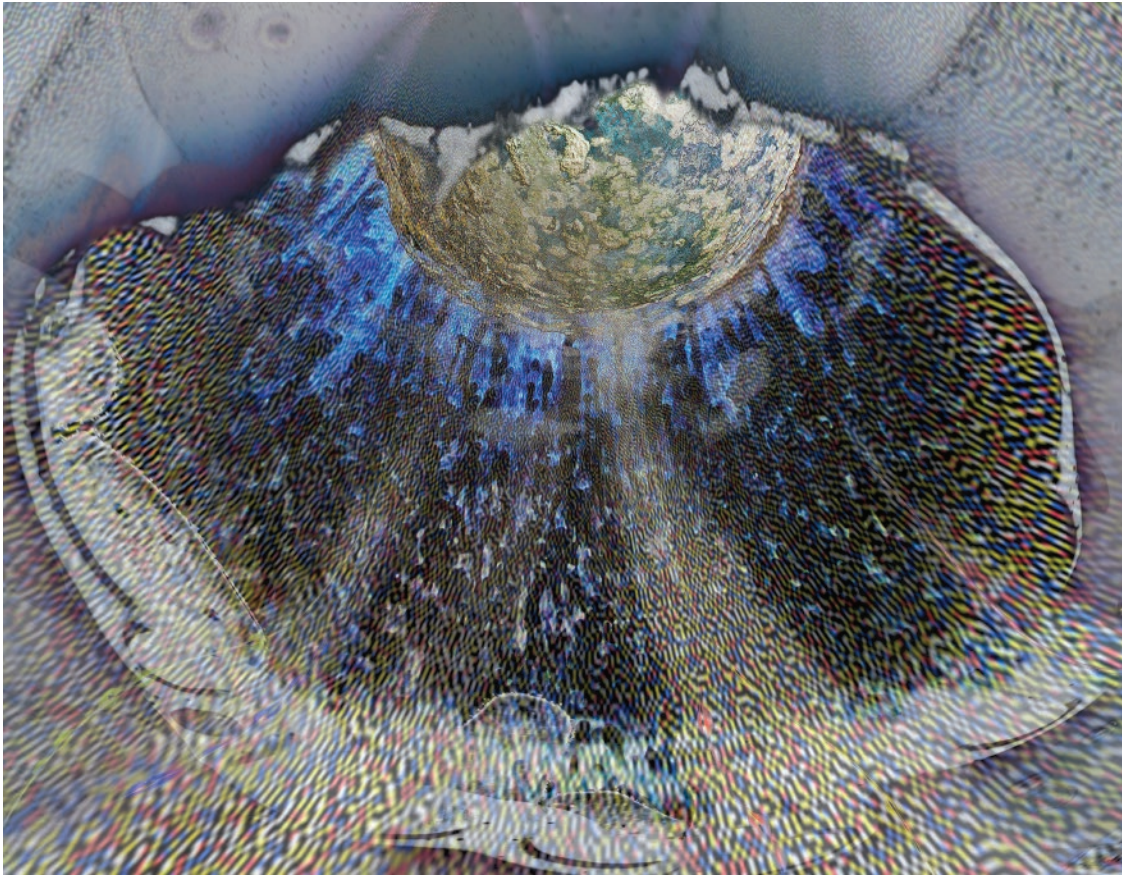


Round Baby Imagines Ships Made of Steel and Stars



At night in her blue shag bedroom, Baby plays a game. First, turn off the lights. Now, feel your pupils dilate, widen, welcome dark like a flood. There, above you, the ceiling whirls like a world. Like a celestial expanse. Imagine ships made of steel and stars. Imagine looping through galaxies, alone. Space is vast, Baby knows, and imagines her parents nowhere inside of it. Press your eyes together hard until colors appear on the thin skin screen of your lids. Count one, two, three. Now open them and picture Mother, Father, floating, like astronauts tethered to the ship of you. Three, two, one, now blink and send them scattering, tumbling into cosmos, cut from the very world.