

Artist
RUTH BURGESS



The Mystery of Mars, 2019, from The Music of the Planets Series, multi block woodcut, image size 47cm x 42cm, Paper size 98cm x 651/2 cm



The Milky Way Nebulae 1, 2020, from The Milky Way series, multi-block woodcut, on Shinano/Kozo paper, unique state, image size 48 x 42 cm, paper size 98 x 65.5 cm

Information from Ruth Burgess

*I have been working on large format multi-block woodcuts on beautiful Japanese paper, and as they have evolved so have vibrant colours and dimensions of imagery to express the wonders of space. Although the early astronomers were scientists and philosophers and mathematicians, it is **imagination** that extended their perceptions and as an artist it is imagination which is the source of this exhibition. So immense are the dimensions of space that I found my mind was extended into explorations of **the known and unknown** and I was visually inspired by the messages from the Hubble telescope and the recent space craft such as Voyager sending back to earth extraordinary images, and the wonders always evolving in the Milky Way.*

Studying

The large-scale woodcut prints by Ruth Burgess focus on the spiritual nature of art, celebrating the interconnection between man and nature. Her style and technique are influenced by Chinese and Japanese woodcuts, traditional Chinese calligraphy and paintings, as well as Buddhist philosophy. Burgess exploits woodcut materials and processes, its flat surface and lack of perspective, in order to express the hidden raw energy and power that will invoke a subjective response from her viewer's heart.

- Research Modernist Post-war Japanese artist Koshiro Onchi who inspired Burgess's approach to woodcut printmaking. Consider similarities between their works and how they sought to engage their audience.
<http://www.myjapanesehanga.com/home/artists/onchi-koshiro-1891--1955->
<https://www.wikiart.org/en/koshiro-onchi>
- The connection between astronomy and music extends back 2000 years. Greek philosopher Pythagoras believed the sun, moon and planets of our solar system revolved around the earth generating a 'hum' or 'frequency' according to its distance from Earth. Pythagoras said, "There is geometry in the humming of the strings, there is music in the spacing of the spheres". These ideas were developed by 17th century German astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) who described Earth as producing a mournful tune while Mercury whistles. What sounds do you imagine Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Pluto, Uranus and Neptune make?

Making

Ruth Burgess uses her imagination to explore the known and unknown universe. Imagine you are travelling to the outer limits of space and into the unknown universe. Create a drawing using visual language (colour, tone, texture and composition) about what you discover and let your imagination be the guide.