

Judy Chicago
The Natural World

May 14 – July 9, 2022



Judy Chicago, *Circumscribed by the Garden (Garden Smoke boxed set)*, 2020.
Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco.

Daniel Faria Gallery is pleased to present *The Natural World*, a solo exhibition of work by Judy Chicago from 1973 – present. This exhibition coincides with Chicago's site-specific smoke performance *A Tribute to Toronto* (2022) at Sugar Beach for the Toronto Biennial of Art on June 4, 2022, and is included in the 2022 edition of Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival.

Running through Judy Chicago's practice is a deep and longstanding concern for the environment. Her desire for both ecological harmony and just societies has fueled her art since her 1960s "Atmospheres" to more recent portraits of endangered species.

Chicago first turned to pyrotechnics in the late 1960s in an effort to feminize the atmosphere at a time when the southern California art scene was almost entirely male dominated.

Between 1968 and 1974, Judy Chicago executed a series of increasingly complex fireworks pieces that involved site-specific performances around California. Rather than cutting into the land or attempting to manipulate it as the male artists did, she sought to “soften and feminize the environment, if only for a moment.” She celebrated the earth with beautiful, transient color, enveloping the earth as if it were truly a female “mother.”

In the 1990s, Chicago’s concern for climate change was expressed in a series of colour drawings, validating the dignity and life force of trees in the face of drought. In her more recent work, the artist continues exploring themes of death: her own mortality, as well as the mortality of entire ecosystems that have been irreparably damaged by the action, or inaction, of humans. Between 2019 and 2020 Chicago created “Before It’s Too Late,” a series of portraits of animals endangered in the American Southwest. Using china paint on porcelain, her materials are a reflection of life itself: simultaneously hard and fragile.

Since March 2020, Chicago has been creating artwork in response to life during the pandemic and the feelings of isolation that it has caused. Her creative impulse culminates with “Garden Smoke”—a set of 12 prints that document a series of intimate smoke sculptures that Chicago created during the pandemic in her personal gardens in Belen and Albuquerque, New Mexico. The smoke performance works were photographed and printed by Chicago’s artistic and life partner Donald Woodman in Belen where the couple live and work.

In all of these works, Chicago asks viewers to contemplate their own fate as it is tied to the treatment of other species and the planet. The works’ foundation lies in the feminist principle that justice for women is connected to a global justice, one that includes the humane treatment of all creatures.

Judy Chicago (b. 1939, Chicago, IL) has worked for six decades pioneering Feminist art and art education. She has work in the collections of the British Museum, Moderna Museet, Tate, Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Gallery, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, Hammer Museum, Getty Trust and Getty Research Institute, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Art Institute of Chicago, and over 25 university art museums such as Brandeis, Cornell, Harvard, Illinois, Michigan, UCLA, Canterbury (New Zealand) and Cambridge (UK). Over the past four years, Chicago’s work has been exhibited in a broad range of major thematic group shows such as “Pacific Standard Time: Made in LA” at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; “Ends of the Earth” at Haus der Kunst, Berlin; “Pretty Raw: After and Around Helen Frankenthaler” at the Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA and “The World Goes Pop” at Tate Modern, London. Recent museum surveys include “Judy Chicago: A Reckoning” at the ICA Miami (2018); “The End: A Meditation on Death and Extinction” at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. (2019) and her first retrospective at The De Young Museum, San Francisco CA (2021). Chicago lives and works in Belen, NM and is represented by Jessica Silverman, San Francisco.

For more information contact Madeleine Taurins at:
madeleine@danielfariagallery.com or 416 538 1880

Daniel Faria Gallery
188 St Helens Avenue
Toronto, ON M6H 4A1
416 538 1880
www.danielfariagallery.com