

Olivia Erlanger, *Planet Me* 13–17 October, 2021 Frieze London

In *Planet Me*, New York-based artist Olivia Erlanger presents nine new sculptures specially conceived for Frieze London. Scattered across the walls and hovering above a dark floor, the works — at once minute and monstrous — oscillate between resembling singular atoms and entire worlds. Struck through their glowing core, metallic arrows pierce each planet as if shot back down to Earth from the celestial realm. Much like the weapons of Eros, god of passion, or those that wounded the mortal warrior Achilles in his heel, these pointed darts reflect on the vulnerability of humanity.

Continuing the artist's use of materials associated with basic technology, each sculpture is finished in a mineral found in lithium batteries. Cobalt, copper, sulphur, sodium, graphite and magnesium coat the works' surfaces and initiate the basic construction of this power-generating unit. Vital in storing energy, a battery constitutes one element in a circuit, which in turn essentially functions as a metaphor for a solar system. The system imagined in *Planet Me* reflects on its own circuitry as Erlanger situates the viewer within an orbit of her own design.

Each work is titled by the latitude and longitude of significant locations from the artist's personal history including former residences as well as the local mall near her grandparents' home in Virginia and her recent vacation accommodation in Greece. Specific yet arbitrary, these locations chart a lifetime of movement across a changing planet, tracing her environments from childhood to a lived present.

Citing references including the Perisphere at the 1939 World's Fair in New York, Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome and the Flat-Earth movement, the artist exaggerates and undermines the use of the sphere in utopian design. Additionally, Erlanger's non-functioning appliances emblematises a tension between design and decoration in the

Soft Opening,

aspirational middle-class home to extend a project that examines how architecture, infrastructure and engineering frame American dreams and delusions. Rather than offering another escapist alternative to a traditional domicile or cityscape as in previous work, Erlanger reimagines absurdist, unviable surrogate environments and outcomes.

The sculpted surface of each sphere depicts aerial views of sections of New England's first information freeway, the Boston post road, the original commercial artery from which the first American suburbs developed in the mid-twentieth century. For Erlanger, this link between metropolis and suburb generates the same interdependent, energetic connectivity as an electrical circuit. Raw materials, provisions, waste and information all pass through the hierarchy of roadways, plumbing and cabling of any metamodern habitat or built world. Together, this group of works considers how over-consumption as a by-product of radical individualism acts as a topographical influence.

List of Works,
in no particular order...

*34.044475879474845° N,
-118.64673408513035° W,*
2021,

Cobalt, aquaresin,
fiberglass, aluminum,
LED lights,
transformer, cable
70 × 64 × 37 cm

*40.7612660284936° N,
-73.96993672171108° W,*
2021

Magnesium, chalk,
aqua resin, fibreglass,
aluminium, LED lights,
transformer, cables
81 × 35 × 32 cm

*40.71875964843092° N,
-73.99129010202795° W,*
2021

Sulphur, aqua resin,
fiberglass, aluminium,
LED lights, transformer,
cables
80 × 28 × 20 cm

*37.350666455067966° N,
23.464661047493465° W,*
2021

Silicone, aluminium,
LED lights,
transformer, cables
71 × 25 × 56 cm

*38.9173100271627° N,
-77.22183907758908° W,*
2021

Silicone, aluminium,
LED lights, transformer,
cables
76 × 47 × 38 cm

*45.484151252919894° N,
9.243747380301704° W,*
2021

Silicone, aluminium,
LED lights,
transformer, cables
40 × 35 × 69 cm

*34.07763410214515° N,
-118.29586209492896° W,*
2021

Copper, aqua resin,
fibreglass, aluminium,
LED lights,
transformer, cables
70 × 24 × 45 cm

*45.50221109355191° N,
-122.63449205090876° W,*
2021

Salt, mother of pearl,
aqua resin, aluminium,
LED lights,
transformer, cables
60 × 30 × 61 cm

*41.149804553968735° N,
-73.31752522169846° W,*
2021

Graphite, aqua resin,
fibreglass, aluminium,
LED lights,
transformer, cables
82 × 17 × 42 cm

Olivia Erlanger (b. 1990, New York, NY) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Her first institutional solo exhibition will be held at Kunstverein Gartenhaus, Vienna, Austria in 2022. Recent solo exhibitions include *Home is a Body*, Soft Opening, London, UK (2020); *Split-level Paradise*, Bel Ami, Los Angeles, CA (2020); *Ida*, Motherculture, Los Angeles, CA (2018); *Poison Remedy Scapegoat* (with Nikima Jagudajev), Human Resources, Los Angeles, CA; *mouths filled with pollen*, And Now, Dallas, TX (2018). Recent group exhibitions include *Liquid Life*, Kistefos Museum, Jevnaker, Norway (2021); *Psychosomatic*, Various Small Fires, Los Angeles, CA (2021); *In Situ*, Marianna Boesky Gallery, New York, NY (2021); *Winterfest*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (2020); *Haunted Haus*, Swiss Institute, New York, NY (2020); *DIS Presents: What do people do all day?* Kunsthalle Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark (2020); *No Space, Just a Place*, Daelim Museum, Seoul, South Korea (2020) and *For a dreamer of houses*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX. Erlanger has presented work at: Galleria Zero, Milan, Italy (2019); Ly Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2019); Capital Gallery, San Francisco, CA (2019); M + B, Los Angeles, CA (2018); Jonathan Ellis King, Dublin, Ireland (2017); CANADA, New York, NY (2017); Pilar Corrias, London, UK (2015); Centre for Style, New York, NY (2015); and Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, Italy (2014). Olivia Erlanger and Luis Ortega Govea co-wrote *Garage* (MIT Press, 2018), a secret history of the attached garage as a space of creativity, from its invention by Frank Lloyd Wright to its use by start-ups and garage bands.

softopening.london