

CHRISTINE ELFMAN

All solid shapes dissolve in light

March 19 - April 30, 2022

Opening reception: Saturday, March 19, 2022, 3-7 pm

Conversation between Christine Elfman and Shana Lopes, Assistant Curator of Photography, SFMOMA, Tuesday, March 22, 2022 6:00pm to 7:30pm

EUQINOM Gallery is pleased to present its first solo exhibition of works by gallery artist Christine Elfman. *All solid shapes dissolve in light* centers around the artist's work with anotypes made from lichen dye and developed through month-long exposures in the sun. Elfman uses both medium and subject to explore the unity and tension of binaries such as stillness and change, distance and intimacy, and visibility and the unknown. *All solid shapes dissolve in light* opens on March 19 and runs through April 30, 2022 with an opening reception on Saturday, March 19, 3-7 pm.

Bearing witness to the natural cycle of growth and decay, the anotype is a photograph made from the same components that eventually facilitate its entropy. Christine Elfman's fading pictures embody the constant transformation of objects, images, and memory. The images develop slowly: sitting outside for a month, the sun bleaches paper saturated with light-sensitive natural dyes. Once complete, these unfixable photographs slowly fade from the very same light that allows them to be seen.

In *All solid shapes dissolve in light*, Elfman has coated many of her anotypes with resin, prolonging their lifespan. Like an insect encased in amber, the resin acts as a preservative, slowing the breakdown of the dye molecules. When paired with fixed silver gelatin and gold toned iron-silver prints, the images emphasize a tension between the archival impulse and ephemerality of photography and the subjects themselves. The works offer a rare opportunity to witness the constant cycle of growth and decay, as the images are continuously made anew as they decline.

In contrast to the ephemerality of their medium, the subjects of these pictures are plaster casts of the artist's and mother's hands, fragments of plaster cast statues, and rocks - tactile objects that may appear solid, yet dissolve in light. Elfman discusses the contrast and the collapse between the medium and subject of her work:

We photograph to define, hold, capture things. However, pictures remind us of everything left undescribed and unknown. Early photographers were obsessed with fixing the image, so it would last forever. Yet experience shows us that the more you try to hold something still, the more it's ruined. Taking a picture is like catching a bird for a collection, or turning a person into a statue. The subject matter of my work reflects this desire for security. However, the materiality of the prints acknowledges the necessity of change. This ruin - the fading - is the subject, medium, and fate of my photographs. And in their fading, they're living, changing slowly, imperceptibly over time.

About Christine Elfman

Christine Elfman received her MFA from California College of the Arts, and BFA from Cornell University. Her interest in ephemerality has been influenced by family photographs and her work with historic collections at the George Eastman House, University of Rochester Rare Books Library, and the Berkeley Art Museum. She has worked with and taught experimental photographic processes for over 15 years, beginning with the wet-plate collodion and albumen printing processes as an intern for France Scully Osterman in Rochester, NY. She has had solo exhibitions at Penumbra Foundation (New York), Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, University of the Arts (Philadelphia), Gallery Wendi Norris (San Francisco)

EUQINOM gallery

and Somarts (San Francisco). Awards include a Light Work Grant in Photography, Penumbra Workspace Residency, Saltonstall Foundation Residency, and San Francisco Artist Award. Her work has appeared in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Photograph Magazine*, *Der Greif*, *Loupe Magazine*, *Humble Arts Foundation*, *SF Weekly*, and other publications. . Elfman has taught art at Bowdoin College, Cornell University, San Francisco Art Institute, and lives in Upstate New York.

About EUQINOM

Founded in 2015, EUQINOM Gallery represents emerging and mid-career contemporary artists. The gallery is focused on presenting multidisciplinary work that expands the boundaries of photo-based practices. Ranging from the ephemeral to the documentary, the program champions work that is rigorous in-process and practice and demonstrates a lively engagement with photo and art histories. EUQINOM Gallery represents their artists and works closely with their clients to create a tailored and thoughtful approach in all relationships. The gallery is proud of its dynamic roster of artists and continues to grow artist practices through a combination of interdisciplinary artist talks, museum placements, publishing, and other dynamic career opportunities.