

The Strange Beauty and Mystery of Migraines with Auras

By Ellen Burgin



© *The Strange Beauty Mystery of Migraines with Auras*. Ellen Burgin. Oil on paper.

In my paintings, I am interested in re-evaluating stories we've been told about femininity and womanhood and many of the stories I explore are centered around the experience of physical pain. One specific manifestation of pain that has interested me for a long time are migraines with auras. Migraines with auras are unpredictable, scary, and disorienting but, as an artist who experiences them, they are fascinating subject matter. These paintings are very large and their overwhelming size is important for conveying the all-consuming migraine experience. Powerlessness is a hallmark of migraines and the process of painting them was a way for me to reclaim a sense of control over my body and to magnify the strange beauty and mystery of my auras.



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Ellen Burgin is an abstract artist who works in a variety of mediums on paper and canvas. She received a BFA from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and an MFA from Louisiana State University. Burgin's paintings are exhibited nationwide and she has a broad range of collectors spanning both coasts. Her paintings can be found in the permanent collections of two museums: The Huntsville Museum of Art in Alabama and the Alexandria Museum of Art in Louisiana. Burgin was born and raised in Marion, North Carolina, a small town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and has called San Francisco home since 2006. Find her on Instagram @ellenburgin or on her website at www.ellenburgin.com.