

Petzel

“Emma Webster ‘That Thought Might Think’ at Petzel Gallery in New York,” *Autre*, March 4, 2025.

AUTRE

EMMA WEBSTER "THAT THOUGHT MIGHT THINK" AT PETZEL GALLERY IN NEW YORK

March 4, 2025



Emma Webster, *The Material World*, 2025. Oil on canvas 102 x 190 x 2 in 259.1 x 482.6 x 5.1 cm. Photo: Marten Elder. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel, New York

Emma Webster's inaugural solo exhibition at Petzel Gallery, "That Thought Might Think," is a mesmerizing journey into expansive, otherworldly landscapes that challenge our perception of reality. On view from March 7 through April 12, 2025, this exhibition showcases Webster's largest works to date, offering viewers an immersive experience. Central to the exhibition are two monumental paintings: "The Material World" and "Era of Eternity." "The Material World" transports viewers to a primordial realm, where lush foliage thrives under an obscured sun, evoking a sense of ancient majesty. In contrast, "Era of Eternity" captures a celestial spectacle—a spiraling sunburst accompanied by a flock of geese soaring over a canyon—eliciting feelings of awe and contemplation. Webster masterfully manipulates light and atmosphere, leaving us pondering whether we are witnessing the dawn of creation or the quietude of an impending dusk.

520 W 25th Street New York NY 10001

Tel 212 680 9467 Fax 212 680 9473 info@petzel.com www.petzel.com

Petzel

“Emma Webster ‘That Thought Might Think’ at Petzel Gallery in New York,” *Autre*, March 4, 2025. What sets Webster's work apart is her innovative fusion of traditional painting techniques with modern technology. By integrating virtual reality, hand-drawn sketches, and scans of handcrafted sculptures, she constructs digital dioramas that serve as the foundation for her paintings. This approach not only pays homage to historical artistic tools like the camera obscura but also propels the genre of still life into the contemporary digital age. The resulting landscapes are immersive and uncanny, blurring the lines between the tangible and the virtual, and prompting reflection on our relationship with nature in the Anthropocene era.

The timing of these works is particularly poignant. Created amidst the Los Angeles fires, Webster's paintings resonate with the urgency of ecological crises. She reflects, "It was surreal to make this work while just outside the studio; the orange, smoky sky was raining ash from the fires." Yet, through her art, she celebrates the resilience and complexity of natural systems, inviting viewers to engage with environments that are both familiar and fantastical. "That Thought Might Think" is not just an exhibition; it's an invitation to explore the delicate interplay between reality and artifice, nature and technology. Emma Webster's visionary landscapes beckon us to reconsider our place within the natural world and the digital constructs we inhabit.



Emma Webster, Era of Eternity , 2025 Oil on canvas 108 x 180 x 2 in 274.3 x 457.2 x 5.1 cm. Photo: Marten Elder. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel, New York

<https://autre.love/journal/2025/3/4/emma-webster-that-thought-might-think-at-petzel-gallery-in-new-york>