

ATHENA TACHA

American, b. 1936, Larissa, Greece
Lives and works in Washington, DC

WEBSITE

Over her career spanning many media, Athena Tacha has investigated the rhythms of nature in drawing, photography, experimental books, sculpture, and public art. The systems and processes of the human body and the patterns and cycles of change inherent to other organisms and geological formations are interwoven throughout her multifaceted art. Small-scaled sculptures of an erupting volcano and an ice-capped mountain peak express the awesome physical intensity of nature in microcosm. And, by selecting, editing, and combining photographs of the hot, acidic waters of volcanically formed pools in Ethiopia's Dankali Depression, she makes quite palpable one of the most geologically extreme locations on Earth.

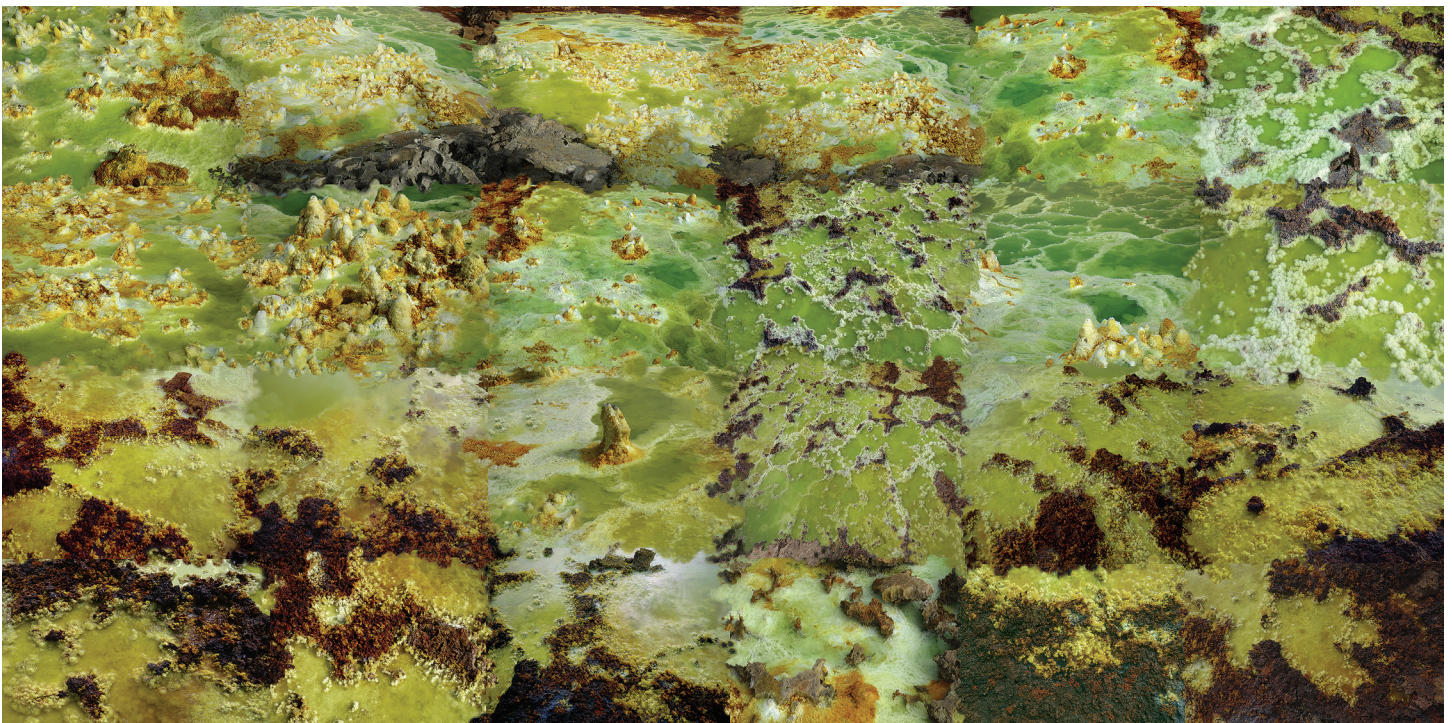
Tacha's *Singularity* series shifts perspective to a place where the expanse of the universe and the subatomic operations of matter collide, a point of extraordinary density such as that which gives rise to a black hole or which might lie at the origins of our known universe. A physical phenomenon that theoretically extends from the physical properties of matter just as chemically seething desert pools, lava, and ice flows do, cosmic singularities remain beyond direct human observation. Tacha's meticulous accumulations of individual marks executed in different media throughout the *Singularity* series allow us to ponder this life-generating and destroying force.



Athena Tacha, *Singularity # 7 (Silver Stars)*, 2002, airbrushed silver acrylic ink on black watercolor paper.

Educated at the School of Fine Arts, Athens, Greece (MFA), Oberlin College (MA in art history) and the Sorbonne, Paris (PhD in aesthetics), Athena Tacha is a pioneer in environmental public art. She has won more than forty public art commissions, from Alaska to Florida, including a two-acre park in downtown Philadelphia and plazas with multiple works at the Muhammed Ali Center, Louisville, KY and Wisconsin Place, Bethesda, MD. Her multi-faceted art, consisting of a body of textual and photographic conceptual works as well as smaller sculptures, has been exhibited world-wide and is represented in more than fifty museums.

Among major publications on her work are *Athena Tacha: Public Works, 1970-88* (the catalogue of a retrospective exhibition at the High Museum in Atlanta); *Dancing in the Landscape. The Sculpture of Athena Tacha*, 2000; *Athena Tacha: from the Public to the Private*, 2010 (a bilingual catalogue of a large traveling retrospective in Greece); *Visualizing the Universe: Athena Tacha's Proposals for Public Art Commissions, 1972-2012*, 2017; *Fifty Years Inside an Artist's Mind: the Journal of Athena Tacha*, 2020; and *The Art of Athena Tacha: a Complete Catalogue*, 2022.



Athena Tacha, *Golden Pools (Danakil, Ethiopia)*, 2015-16, chromogenic digital print on metallic photo paper.