

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA MUNROE
fine art

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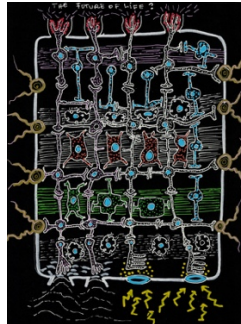
CHRISTIAN SARDET

drawings by a biologist about the origin and evolution of life

January 26 – March 9, 2024



Division, 2019
acrylic marker on paper



Future of Life, 2017
acrylic marker on paper



A world of protists, 2020
acrylic marker on paper

Opening January 26 through March 9, 2024 Victoria Munroe Fine Art presents two drawing exhibitions; DRAWN FROM SCIENCE which includes three 18th and 20th century botanical artists, and CHRISTIAN SARDET: *drawings by a biologist about the origin and evolution of life*. By coincidence all four of the artists on view employ innovative painting, drawing or collage techniques on black to convey the luminous life of flowers, vegetables, or cells on paper.

DRAWN FROM SCIENCE presents unique techniques of rendering botanical specimens. The rare 18th century British paper mosaics of flowers from the Circle of Mary Delany (1700-1788), contrast the meticulous watercolor on vellum flowers and still lifes by Barbara Regina Dietzsch (1706-1783). The Commandant Julian Lignier's (1872-1932) masterful diagrammatic watercolors of dissected flowers and fungi, under the microscope draw us into the expectations and culture of scientific observation cultivated in the French army. A separate press release for that show is attached.

The exhibition of drawings by the contemporary French biologist and artist Christian Sardet is the first exhibition of his art on paper in America. In his dynamic almost psychedelic drawings on black paper he captures the structures and functions of cells, the building blocks of life. This collection of dynamic drawings made on black paper under 14 x 10 inches represents his long practice of drawing inspired by the microscope crucial to his work in cell and molecular biology. His research spans 50 years of life sciences.

Sardet's practice of drawing with markers on black paper was inspired by his natural facility of drawing since he was a child, and the images he created through the microscope. The compositions reflect the life and patterns of animalcules and cells which he has witnessed and imagined.

I have painted since childhood, and as a researcher in biology I filled my laboratory notebooks with drawings. Ten years ago, inspired by the "Calligramme" poems of Apollinaire, I started drawing cell calligrammes that resonated with short texts. Progressively they became the heart of a book about cells and their evolution.

Each composition reflects an event in the life of cells: division, viruses, sperm and embryo, the genetic code, unicellular and multicellular organisms. Titles of his complex drawings are *The energy of Life*, *The Genetic Code*, *From one to two cells*, or *The Future if Life*.

Sardet's vocation began with the gift of a microscope with which he observed the tiny creatures that populate the marshes of his rural childhood village Melle. After studying with a naturalist teacher he decided to pursue biology and became a biochemical engineer graduating from Institut National des Sciences Appliqués in Lyon and later earned a PhD

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from the University of California Berkeley (USA). He is founder of the Laboratory of Cell and Developmental Biology at the Marine Station of Villefranche-sur-Mer, sponsored by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and Paris Sorbonne University. At present he is emeritus researcher at the Villefranche-sur-Mer Marine Station.

In recent years Christian worked on *Les Cellules – une histoire de la vie* his art and science book recently published by Ulmer. Many of the drawings on view in this exhibition are published in this book which will be on display during the show.

Christian is the author of numerous scientific publications on cells, embryos and plankton. He is the recipient of the Grand Prix des Sciences de la Mer from the French Academy of Sciences. Creator of award-winning documentaries, animated films and DVDs, he received the European Award for Communication in Life Sciences from the European Molecular Biology Organization and the French Légion d'Honneur for his diverse contributions.

Christian Sardet is a co-founder and a scientific coordinator of the Tara Oceans expedition, devoted to a worldwide study of plankton. Working with the Macronauts, he initiated the Plankton Chronicles project <http://www.planktonchronicles.org>. He is the author of the book *Plancton - aux origines du vivant* (Ulmer 2013) published in Japanese, English, German, and Chinese. Christian Sardet and the Macronauts have exhibited photos, films and video installations in Japan, France, England, and Canada.

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