

PRESS RELEASE

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**Nadezda Nikolova**  
***Elemental Forms***

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

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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 her. 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.

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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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

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**Artist statement**

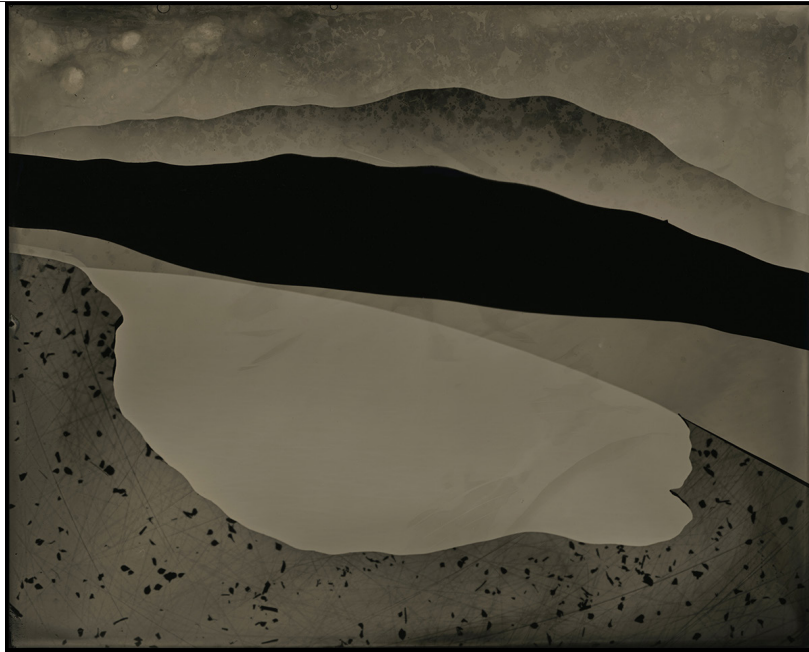
Anchored in a deep connection to the landscape, fascination with the photo-based object, and daily walks in the redwood forest overlooking the San Francisco Bay, her work investigates how observing Nature informs contemplation, perception, and identity, while reflecting on environmental concerns.

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

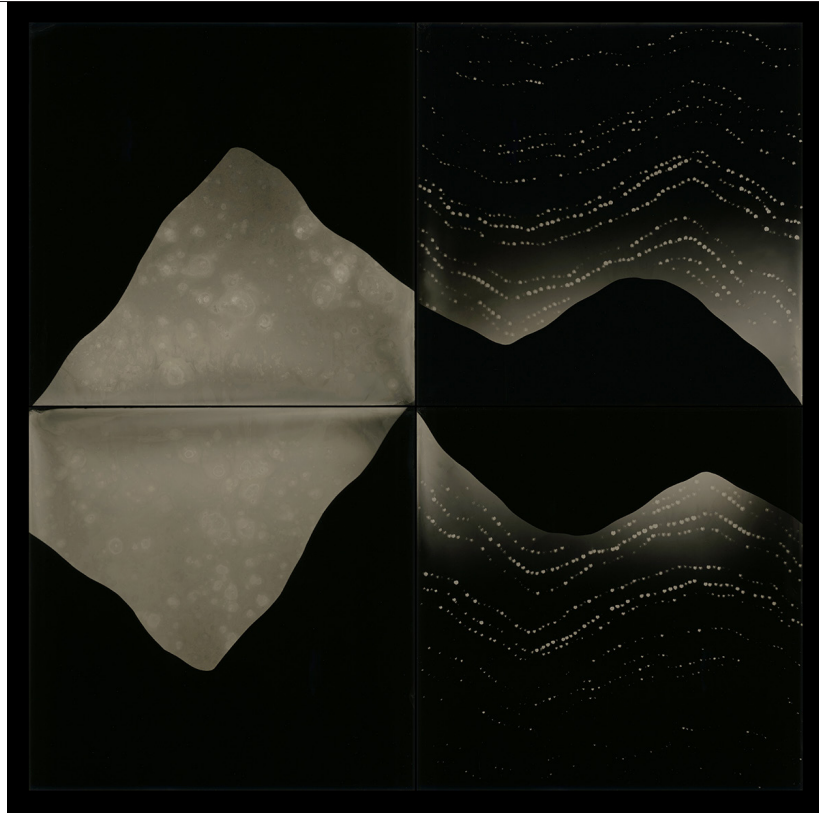


Nadezda Nikolova, *Elemental Forms, Landscape no. 157*,  
"Elemental Forms" series, 2021  
Unique wet plate collodion 20,3 × 25,4 cm

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.

Obligatory mention : ©Nadezda Nikolova courtesy Galerie Esther Woerdehoff

**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 Chearsabhagh 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

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**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