

## Between the Known and the Unknown

From his proverbial cradle in Jamaica, Peter Wayne Lewis was gently rocked by notes struck on the piano by his father's fingers. Every tap on the keys set wires – strings - in motion, vibrating, transmitting memories of human histories from DNA to the outer edges of the universe. Later in life, Lewis developed an interest in string theory as a framework to understand the cosmos. The intertwining of the sound and color formed his being; abstraction became his visual vocabulary.

Visiting the 30,000-year-old Pech Merle cave paintings in France, in 1982, Lewis felt an “out-of-body experience” that sensitized him to forces he explores spiritually and artistically. Copernicus, DaVinci, Watson, and Crick each lived their own balance of the scientific, the ocular, and the spiritual as they visualized new understandings of the center of the universe, the anatomy of the soul, and the origin of life.

String theory links Lewis to music and embraces all beings as strings of vibrating energy, like points on strands of DNA in a double helix. This harmony of the self and the universe, the syncopation of Lewis' broad strokes of paint, and large series of works pulsate beyond the constraints of framed art. His rich experiences living and working in Japan, Germany, Jamaica, New York, and Beijing influence his work in the way Abstract Expressionism does; they are resources informing his being on a higher level, spanning from the primordial to the quest for a Unified Field theory.

What is more primordial than the birth of the universe? The new James Webb telescope is extending our scope of understanding, giving us a clearer picture of Lewis' visions of vast and complex energy fields. Since 2001, Lewis has used pigment in the ritual act of painting to conjecture strings, their movements, and time. Is time a human construct? What is time in a Webb-sized galaxy? How many dimensions of time are out there? These are not esoteric questions for Lewis; they are much his material as are paper, canvas, and paint.

Beauty is born of subliminal thought and ritual act.

Catherine S. Amidon, PhD

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Catherine Amidon earned her Masters and PhD from the Sorbonne while working at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris. After returning to the States, she taught and worked in university galleries, while living or traveling abroad (Baltic States, Poland, Senegal, Jamaica), writing, independently curating (including the first Jamaican Pavilion at the Venice Biennial in 2002) and creating nationally touring exhibitions. She was awarded a Fulbright-Hayes Grant *for Comparative Cultural Diversity in Transition in the Baltic States and Russia* and in 2008, a Fulbright Fellowship to the National Gallery in Kingston, Jamaica. On her return, she became the founding director of the Museum of the White Mountains. Amidon currently serves as the Executive Director of the Marblehead Arts association and continues independent projects.

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