

AMOS ENO GALLERY

Towards a New Animism

January 6th – 30th, 2022

Opening Reception: Friday, 1/7/22 from 6 PM to 9 PM

Virtual Film Screening, 'Invisible Hand': 1/6/22 - 1/9/22

Salon Discussion with Artists and Filmmaker Melissa

Troutman: Saturday, 1/8/22 from 2 PM to 3:30 PM

Closing Reception: Sunday, 1/30/22 from 4 PM to 6 PM



January 6th-30th, 2022

Candace Jensen
David Nakabayashi
Kathleen Vance
Jo Watko
Joyce Yamada
with Project Space Installation by
Grant Johnson

Amos Eno Gallery is pleased to present *Towards A New Animism*, which includes the work of 6 artists whose practice observes and responds to the vital and infinitely complex relationships between humans and the living planet. The show also explores the possibilities for shifts in cultural focus, especially in the context of our universal crises; climate change, and ecosystem degradation and destabilization.

“Animism” is an anthropological term used to define and categorize worldviews and spiritual beliefs that attribute soul or spirit to places, creatures and material. It implies that places, creatures and matter have animacy or agency, even if rather different from our own. The artwork included in *Towards A New Animism* offers both critiques and subtle alternatives to the flawed perspectives of anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism, and posits moving toward a new ecological baseline; if we recognize the qualities of agency in non-human beings and matter, then navigating new relationships with them, and acknowledging their rights to exist and thrive, becomes imperative.

This assembly of visual work joins conversations already happening between scientists, philosophers, activists, and thinkers of all stripes— synthesizing views which acknowledge that Life is self-generating, complex, deriving from relationships of both competition and co-operation, and insistently re-forming balance moment by moment through all interactions great and small. There was a time when some in the sciences thought that life was nothing more than a mechanical process, like a machine— and so many of our cultural views still echo this. However, we are now invited to regard that as a radically outmoded idea, and to instead see life as a creative process, and to creatively participate and collaborate. This vision of humanity within a continuum of all beings related to each other, entwined and entangled, dependent on each other in mysterious and unexpected ways, is not a new idea exactly, but in this dire time, new ways of enacting and embracing this idea could be a vital and inspired turn.

And how do we get there? We start where we are; we become engaged in an erotic ecology with place and life through simple acts of observation, through reverent contemplation, and through curious attention— such as we see here in paint, writing, collage, sculpture, photography and recording. We build relationship to place, establish an awareness of beauty. *Towards a New Animism* proposes that a humble appreciation of complexity and cultivation of wonder will make possible what all of the knowledge of our dire circumstances hasn't been able to do on its own— to inspire us to protect the long list of 'things' we love, and enable the list to grow ever longer.

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Towards a New Animism is co-curated by Amos Eno Gallery artist members Candace Jensen and Joyce Yamada, who consistently engage with themes of ecology and 'environmental issues' through painting, language, book arts, and sculpture. They welcome to this exhibition; painter David Nakabayashi (NYC), sculptor Kathleen Vance (New York), and ceramicist Jo Watko (Philadelphia), who also address key ecological issues of our times with beauty, intelligence, and passion. They are joined by fellow gallery member, Grant Johnson (environmental photographer, video and installation artist) in the Project Space.

Candace Jensen (she/her) is a polymath artist and radical idealist living on the unceded lands of the Elnu Abenaki and Pennacook people (Southern Vermont). Jensen earned an MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and a BFA from Tyler School of Art, both in Philadelphia (traditional lands of the Lenni-Lenape). She has exhibited her work in New York, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Vermont and Antwerp, Belgium, and is currently represented by Amos Eno Gallery in Brooklyn, NY. Jensen serves as the Book Arts & Letterpress Director at the Ruth Stone House, Art Editor of *Iterant Magazine*, and is Co-founder and Programming Director of In Situ Polyculture Commons, an arts residency and regenerative culture catalyst.

www.candacejensen.com • @artist.cjensen on IG

Joyce Yamada (American, b. 1949) Joyce Yamada as a teenager wrote intensively. She soon realized that although she was pursuing imagery through poetry, she had no real love for language as a medium. After a semester at UC, Berkeley in 1967, she enrolled at the San Francisco Art Institute as a visual artist. After various misadventures, she went to medical school, becoming a board-certified Diagnostic Radiologist. For two decades she worked as an artist one week, a radiologist the next. She retired from medicine in 2004, moving to Brooklyn in 2006 as a full-time artist. A painter and installation artist, she is profoundly interested in science and ecology, contemplating the deep history of life on earth, we humans in relation to Nature, and our collective possible futures. She has exhibited in numerous group shows in New York City, Boston, and Alexandria, VA., and is currently represented by the Amos Eno Gallery in Brooklyn, NY.

<https://joyceyamada.com/>

David Nakabayashi was born in Germany and grew up in Japan, Oklahoma, and Texas. He is a self-taught artist with a wide range of experience working as a cook, a cotton chopper, a musician, a naturalist, a graphic designer, and an urban designer. His rootless childhood evolved into a lifelong exploration of the American landscape with its homogeneous sprawl, forgotten architecture, untamable Nature and chance cultural encounters, all of which filter into his artwork, which includes painting, works on paper, collage, ceramics, mixed media sculpture, photography, installation, music and video.

David has exhibited his artwork throughout Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma at venues including the El Paso Museum of Art, the Museo Regional in Chihuahua, Mexico, Mexic-Arte Museum in Austin, Living Arts of Tulsa and Box Gallery and Zane Bennet Gallery in Santa Fe. David has lived and worked in New York City since 2013 and has exhibited at SFA Gallery and The Sheen Center for Thought & Culture in Manhattan and Iorimoto gallery in Queens. He is currently represented by Judy Ferrara Gallery in Three Oaks, MI.

<https://www.davidnakabayashi.com/>

Kathleen Vance is an environmental artist who creates projects that connect people to local aspects of Nature that are overlooked or under-appreciated. "In my work I distinguish forms that are indicative of growth and explore the variance between experiences of an authentic natural encounter vs. an inauthentic encounter. I look for the ways in which Nature can be brought back into the course of one's daily life. I am intrigued by areas where manicured Nature is being reclaimed by the wild. With my installations I engage viewers with the experience of a space being overtaken by natural elements. I bring discarded particles from the forestry floor together to be revived in my constructions." <https://www.vanceartworks.com/>

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Jo Watko (she/her) is a ceramic artist based out of Philadelphia, PA. She graduated from Tyler School of Art with a BFA in Ceramics, and BFA in Painting in 2008. She has been a studio assistant and glaze technician for Jason Silverman Ceramics since 2008. During this time, she has focused on maintaining a studio practice in both sculptural and functional ceramics. Her work is informed by processes in Nature and our connection or distance from them. This exploration takes the form of sculpture, installation, tile, and utilitarian vessels.

<https://www.jowatko.com/>

Grant Johnson's work is dominated by a fascination with form, specifically the interaction of natural and human forces with the landscape. Trained as a painter and photographer before becoming involved with new media, he received the first graduate degree in experimental video awarded by the Rhode Island School of Design in 1975. For twenty years, Johnson was an assignment photographer for The Nature Conservancy covering California and areas of Hawaii, concurrently working in film and television as a video engineer and camera operator specializing in aerial photography. He currently uses reconnaissance image processing technology to interpret his terrestrial and aerial photographs as large prints. In 2008, the entire Landsat image collection became public domain enabling the creation of ultra high altitude satellite image composites showing the effects of our competitive consumption and climate change.

<http://grantjohnson.net/>

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