

## Anne Katrine Senstad - Cosmosis Collages

*Chance comes in here to give us the unknown.*

John Cage, 1950

In *The Anarchy of Silence*, historian Branden W. Joseph amplifies Cage's relationship to chance in his compositions as being the source of an unacknowledged conflict between a love of chance operations, and a rigorous methodology of discipline. *Cosmosis Collages* enters the same polarity in a post-Dada'ist magnetic force between the uncharted playful sphere of the subconscious and utopic dream world - and the rigorously handcrafted compositions with homage to the 20th century history of Op-art, Kinetic art, Constructivism and Suprematism – all of which were representational of a form of revolutionary process, be it sociological, phenomenological, scientific and technological, or transcendental evolution. The search for the condition of cosmosis, a feeling of oneness with the universe, echoes today in our collective meta space and despairingly entropic conflicts of seemingly luminal velocity.

Senstad's examinations are inspired by the underpinnings of philosophical anthropology and its mechanisms, and equally embedded in the phenomenology of perception of space and color theory – as pure color compositions, geometric and circular patterns, optical illusion, and the language of sound and color frequencies. In the layers of collaged color film, we observe spectrums of light and color itself, the root of Senstad's practice since the mid 1990's: light as the subject, material and matter, exposing sensorial portraits of color. In the layers of film, we find an enhanced textured fabric of the emulsion, either added or subtracted with noise and patterns, too ephemeral or too dense to have been created purely digitally - as potentially unknown compositions created by chance and by the photographers hand.

## Artist Statement : Anne Katrine Senstad Cosmosis Collages

*Cosmosis Collages* is a new body of photographic works that is the result of Anne Katrine Senstad's inspiration of and research on the aesthetics of utopianism and cosmology, the scientific and philosophic optimism and confidence of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that the Suprematists and Constructivist movements were born out of as well as the colorful and geometric Op Art and Kinetic Art movements, of the 1950-60's that explored the physiology and psychology of perception, abstraction and color theories.

The idea of Cosmosis refers to the experience of oneness with the universe, the idea of harnessing the universe and a psychological state of immortality. An illusionary ecstatic state of earth-cosmosis can be a result of revolutionary utopic forces in culture and society that were experienced during both eras – the power of revolutionary victory. During the era of Russian Constructivism and Futurism, practitioners of art, science and philosophy were engaged in experimental thought and esoteric practices, seeking new societal structures and living systems, as well as conducting experiments in technology, science and medicine. While seeking ideals of utopic states of being as the ultimate internal, physical and psychological experience, they simultaneously engaged in metaphysical concepts of the cosmic state and the universe translated into art. These philosophies and practices were a vehicle to claiming the highest state of consciousness while experiencing the physical being as a means to mastering eternity, life and mortality. Represented by the release of constraints of pictorialism, symbolism and figurative romantic art, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century artists embraced abstraction, which later evolved into Modernism.

Human culture has been described as an eternal war between Apollonian and Dionysian forces, between the architecture of the cosmos and total chaos, between societal structure and the mayhem of anarchy, between the peaceful boredom of stability and evolutionary revolution. Our culture has tried to either embrace the ecstatic chaos through art movements, theological ideas, and inventions, or control

the futuristic cosmic forces through technology and economic politics. In Malevich's iconic black square the ontological celebration of a divine mysticism and new philosophy of art, symbolized a new era of futuristic hope and technological utopianism. Today we are again at a cross roads and tug of war between Apollonian and Dionysian forces where art, music, architecture and philosophy both mirror our time and can provoke or fertilize, and therefore inspire the force of history of the human pendulum.

In the photographic collage series *Cosmosis Collages*, Senstad has created compositions informed by her research and elaborated on the thematic material, reformulating their ideas into a contemporary visual language. The works referencing De Soto and Cruz-Diez, are painstakingly collaged based on color combinations, color shades and nuances in the color film negatives as well as geometric, triangular and circular shapes hidden within the classical Op art rhythms. Likewise the works referencing aesthetics of the cosmists, constructivists and futurists are playful compositions balancing squares within squares, color combinations that stretch the boundaries of harmony often using non-colors or anti-harmonious diagonals, bothersome colors or loud colors like hot pink and teal green mixed with brown or a muted blue. The illusions of space and scale by way of her use of light and darkness, can be recognized from the systematic creation of disorientation and visually challenging optical manipulation of the Op art movement merged with references to utopic fantasies of the cosmos. The works are simultaneously pleasant and unpleasant, naive yet psychologically laden, and display a complexity in the layers of analogue and digital material, creating new compositions of the past and the future.