

## Mira Lehr Confronts 2020 with New Planetary Visions and Takes Us Forward Beyond Boundaries

*The artist premieres a bold new series of work created during the pandemic quarantine on her 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of founding one of America's first women artist co-ops.*

— New Exhibition “Mira Lehr: Planetary Visions from Spaceship Earth” —  
November 16 - January 16 at Rosenbaum Contemporary Gallery

During the pandemic quarantine this year, the celebrated artist Mira Lehr has created more work now than ever before in her six decades of artmaking. Her new series, called *Planetary Visions*, represents a bold departure for the artist. She has been invited to present a solo exhibition featuring this new series at Rosenbaum Contemporary gallery in Boca Raton, Florida (November 16 - January 16). The gallery will feature online initiatives to allow art lovers from all over the world to experience Lehr's new work across digital platforms. This year also marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lehr's visionary founding of *Continuum*, one of America's first women artist co-ops which she pioneered in 1960.



Mira Lehr with one of her new works, *Norweky*, from the series *Planetary Visions* (acrylic, ink, burned and dyed Japanese paper, ignited fuses, and handwriting on canvas), 2020. From the collection of the Boca Raton Museum of Art. Photo by Michael E. Fryd.

“This is a major turning point for humanity. Because of the global pandemic, for the first time in human history, the entire population of the planet is thinking about the same problems — and grasping for the same solutions,” says Mira Lehr.

“Together, we can meet this challenge and use this time to transcend across borders and places, with a unified vision for the world. We must now work together to address global problems without thoughts of artificial separations between human beings.”

“The title *Planetary Visions* refers to the need for all of us to remain focused on this shared vision that we need. We are a one-world landmass island, surrounded by water, flying across the galaxy on our Spaceship Earth. What happens in one part of our world affects all of us, and the pandemic proves this like never before,” adds Mira Lehr.

*“Planetary Visions* also refers to the mythical places featured on some of these newer paintings, my visions of environmental flashpoints happening around the globe,” adds Lehr. “While these are all imaginary places that I envisioned as an armchair traveler during the pandemic quarantine, the climate issues depicted are very real: rising seas, air pollution, global warming, and more. These issues also point back to the pandemic. Each invented place represents different climate challenges that are alarming, and time is running out for our planet Earth.” She ignites gunpowder fuses across the landmasses to create the visual effect of fuses from a ticking time-bomb.





*What This Earth Does Not Remember, I and II*, by Mira Lehr, from the new series *Planetary Visions* (acrylic, ink, gunpowder, ignited fuses, burned and dyed Japanese paper, and handwriting on canvas), 2020.

The new exhibition features a selection of twenty works by Lehr, spanning nearly 2,000 square feet, with the entire front of the gallery dedicated to this new show. The gallery is located at 150 Yamato Road, in Boca Raton, Florida. The exhibition may be viewed on-site during regular gallery hours (Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) in accordance with current Covid-19 safety guidelines. Additionally, reservations for private in-person viewings may be made in advance by calling 561-994-9180. Private zoom viewings are also available, exclusively with the gallery owner for his personal walk-through online of the show. Digital viewing worldwide also features this [360-degree virtual tour of the exhibition](#).

“So many friends have expressed their loneliness, boredom and frustrations at this time, with the quarantine. I totally understand, and I empathize,” says Lehr. “For me, however, I experienced a surge of new ideas and concepts. There has been more time to reflect, experiment and dream in my studio sanctuary. Being alone, without the comings and goings of normal times, has opened up new worlds for me. This time of concern about the earth has changed everything, and I don’t think the planet will ever be the same again. We’re on the brink of making it — or not making it.” According to Lehr, “My paintings have become darker, more mysterious. Encased in a layer of resin that creates the appearance of a layer of ice that seems to cover the surface, separating the image from the viewer. Time appears to stand still, waiting for the moment to search for solutions for our world.

These glossy surfaces also conversely carry us in — because the reflection is an invitation to be involved, to be aware. Help our Spaceship Earth! There’s still time, but the clock is ticking.”



*A Mystic Silence that Cannot Engage*, by Mira Lehr, (acrylic, ink, burned and dyed Japanese paper, and handwriting on canvas), 2020.





*Dance*, by Mira Lehr, 8' x 12', (burned and dyed Japanese paper, acrylic and ink on wood panel ), 2020.

The depth of Lehr's perspective and the scope of her trajectory are singular, having worked as an artist through the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s, the 80s and the 90s . . . and now the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with its direction into the unknown that feels so impossible to navigate.

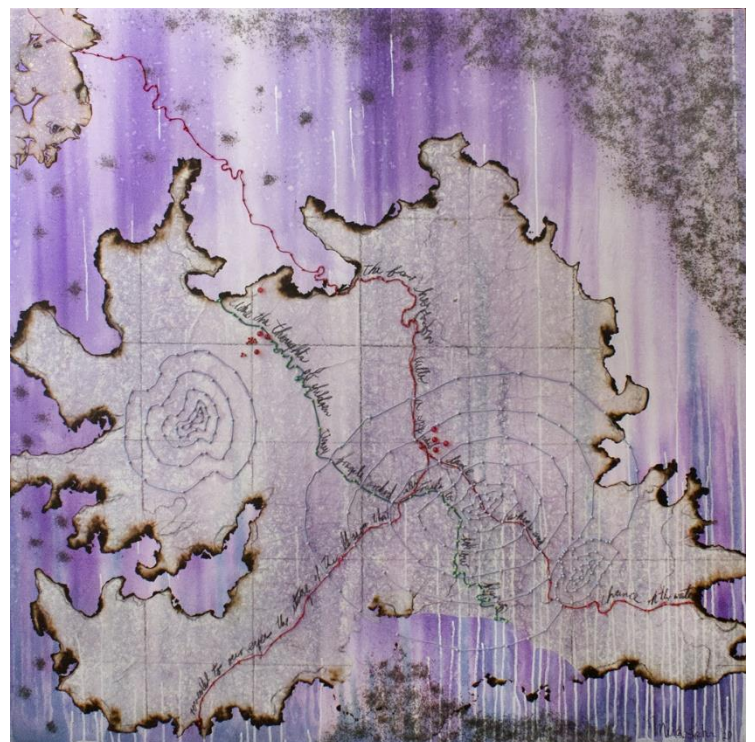
Artists, however, can imagine places and scenarios that help all of us map out our present. They can inspire us to make sense of our future too, guiding us to chart a new course toward the better.

"I feel the need to explore new creative pathways now. To create new imagery of imaginary places and events in nature, creating poetic visions of the earth and as a result, a more inventive and carefree approach has taken over my work," says Lehr.

"My previous work was more part of a certain tradition in abstraction. These new works are original visions, and it feels like they are coming from a different place, more spiritual perhaps. Replaced by more of a subject matter and a narrative, about the planet and these visions. I feel this is all new. I have no way to analyze it, this is just different."

"What I definitely do know is that it feels like I no longer have art history sitting on my shoulders and watching what I am doing. I am more of an explorer now," says Lehr.

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*Ancient Secret Map*, by Mira Lehr (burned Japanese paper, ignited gunpowder, ink, thread and pins on canvas), 2020.



## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Mira Lehr's solo and group exhibitions number more than 300. She is a graduate of Vassar College (1956) with a degree in Art History, under the mentorship of Linda Nochlin, the renowned feminist art historian. She has been collected by major institutions across the U.S., including the Smithsonian Museum of American Art (Washington), the Getty Museum Research Center (Los Angeles), the Boca Raton Museum of Art, the Perez Art Museum (Miami), the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center (NY), and the Margulies Collection, among many others. Her work is in the private collections of Elie and Marion Wiesel, Jane and Morley Safer, and the artist Judy Pfaff, among others.

Lehr is included in the prestigious Leonard Lauder Corporate Collection in New York. Thirty of her paintings were commissioned for the permanent collection of Mount Sinai Hospital. Her work can be seen in American Embassies around the world and is permanently on view in the lobby of the Evelyn Lauder Breast Center of the Sloan Kettering Memorial Center.



*Perfect Flight*, by Mira Lehr (burned and dyed Japanese paper, ink and acrylic on canvas), 2020.

Her recent solo exhibition headlined Art Basel Miami Beach 2019 at the Jewish Museum of Florida, and received national and international critical acclaim. Lehr's 2020 solo museum show at the Mennello Museum of American Art was selected by *ArtNet News* and *The New York Times* as one of their selections among the leading museum exhibitions in 2020 in the United States. Her museum-wide exhibition at the MOCA Museum in North Miami spanned across 10,000 square feet of installations. She has currently been chosen by Flying Horse Editions as an invited artist for a major project this year.

Mira Lehr's nature-based work encompasses painting, sculpture and video. She uses non-traditional media such as gunpowder, fire, Japanese paper, dyes and welded steel. Lehr is known for igniting and exploding fuses to create lines of fire across her paintings.

Critics are calling Lehr "the Godmother of Miami's art scene" because in 1960 she created one of the nation's first co-ops for women artists, in 1960. At the age of 86 and

with a career that spans more than six decades of artmaking, Lehr is creating more new work now than at any other point in her life — with a heightened sense of urgency about the planet and climate change.

In the 1950s, Lehr studied and worked in New York as an artist, where she met some of America's most prominent masters including: Joan Mitchell, Lee Krasner, and Helen Frankenthaler. She studied with James Brooks, Ludwig Sander, Robert Motherwell, and within the Hans Hofmann circle.

When Lehr moved back to Florida in 1960, she was shocked at the lack of an art scene, especially for women. She convinced many of the masters from New York to visit and lead workshops for her league of women artists. This helped the evolution of art in Florida.

She was selected in 1969 by Buckminster Fuller, as one of only two artists, to participate in his World Game Project about sustainability and his groundbreaking "Spaceship Earth" concept which preceded the world's very first Earth Day in 1970.



*Embrace I*, by Mira Lehr (burned and dyed Japanese paper, ignited fuses, ink and acrylic on raw canvas), 2020.

Lehr's video installation, V1 V3, was on view at the New Museum, NY. Her work has been included in numerous art fairs during Art Basel Miami Beach, including Art Miami, Pinta Art Fair and INK. She was the recipient of the Vizcaya Museum Lost Spaces Commission, where she was commissioned to create a site-specific installation by the Vizcaya Museum & Gardens as part of Vizcaya's centennial celebration.

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