



museum of arts and design

**MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN TO PRESENT WORK OF
BROOKLYN-BASED ARTISTS CARRIE MOYER AND SHEILA PEPE**

Carrie Moyer and Sheila Pepe: Tabernacles for Trying Times
May 22, 2021—February 13, 2022



Carrie Moyer and Sheila Pepe, *New Blue Bontecou*, 2016. Image courtesy of Luc Demers. © the artists.

NEW YORK, NY (March 24, 2021) – From May 22 through February 13, 2022, the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) will present *Carrie Moyer and Sheila Pepe: Tabernacles for Trying Times*. The exhibition, originating from Maine's Portland Museum of Art, marks the first major museum survey of painter Carrie Moyer and sculptor Sheila

2 COLUMBUS CIRCLE NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10019 P 212.299.7777 MADMUSEUM.ORG

Pepe, whose abstract works, rich with color and materiality, explore themes of craft, feminism, and queer activism.

Highlighting the artists' individual styles and techniques, collaborative works, and new directions through more than 25 works on view, the exhibition presents their most ambitious collaboration to date. The impressively scaled *Parlor for the People* is a site-specific installation that reimagines the religious tradition of the tabernacle as a communal space open to all for the discussion of justice, equality, knowledge, and these "trying times."

"The opportunity to bring this exhibition, the first major collaboration by these Brooklyn-based, visionary life partners, to the people of New York City at this moment couldn't be more important. It is critical that museums take a leading role in the healing of our communities and at the same time do all we can to support our local artists. We invite everyone to be a part of this exhibition experience and to find inspiration within our galleries," said Terry Skoda, Interim Director, Museum of Arts and Design (MAD).

For Moyer and Pepe, the evolution of their artistic practices is inextricably linked to their twenty-five-year love story. A couple since 1998, they married in 2015. Over the decades, they have broken through homophobic and sexist barriers to earn international acclaim.

As a painter, Moyer developed a visual language that weaves together abstraction, bodily forms, and logo-like imagery. Pepe is best known for her use of industrial materials, which she knots, knits, and crochets into monumental structures. In the exhibition, individual works from over the last two decades demonstrate how Moyer and Pepe have informed each other's development while maintaining distinct identities as artists, scholars, women, lesbians, and activists.

The couple's most recent collaborations represent an exciting new advancement for these two radical artists' trajectories, as together they challenge the viewer's understanding of craft while expanding definitions of abstract painting.

"We are thrilled to bring *Tabernacles for Trying Times* to our hometown of New York City. For the 25 years that Sheila and I have been a couple, we have been deeply engaged in each other's evolution as artists," said Moyer. "One of the pieces Sheila created specifically for MAD is a new kneeler, part of her 'American Bardo' series. Audiences will have the chance to see this important floor sculpture in the context of the table-top 'Votive Moderns'—both rarely seen objects from her wide-ranging sculpture practice—alongside Sheila's well-known, large-scale fiber works."

"Carrie and I are in each other's studios all the time—her nickname for me is the 'Painting Doctor!' The new version of *Tabernacles for Trying Times* opening at MAD will gather a selection of her works from the last 25 years along with a 10-foot canvas created especially for the New York venue," said Pepe. "Our collaborations seen alongside the individual pieces will give viewers a taste of the eclectic range of our shared interests—from formalism, abstraction, and New York modernism to queer politics, spirituality, and our own cultural backgrounds."

Accompanying the exhibition is an 89-page, full-color catalog published by the Portland Museum of Art (PMA). Jaime DeSimone, the PMA Associate Curator of Contemporary Art, offers an introduction and six essays, as well as a lengthy interview with Pepe and Moyer. Additionally, a full slate of public programs will leverage the exhibition's content and themes and will include virtual talks and in-gallery activations with the artists.

EXHIBITION CREDITS

Carrie Moyer and Sheila Pepe: Tabernacles for Trying Times exhibition at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, has been organized by the Portland Museum of Art, Maine.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Carrie Moyer's sumptuous paintings on canvas explore and extend the legacy of American Abstraction while paying homage to figures such as Helen Frankenthaler, Elizabeth Murray, and Georgia O'Keeffe. Rife with visual precedents, Moyer's compositions reference Color Field, Pop Art, and 1970s Feminist art while proposing a new approach to fusing history and experimentation in painting. Moyer co-founded one of the first lesbian public art projects, Dyke Action Machine! (DAM!). DAM! blitzed the streets of New York City with posters to dissect mainstream media by inserting lesbian images into recognizably commercial contexts, revealing how lesbians are depicted in American popular culture.

Sheila Pepe is best known for her fiber-based, site-specific installations that challenge notions of domestic crafts and "women's work." These web-like structures intervene in architectural spaces and galleries, creating volumes, lines, and shadows that are subject to the changing conditions of the environments they occupy. Part of Pepe's commitment to feminist politics is her long-standing engagement with collective making. In 2007 she undertook several ambitious collaborative projects, including *Liquid Sky* at MoMA PS1. Some of Pepe's other collaborations have reversed the terms of making and invited collective unmaking. In her *Common Sense* series, participants were encouraged to unravel her textile installations and use the materials for their own purposes.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design. For more information, visit madmuseum.org.

For high-resolution images, visit our press image archive: <http://press.madmuseum.org>

User ID: mad
Password: media
Folder: Tabernacles for Trying Times

#TabernaclesMAD @MADmuseum

PRESS CONTACTS

Museum of Arts and Design

Wendi Parson
Iman Nelson
+1 212 299 7737
press@madmuseum.org

Jonathan Marder + Company

Jonathan Marder
+1 646 638 2479
jon.marder@gsmltd.net