

Artforum January 2012

Mickalene Thomas: The Origin of the Universe

By David Frankel

April 14-August 18 . Curated by Lisa Melandri. A kind of visual *Vagina Monologues*, Mickalene Thomas's "The Origin of the Universe" will take as its starting point two images that even today are most often kept behind closed doors, metaphoric or literal: Gustave Courbet's *L'Origine du monde*, 1866, and Marcel Duchamp's *Etant donnes*, 1946-66. Thomas is known for paintings and collages that combine garish multipatterned and beglittered decors, arthistorical echoes and references, and racial and sexual debate, and here she will premiere more than a dozen paintings, conceived as a suite for the occasion, as well as her own reimagining of Duchamp's infamous installation.

In its juicy yet venerated content, this exhibition seems both a logical and a daring next step. *Travels to the Brooklyn Museum, New York, Sept. 28, 2012- Jan. 20, 2013.*