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Boca Raton

# Boca Artist Carol Prusa's "Dark Light" Exhibit On Display At Boca Raton Museum Of Art

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*Carol Prusa working in her studio. She has an exhibit on display at the Boca Raton Museum of Art. Photo courtesy of Carol Prusa.*



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## Boca artist Carol Prusa's "Dark Light" exhibit on display at Boca Raton Museum of Art

By: Jan Engoren Contributing Writer

When Boca Raton artist Carol Prusa, was 12, she became interested in the Big Bang Theory: Where did the universe come from? How did life begin? How could there be nothing before there was something?

Not typical concerns for a 12-year-old girl, but Prusa is anything but typical.

Now, a professor of art at FAU, Prusa has a one-woman exhibit, "Carol Prusa: Dark Light" at the Boca Raton Museum of Art through Jan. 19.

"We're very pleased to have this exhibit of Carol's latest works here at the museum," said Irvin Lippman, executive director of the Boca Raton Museum of Art.

"Carol is the embodiment of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math)," says Lippman, who met Prusa when he came to Florida

in 2003. "We need artists like Carol to expand our horizons into the solar system, into the deeper unknown of dark space."

Working exclusively in greyscale and using an ancient technique of silverpoint which she learned in Florence, Italy, Prusa uses sculpted resins, fiberglass, metal leaf and powdered steel, LED lights, black iron oxide and titanium to create round, spherical, domed orbs with intricate patterns representing our cosmos, that take many meditative hours to complete.

"Carol's work is unique," said Kathleen Goncharov, curator of the exhibit. "Her work spans not only the cosmos, but the ages, using techniques popular in the Renaissance juxtaposed with modern technology such as LED lighting and video streams."

Prusa admires women who charted the heavens such as Maria Mitchell (the first woman elected into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1848), and the first female astronomy professor, Henrietta Swan Leavitt, Annie Jump Cannon, Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin, Vera Rubin and Jocelyn Bell Burnell.

She created a suite of prints dedicated to these pioneering women, titled "Galaxias Kyklos." Galaxias Kyklos is the Greek term for the Milky Way, featuring Ourania, the muse of astronomy in Greek mythology.

Prusa also pays tribute to the women who worked as human computers at the Harvard Observatory in the 19<sup>th</sup> century analyzing glass photographic plates to map the stars.

Although she studied chemistry in college and began her career as a medical illustrator, Prusa

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[FROM PG 1] quickly realized her true passion for art and the exploration art afforded.

"Art engaged my mind fully," she said. "Artists can explore; they're not confined by rules." She set out to master the skills and techniques she would need to follow that passion and along the way discovered some answers.

"We are all interconnected," she said. "Life is strange, beautiful, fecund and resilient. This discovery gave me positive feelings toward life."

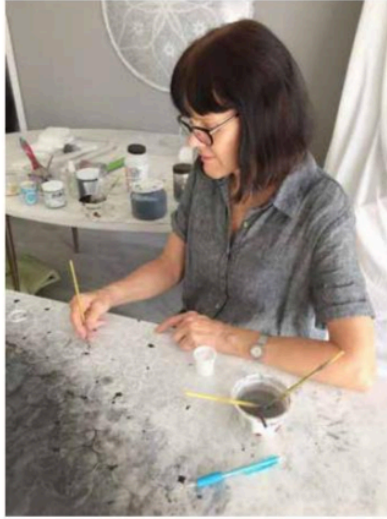
These positive feelings are reflected back to us in her ethereal and intricate work of the heavens and of solar eclipses.

In 2017, following in Mitchell's footsteps to document solar eclipses, Prusa traveled to the Atacama Desert in Chile and to the North Platte River in Nebraska to witness a total eclipse, a phenomenon so overwhelming, it knocked her off her feet.

"Seeing a total eclipse for the first time, I was blown away by a euphoric feeling of floating," she says. "I was so moved that I literally fell backward. When the shadow of the eclipse passed over, the world changed in a way I had never experienced."

It is from this life-changing experience that Prusa created her latest works, depicting intricate and mesmerizing depictions of eclipses, the universe, dark light and portholes to the heavens.

A fan of Stephen Hawking and Richard Feynman, Pru-



Carol Prusa works in greyscale in her studio. Photo courtesy of Carol Prusa.

sa reads popular physics and incorporates complicated physics theories such as string theory and the theory of everything into her work.

She loves to reflect on her work and finds it visually calming. "I make what I want to see," she said.



"Carol Prusa: Dark Light" is on display at the Boca Raton Museum of Art through Jan. 19. Photo courtesy of Carol Prusa.

"My practice becomes a form of meditation that leads to bliss, like a Buddhist prayer," said Prusa, who studied Tibetan art techniques. "The time-intensive process expands my introspection and reverie about our universe." ■