

# form & concept

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## **Matthew Mullins: THE SUN IN OUR BONES**

September 28 - November 17, 2018

**Opening Reception:** Friday, September 28, 5-7 pm

**Artist Talk:** Saturday, October 20, 2-3 pm

**Closing Reception:** Saturday, November 17, 5-7 pm

**What/Who:** Santa Fe artist Matthew Mullins presents a solo exhibition of paintings, photographs and sculptures, inspired by the intrinsic links between humans and the natural world. Known for his mixed-media paintings that visually connect landscapes with human-made, geometric patterns, Mullins broadens his practice to encompass photography and sculpture. With this expanded artistic palette, he draws viewers across time and space—from a windswept patch of grass to the swirling cosmos. The monumental body of work, which will fill form & concept's ground floor, is united by patterns that repeat throughout the universe at infinite scales.

**When:** *The Sun in our Bones* debuts on Friday, September 28, 5-7 pm. The opening reception is part of the Last Friday Art Walk in the Santa Fe Railyard Arts District. Mullins hosts an artist talk on Saturday, October 20, 2-3 pm and closing reception on Saturday, November 17, 5-7 pm.

**Where:** form & concept, 435 S. Guadalupe St. Santa Fe, NM 87501

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## **SANTA FE ARTIST FINDS INSPIRATION—AND LOSES SOME ARTWORK—ON LONG TREKS THROUGH THE WILDERNESS**

Santa Fe, NM—Matthew Mullins is an avid hiker and distance runner, and lately he's been leaving artwork behind on his adventures through New Mexico's high desert. He'll install pinhole cameras in remote areas, note their coordinates, and return for them weeks or months later. The final images reflect the shifting path of the sun and other natural phenomena—that is, if Mullins can retrieve them. Weather and wild animals have destroyed several cameras, and others have vanished without a trace. Despite the occasional lost artwork, Mullins says his far-flung creative process is worth the risk. "With these pinhole photos, I'm presenting different ways to look at nature and different ways of seeing time," the Santa Fe artist explains. "The incredibly long exposures require the cameras to be in remote locations, which always involves leaps of faith." In his solo exhibition *The Sun in Our Bones*, opening Friday, September 28 from 5 to 7 pm, Mullins presents photographs, paintings and sculptures inspired by the intrinsic links between humans and the natural world.

When Mullins began working on *The Sun in Our Bones* last year, he was shooting for the stars. “I thought about making a series of artwork within a spectrum of very earthy and grounded to cosmic. I wanted to paint nature and natural process from the subatomic world to the stars” says Mullins. “How do you encompass that staggering span, and pull someone all the way through it?” The Santa Fe artist has been working on a series of highly unconventional landscape paintings since moving to New Mexico from Berkeley, California in 2011. The works depict scenes from nature, often in a monochrome palette, with geometric patterns inspired by human-made designs cutting through them. A concurrent series of watercolor paintings features mandala patterns dotted with countless stars.

Branching out even further, the artist started experimenting with several new mediums. He gathered dry, twisted pieces of juniper wood on his outdoor excursions and brought them back to his studio, cleaning them, burnishing them and covering them with shiny graphite to accentuate their lines and textures. Through the pinhole photography series, Mullins found a method for depicting a temporal experience of landscape. “I really wanted to track time in a different way and also show the movement of our planet around the sun. I didn’t think I could really get that in my paintings,” he says. “I love the idea of having these pinhole cameras out in the world. They’re working right now, so I’m making art 24/7.”

*The Sun in Our Bones* will span form & concept’s ground floor, the second show in the gallery’s two-year history (after Thais Mather’s *Reckless Abandon* in November 2017) to devote an entire level to a single artist. The title of the exhibition is a reference to an unconventional material Mullins has incorporated into some of his cosmic paintings: pigment made from burnt bones. “The calcium and phosphorous in those bones, and our own, are made in stars,” Mullins says. “It’s truly all connected.”

For Mullins, the exhibition is a culmination of 15 years of work as a professional artist. Originally from the Bay Area of California, he received his MFA from University of California Berkeley. There, he began his career with his *Artifacts & Archives* paintings, a series of photo-realistic watercolors that replicate the archival environments and materials he had access to during his graduate studies.

Mullins received the prestigious Eisner Prize for Visual Art in 2010, a year before relocating to New Mexico. Following the move, he was inspired by the desolate, sweeping landscapes of the Desert Southwest to shift from an illustrative style to semi-abstraction. Through his latest work, Mullins has sought to show the connection between human consciousness and the natural world. “Humans are part of the natural world,” says Mullins. “But we often become so focused on our individuality that we lose track of that greater connection. My work is about reintegrating with nature and finding unity in that relationship.”