutrients. Creatures, like sponges, corals and fanworms are fixed to the rock and cannot move to search for food. They depend on waves to deliver nourishment.

Waves carry other important cargo. Embedded in the white water are the larvae of reef creatures that have been floating in the sea for weeks or months. They are searching for a good neighborhood on the rock in order to settle down, grow and reproduce. As the white water touches down on the reef, it drops the tiny creatures onto their new home.



Nicole Etienne

Tempest Unlocked
2014

Diptych

Oil and mixed media on canvas

200 x 109 cm per panel / 79 x 43 inches per panel

200 x 218 cm total size / 79 x 86 inches total size



***Anthopleura* landscape,** Courtesy of Dr Deborah Brosnan

During spring tides the sea recedes more than normal, exposing parts of the shallow reef to air. At these times we glimpse their hidden beauty and biodiversity. In this image each color represents a different life form: pink coralline algae, green flower sea-anemones, purple starfish and dark seaweeds. Green flower anemones spread by cloning, each one is genetically identical to the other - but even they must make room for other creatures to coexist in this limited space that they call home.



Nicole Etienne

Anthopleura
2014

Oil and mixed media on canvas
28 x 35.5 cm / 11 x 14 inches



Nicole Etienne

Lithium Sunset
2014

152 x 122cm / 48 x 60 inches

Oil, copper, metallic pigments, mica chips on canvas

Tempests Unlocked

Nicole Etienne's oeuvre encompasses a broad spectrum of portraiture and seascapes which, over recent years, have evolved from pure painterly representation to a heightened sense of magical realism, testing its bounds against sensual expressionism.

In this new body of work, Nicole represents the ocean and its treasures akin to love, there is no beginning, and no end to look to except for timeless depth.

Since the dawn of time, mankind has been mesmerized by sunken treasures. Sailors and adventurers have been lured to their demise by the siren sounds of good fortune. The oyster, mother to the pearl, is hidden amongst the drifting sands. Alexandrian glory awaits the one who finds his sunken statue, laid to waste by nature's hand. Canons and gold lie hidden where they sank, covered by the sands of time. These are all emotions evocative of Nicole's recent work.

Come hither, don't dither! Sirens sing, their song translated into paint.

To my eyes, Nicole conjures up the sublime in the ordinary, mystery where there should be dread, passion where calm waters still the lives of ordinary men and women. The daily currents of life, she tells us, carry their own ballast, represented in good or evil, at one and the same time.

We humans have often to navigate these moody waters astride the symphony of nature. Yet we're often drawn to the mysterious depths that belie our own selves. The mystery of being shipwrecked, of reaching edenic climes even as we lose all contact with human touch. Doubt, like the swirling seas of life, lap at our pristine shores.

Seascapes, and the promised riches that lie beneath their unlocked ocean surfaces are, in my opinion, the product of Nicole's own yearning for inner peace, an attempt to understand herself, whilst maintaining the outer divisions of superficial appearance.

The sea, with its mirror like surfaces, become reflective searching metaphors, empowering man by the hands of the artist as creator. The paintings seem to me to speak to the human condition, to confront women's existential anguish in the face of daily human emotions. This is what I see in this series of paintings, and it is this which attracts my interest in swimming across the unfolding tempest of creativity which Nicole unleashes.

Maryam Eisler, MENAAC Acquisition Committee at the Tate, and co-author of Art Studio America amongst other publications
Hossein Amirsadeghi, Art writer, publisher and editor. Author of Art Studio America amongst other publications
London, May 2014



White wave, Courtesy of Dr Deborah Brosnan

Submerged reefs, like rugged city skyscrapers piercing a fluid sky, are the ocean's speed-bumps. Their shape and shallowness slows down water coming from the deep ocean. Robbed of its speed, the water starts piling up until it loses its balance and breaks as a wave on the reef crest.

Science shows us that reefs absorb 97% of a wave's energy. This single act drives biodiversity, sustains fisheries, and determines the shape of our coastlines. By creating a more gentle flow, reefs help to keep sand on the beach and protect our shorelines and coastal properties from storm surge. Protect the reef and it protects us.

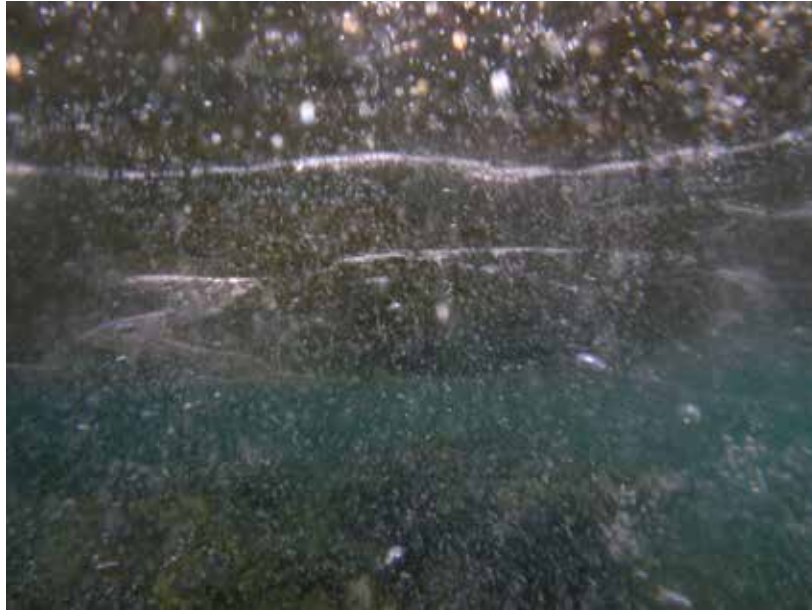


Nicole Etienne

Starlight

2014

Oil, silver leaf, crystal, mica chips, pearls, glass beads on canvas
30 x 30 cm / 12 x 12 inches'



Dark Reef, Courtesy of Dr Deborah Brosnan

Evening on the reef and darkness descends early and quickly. As light fades, surge bubbles and plankton glisten against the dark rocks. At night, plankton migrate towards the surface. Hidden in the blackness, night creatures have emerged to forage or find a mate. The web of life is woven. As small fish converge to feed on the plankton the larger fish converge on them.



Nicole Etienne

Submerged
2014

Oil and mixed media on canvas
40.6 x 30.5 cm / 16 x 12 inches



Nicole Etienne

Night Coral
2014

Oil and mixed media on canvas
40.6 x 30.5 cm / 16 x 12 inches



Sponge Standoff, Courtesy of Dr Deborah Brosnan

Real estate is often the most highly prized commodity on a reef. Competition for space is high and fierce. When two species meet, there's a standoff. In this image two sponge species, one orange and one green, have encountered each other and are fighting to establish their boundary line.



Nicole Etienne

Copper Sky
2014

Medium, oil paint, crushed glass and crystal beads, copper leaf,
mica chips on canvas
61 x 81 cm / 24 x 32 inches



Nicole Etienne painting in her London studio

NICOLE ETIENNE

Biography

b.1974 Santa Cruz, California
Lives and works in London, UK

"I gather, layer, collect, scrape, shatter, expose, photograph, play and dream"
– Nicole Etienne

"The landscape too, is a force for the painter; Etienne's are dense studies of atmospheres that at the same time are filled with transparent depictions of light and sensory color - they are abstract only in the sense that they are recreated from memory, and provide again that invitation to the viewer that makes all of Etienne's works a gesture of welcome."

- Philip F. Clark, the Art Point blog

"Born in Santa Cruz, California, where her mother was also a painter, Etienne traveled to Italy to explore the history of Western art. There she discovered the great classic and Baroque masters who inspired her work greatly: languid female nudes, contoured flesh, or the red and pink tones that dominate delicate complexions, evoking the palette of a Rubens; Landscapes whose lines disappear under a veil, at the very moment before or after the sunset..."

- Hugo Lattard

Exhibition History

Residencies:

Cill Rialaig Artists Retreat, Ballinskelligs, Ireland 2001, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2009, 2010
Eden Rock St. Barthelemy 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

Education:

UCSB, USA - Fine Arts 1992-1995

University California Santa Cruz, California, USA - Fine Arts 1995-1997 Lorenzo De Medici, Florence, Italy - Fine Arts 1996

New York Academy of Art, Masters Degree 2007-2009 cum laude

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

Enatsu Gallery, Tokyo, Japan 2001

The Berkeley Gallery, The Kilkenny Arts Festival, Ireland, 2003 The City Art Gallery, North Carolina, USA 2003

Urban Retreat Gallery, Dublin Ireland 2009

Boudoir, 286 Gallery London 2010

Bare Eden Rock gallery, French West Indies 2011 Movable Feast, Sloan Fine Art, Ny, Ny 2011

Atomic 13, The Eden Rock Gallery St. Barthelemy 2012 Into Blue, The Eden Rock Gallery St. Barthelemy

2013 The Chase, A one night stand in Blake's hotel London 2013 Forage, London 2013
'Afterglow', Space Gallery St. Barthelemy 2014

Selected Group Exhibitions:

Zantmans, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, USA 2001
The City Art Gallery, North Carolina, USA 2002-2005
2005 Wills Art Gallery, London, UK 2002-2010 New York AAF, 2004-2011 Ireland AAF, 2003, 2004, 2005 Sydney Australia AAF, 2004, 2005 Amsterdam AAF 2007 2008 Singapore AAF 2011 Bliss, London 2005, 2006
Take Home A Nude, New York Academy of Art 2008/2009 Summer Exhibition New York Academy of Art 2009/2010
Eden Rock Gallery St. Barthelemy 2010
Conceptually Sound, 2010
Sloan fine Art summer exhibition 2010
A Desert in the ocean, Lesley Heller Gallery, 2011
Scope Miami Alix Sloan gallery 2011
Miami Basel, Cynthia Corbett gallery 2011
Summer Exhibition Royal Western Academy, Coates and Scarry 2012 Cill Rialaig 21 Anniversary Exhibition, County Kerry Ireland 2012 Somerset house London, Josephine Ryan 2013
Young Masters Henley Exhibition, July 2013
Art Markt San Francisco, Cynthia Corbett Gallery 2013
Art Hamptons, Cynthia Corbett Gallery 2013
Los Angeles Art Show, Littletopia 2014

In Private Collection:

Getty family, Mural in Pacific Heights home, San Francisco, California USA Yahoo founder, Palo Alto, California USA Travelocity founder and C.T.O. San Carlos, California, USA
Pepsi, North Carolina, USA
Isle De France Hotel St. Barthelemy
Jane and David Mathews Eden Rock Hotel, St. Barthelemy Stelios Haji-Ioannou founder of Easy Jet
Richard Blumenthal
Linda Morgan of Ralph Lauren NYC
Redken
Maryam Eisler author and on acquisitions board of Tate modern UK Amy Hussey COO All3Media, Los Angeles
Nadia Zahmoul, London
New York Studio highlighted in television show "A Queer Eye for a Strait Guy" 2005

Biography

Dr Deborah Brosnan is a world-renowned marine biologist and conservationist. An Irish-American scientist, she grew up in Ireland, moved to the USA for her Ph.D. and now works in oceans around the world. She is known for her study of extreme events focusing on strengthening ecological and human resilience to natural hazards and climate change. She is sought after for her ability to successfully design and restore marine and coastal ecosystems and to engage stakeholders and scientists in solving pressing environmental challenges.



Dr Brosnan works on understanding and reducing risks from tsunamis, volcanoes, hurricanes and storm surges in vulnerable coasts globally, and uses science to help sustain nature and humans. Her work takes her into hazard zones and she has survived volcanic eruptions and other events. She is President of the Brosnan Center, Professor at Virginia Tech, and Environment and Policy Scientist at the University of California Davis, and has held several academic appointments including Visiting Scholar at Stanford University and Smithsonian Institution.

She serves on numerous Boards of Directors including at UC Davis, PADI Project AWARE and the Wild Geese Network of scientists. She is a frequent speaker on science and resilience in extreme events. Weblink deborahbrosnan.com

The Brosnan Center

Located in St Barth, the Center is devoted to the science, restoration and conservation of marine ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. Proceeds from sales will be donated by Space SBH (owner/director Natalie Clifford) and by Nicole Etienne and Deborah Brosnan. All monies will go entirely to the conservation, study, and restoration of the reef and beach ecosystem of St Jean Bay in St Barth, FWI. To learn more: Brosnancenter.com

About Space SBH – Contemporary Art Gallery

Space SBH is a contemporary art gallery active principally in the primary market exhibiting a mixture of established and emerging leading international artists.

Space SBH regularly exhibits internationally. Most recently it had the honour of being selected to participate at the 55th Venice Biennale showing work by artists Paolo Nicola Rossini and Victor Matthews. The exhibition received great acclaim and was chosen to then travel to the BOCA Museum of Art, Florida.

Space SBH regularly participates in a selection of art fairs such as the Moscow World Fine Art Fair, Art Basel Miami and Arte BA amongst others.

The gallery represents a select group of exhibiting artists and has a portfolio of many others for sourcing artwork for private commission and building and expanding private and public collections.

The gallery currently exhibits Philippe Pasqua, Marco Glaviano, Fernando Botero, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Andres Weissman, Igor Mitoraj, Enzo Fiore, Nicole Etienne and Mario Arlati amongst others.

Partner Natalie Clifford was director of Eden Rock Gallery until 2011 which period yielded a series of collaborations with other galleries including Mary Boone Gallery, Tony Shafrazi Gallery and Gagosian Galleries with a number of significant exhibitions including Richard Prince and Piotr Uklanski.



Installation shot - Mikhail Baryshnikov at Space SBH, December 2013

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