

## Washington DC

### Amy Lin at Addison Ripley Fine Art

On viewing the latest artworks by Amy Lin, in an exhibition entitled *Dreamworlds*, one is immediately seduced by the deftness of her paper sculpting. With over a dozen solo exhibitions in the United States and two residencies in Asia, the American artist of Taiwanese descent has spent over a decade refining her largely paper-focused art.

The recent paper-and-pencil works are layered and are propelled by the themes of interconnectedness of human genetics and society, and the macro-micro composition of societies. Made over the past two-years, Lin's 17 fragile two- and three-dimensional works visualize the possibility of experiencing existence as another human being.

Lin is an obsessive mark maker. Previously her works were exclusively two-dimensional and focused on delicately drawn, intricate abstract forms. Her freeform shapes are initially made through a stream-of-consciousness that grows organically, subtly reappearing and linking several works. Her meticulously hand-drawn, intersecting dots and near perfect spheres suggest the diffusion of different individuals and segments of society.



Amy Lin, *Solaria*, 2015, mixed media, 67 x 87 cm.

In a development, which began last year, Lin elaborately overlays cutout paper sheets, which in some works stretch to four floating tiers. Lin describes such work as a hybrid between drawing and sculpture. The pierced, crisp-white strata invoke chasms in the Earth's geology, exposing finite penciled imagery beneath, teasing the viewer to look closely at the colorful marks. An important element in the show is the gallery lights on each work: these heighten the spatial effect of shadows across paper curls

and within the cutout voids.

There is a biomorphic look to certain works such as *Melpomenia* (2015), while in *Lyonesse* (2015) her forms are more curvaceous, resembling musical swirling notes penetrating the paper's surface. All her works suggest elemental gaseous and liquid energy. In the works where she bends the paper slits to rise above the sheets, the momentum seems unstoppable as if the forms are jumping clear of their two-dimensional reality.

Lin's tiered compositions are painstakingly assembled.

Yet, despite this and with the planning for her intricately cut and layered surfaces, her works still exude a spontaneous creative flow and sensuality. This is achieved through Lin's freehand detailing of the surfaces to be cut, her exemplary bending of the paper, and pencil marks: all suggesting calligraphy.

Perhaps influencing the artist's work is Lin's mother who is a doctor in human genetics: as a child she would accompany her mother to the laboratory. The artist is also passionate about the science-fiction novels of the late American author and biochemist Isaac Asimov (1920–1992), with all the works in *Dreamworlds* titled after fictitious planets in Asimov's *Robot* series.

Lin's paper works are fluid and finely structured and encourage us to wonder about the connections and size of the universe. Her art also inspires us to consider the complex microscopic realities within the human body, as well as the structure and mechanics of different societies.

Steven Pettifor



Amy Lin, *Lyonesse* (detail), 2015, mixed media, 73 x 93 cm.