

PRESS RELEASE

Nadezda Nikolova
Elemental Forms

Exhibition	02.02.2023 – 25.03.2023
Preview	Thursday 2 February 2023, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m., in presence of the artist

Text :
Elisa Bernard

The exhibition *Elemental Forms* presents the work of the artist Nadezda Nikolova, born in the former Yugoslavia, who has recently joined the gallery's programme.

Everything starts with the landscape. First the lived landscape, that of the redwood forests of San Francisco Bay, observed for a long time, to which memories of past experiences are added. Then the landscape drawn before being captured on the metal plate. These are all layers that materialise a singular relationship to the natural world and make the richness of the unique pieces presented in this exhibition.

Nadezda Nikolova's photograms have a close relationship with nature because, like nature, they are in a state of permanent metamorphosis. These images are bridges between the nature that the artist observes and the inner landscapes that inhabit it. From this sensitive experience in contact with the environment, abstract visions emerge.

The meeting of these two perceptions gives the sensation of being truly in the living, as if the artist managed to capture the experience of being in contact with the natural world, an immanent truth that would have the power to put us back at the heart of things.

« Rather than transcribing the observed landscape, I seek to record intuitive responses that speak to the felt and ineffable experience of being present in the landscape, while simultaneously meditating on loss, hope, and meaning. »

Nadezda Nikolova

The attempt to capture this lost intimacy with the landscape is coupled with an anxious look at the future of the natural world, which has been damaged by human activities.

Photography, collage, drawing ? Probably all of these things at the same time, since Nadezda Nikolova makes her images without a camera, in the form of drawings, before working on the surface of the plate with brushes and layers in the darkroom.

Thus, in the short time that separates the primordial drawing from the final photogram, the artist executes a series of very precise gestures that question the limits of the photographic medium. In this experimental work, our gaze is lost in the silence of the material that is born from the burning of the photosensitive elements.

Despite the precision of the drawing and its reproduction on the plate using various tools, the unexpected has its place in Nadezda Nikolova's work. The artist creates a dreamlike visual vocabulary in which the drips draw the contours of an intimate geology that enamels the landscape, while in places the networks of drops appear as parcels of the Milky Way.

In choosing wet collodion, Nadezda Nikolova picks up the threads of a photographic tradition dating from the second half of the 19th century. Her work also nourishes a reflection on time and light because the wet collodion technique has the strange power to make time tangible, as if the memory of the process could be read on the metal plate.

Artist statement

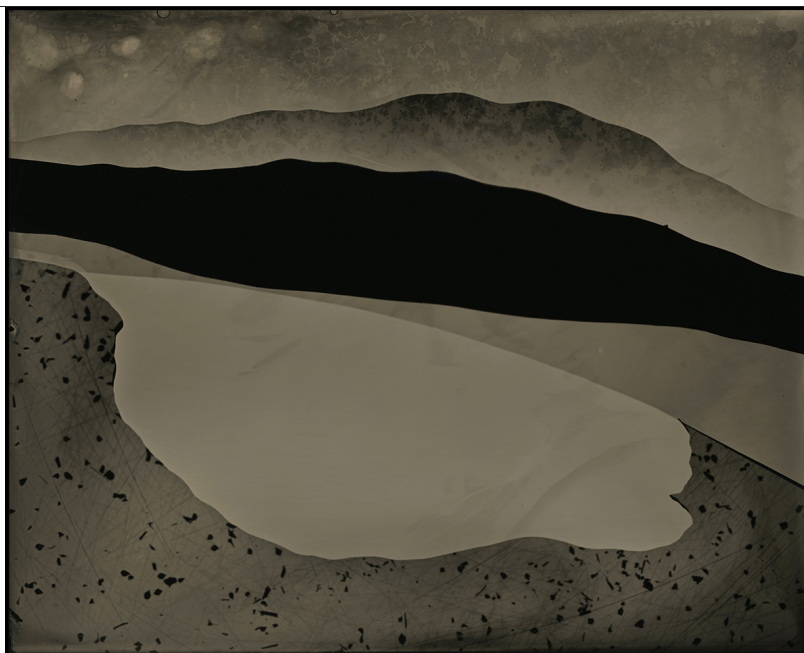
Anchored in a deep connection to the landscape, fascination with the photo-based object, and daily walks in the redwood forest overlooking the San Francisco Bay, her work investigates how observing Nature informs contemplation, perception, and identity, while reflecting on environmental concerns.

Using light, wet plate collodion chemistry, paper cut-outs, cliché verre, and brushes, she creates experimental camera-less works in the darkroom that allude to landscapes, light and atmospheric phenomena, and organic forms found in nature. Rather than transcribing the observed landscape, she seeks to record intuitive responses that speak to the felt and ineffable experiences of being fully present in the landscape—to a sense of wonder, connection, and awe; to a sense of permeating immanence—while simultaneously meditating on loss, hope, and meaning.

Straddling the line between representation and abstraction, the pared down visual vocabulary arises from the immediacy of the photogram as she explores the boundaries of the photographic medium, placing it in conversation with painting, collage, graphic arts, and sculpture.

– Nadezda Nikolova

Images available
for the press



Nadezda Nikolova, *Elemental Forms, Landscape no. 137*,
"Elemental Forms" series, 2021
Unique wet plate collodion, 20,3 × 25,4 cm

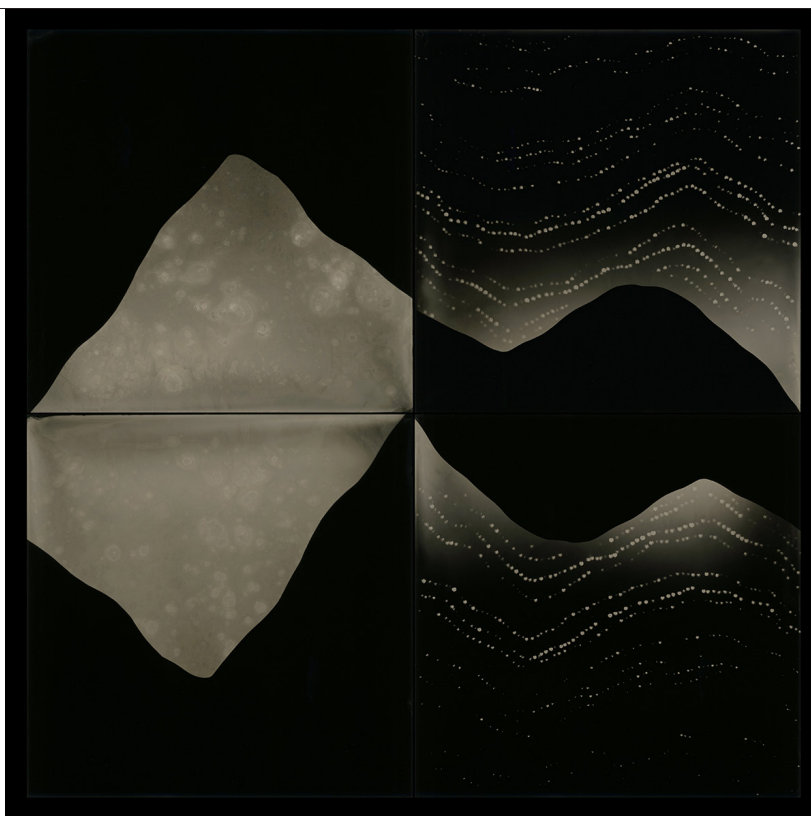


Nadezda Nikolova, *Elemental Forms, Landscape no. 157*,
"Elemental Forms" series, 2021
Unique wet plate collodion 20,3 × 25,4 cm

The use of images is exclusively reserved for the promotion of the exhibition and valid up to its end.

Obligatory mention : ©Nadezda Nikolova courtesy Galerie Esther Woerdehoff

Images available
for the press



Nadezda Nikolova, *Elemental Forms, Landscape Rearticulated no.15*,
"Elemental Forms" series, 2021
Unique wet plate collodion 40,6 × 40,6 cm

The use of images is exclusively reserved for the promotion of the exhibition and valid up to its end.

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BIOGRAPHY

Artist

Nadezda Nikolova

Nadezda Nikolova, born in 1978, is a Croatian-Bulgarian American photographic artist based in Oakland, California. She studied 19th century phototrophic printing processes at the University of Kentucky and the George Eastman Museum. Before becoming a full-time artist, she earned a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and a Master's degree in Policy Analysis. Nadezda Nikolova produces photograms on wet collodion plates (tintypes) imagined in drawing. The artist's imaginary landscapes are produced in the darkroom in a very short time before the sensitive surface dries, using masks and other materials.

Borrowed from reverie and exploration, the plates are assembled to create large compositions that highlight both the beauty of this photographic technique invented in 1851 and the proximity between photography and the pictorial gesture. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally.

Solo exhibitions

2022

Elemental Forms, Center for Photographic Art, Carmel CA, United States

2021

Elemental Forms: Landscape, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom

Group
exhibitions**2022**

The Photography Show by AIPAD, HackelBury Fine Art, New York City, NY, United States

2021

Waiting II, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom

LIGHTWAVES: Experimental Photo Art from California, Marshall Contemporary, Venice, CA, United States

Art in the Plague Year, UCR Arts: California Museum of Photography, Los Angeles, CA, United States

Art Miami, HackelBury Fine Art, Miami, FL, United States

Paris Photo, HackelBury Fine Art, Paris, France

Photo London, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom

Masterpiece Online, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom

2020

Imagining an Island, Symposium in association with Taigh Chearsabhair Museum and Arts Centre, UHI Centre for Rural Creativity, and the Art School at University of the Highlands and Islands, North Uist, Scotland's Outer Hebrides, United-Kingdom

Waiting, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom

Art Miami, HackelBury Fine Art, Online Edition

Photo London, HackelBury Fine Art, Digital Fair

Paris Photo New York, HackelBury Fine Art, New York City, NY, United States

2019

Twenty-One, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom
Out of the Dark, Cabrillo Gallery, Aptos, CA, United States
Art Miami, HackelBury Fine Art, Miami, FL, United States
Paris Photo, HackelBury Fine Art, Paris, France
Photo London, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom
The Photography Show by AIPAD, HackelBury Fine Art, New York City, NY, United States

2018

Alchemy, three person show w. Pierre Cordier and Garry Fabian Miller, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom
Photo Sensitive, Olson-Larsen Galleries, Des Moines, IA, United States
The Voies Off Festival, The Best of LensCulture: Volume 2, Arles, France
Alae, two person show w. Kaden Kratzer, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR, United States
Paris Photo, HackelBury Fine Art, Paris, France
Photo London, HackelBury Fine Art, London, United-Kingdom
Photo London, LensCulture Exposure Awards 2018, London, United-Kingdom

2017

Unique: Alternative Processes, A Smith Gallery, Johnson City, TX, United States
Silhouette, Duncan Miller Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, United States
Little by Little, Art Intersection, Gilbert, AZ, United States
13th Annual National Alternative Process Competition, SohoPhoto Gallery, New York, NY, United States
Other Worlds, SE Center for Photography, Greenville, NC, United States
Light Sensitive 2017 — Celebrating Images From The Darkroom Art Intersection, Gilbert, AZ, United States

2016

Glass & Tin, Don't Take Pictures
Intimate Alchemy: 2016 Annual Juried Exhibition Plates-to-Pixels

2015

Analog Mania, Timisoara, Romania
Illuminate, The Center for Fine Art Photography, Fort Collins, CO, United States
New Alchemy-Lexington Camera Club, Anne Wright Wilson Gallery, Georgetown College, Georgetown, KY, United States
ACTINIC Festival, Scotland
What's Old Is New Again: Alternative Photographic Processes, Gallery 136 1/2 at PhotoSynthesis, Manchester, CT, United States
H2O, A Smith Gallery, Johnston City, TX, United States
Revela-T: Photo Festival of Analog Photography, Vilassar de Dalt, Spain
Lens-less, M S Rezny Studio & Gallery, Lexington, KY, United States

2014

Aura, Lightbox Photographic, Astoria, OR, United States
Theme: ICON {Representations of Semiotics}, SEITIES, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Altered Views, Lightbox Photographic, Astoria, OR, United States

Awards**2018**

Finalist, LensCulture Exposure Awards
Honorable Mention, 13th Annual National Alternative Process Competition,
SohoPhoto Gallery, New York, NY, United States

2016

Finalist, Pohotolucida Critical Mass, Portland, OR, United States

2015

Director's Selection and Juror's Honorable Mention, Illuminate, The Center for Fine
Art Photography, Fort Collins, CO, United States
Second Place, ACTINIC Festival of Alternative Photography, Scotland