

CHUNG | NAMONT
presents

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GROUND WATERS

LIZ HICKOK
solo exhibition

CHUNG | NAMONT
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CURATOR'S CORNER

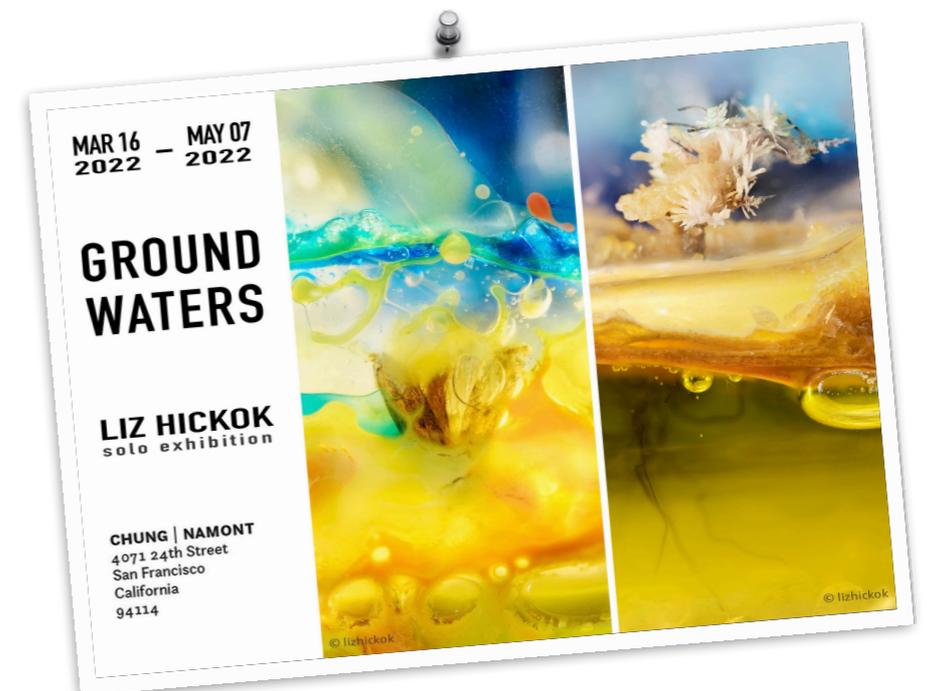
Questions from Emmanuelle Namont

Could you describe your practice? How do you create your images? Do you start with a vision for a photograph and then build the objects or the other way around?

With my Ground Waters series, which I am showing at CHUNG | NAMONT, I actually approach the process in both ways. Sometimes I have a vision for an idea and I will make sketches and plan it all out like a movie set, as with Incident and Deluge. I construct a small scene in my studio, and then I flood it with the chemical Monoammonium Phosphate, which grows crystals over a period of days or weeks.

But then there are other times when I work in a more experimental way. I might be testing out the way the crystals grow on a new material, or how colors might interact. And then something interesting develops unexpectedly, and I capture it for a photograph. *Biosphere* and *Viscosity* are examples of images that evolved organically out of this experimental process. These two processes then result in two different types of images—some are more narrative, with a clear point of view, while others are more abstract and evocative.

CURATOR'S CORNER



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Your work with Jell-O has been well recognized. Why did you transition from that work to *Ground Waters*?

What appeals to you about the crystal?

Do the two materials address the same concepts?

I had been working on my Jell-O series for at least 10 years and was ruminating on what was to come next. It was at that point when I stumbled across a “Magic Garden” crystal-growing kit, and I knew it was going to be in my future. That moment revealed how much I clearly respond to materials for inspiration. Both Jell-O and crystals are playful, luminous, and fragile. The way they both change and evolve in ways that I can’t control—Jell-O molds or petrifies, and the crystals might completely overtake a set. I love to integrate this unpredictability in my creative process.

Both Jell-O and the crystals that I grow (I tend to use the chemical Monoammonium Phosphate) are also incredibly fragile. The Jell-O buildings might start to sweat or melt, as with my City Hall in Jell-O image, and the crystal formations will crumble or dissolve if I am not careful. Their ephemeral nature introduces beautiful metaphors in my work about the cities and landscape that surrounds us.

CURATOR'S CORNER



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Could you name one or two artists who keep inspiring you?

At a young age, Cindy Sherman and James Casebere both inspired me in the way they constructed their own realities to then photograph. I loved the way Casebere incorporated such strong light and emotion into his photographs of the scale models he made. Then James Turrell and Olafur Elisson captured my imagination. Eliasson's experimentations with scientific phenomena and his translations into visceral installations were (and are) incredibly inspiring. Most recently, Wangechi Mutu's multidisciplinary practice has been deeply moving.



Cindy Sherman



James Casebere



Olafur Elisson



James Turrell



Wangechi Mutu

CURATOR'S CORNER

What is your next project?

I am currently working on a few different projects. I have an interactive public art installation that I am working on with my collaborator, Phil Spitler, which we will be installing shortly in Los Altos, CA.

I'm also working on a series called Residuum (Gowanus to Hunters Point), in which I combine photographs of the surface of the highly toxic Gowanus Canal with data visualizations and video projection. Whereas previously I have constructed my own ephemeral worlds and captured them through photography and video, with this project there is no need to build a new reality because the truth is otherworldly.



Liz Hickok