

CHAPTER NY

For immediate release

Erin Jane Nelson

Sublunary

March 31 – May 6, 2023

Opening Reception: Friday March 31, 6 –8 pm

Chapter NY is excited to announce, *Sublunary*, Erin Jane Nelson's second solo exhibition with the gallery, featuring a new body of work centered around the Okefenokee swamp, including quilted silks, ceramic wall works, and ceramic sculpture.

Nelson's practice unfolds serially, with each project delving into new conceptual frameworks as far ranging as regional histories of the Southern barrier islands, formative personal relationships, spirituality as a process of mourning and healing, and science fiction narratives. Her multimedia works—including silks, hand-crafted quilts, panels, and ceramics—all stem from photographic source material that the artist intuitively merges and collages together.

For her newest series, Nelson explores the Okefenokee swamp in a remote area along the Georgia-Florida border, allowing the landscape to guide her formal choices and seep into the content of her work. Prevalent in the American South, wetlands play an important role in protecting and preserving the natural world by absorbing excess water and repurposing harmful chemicals. Despite their valuable ecological contributions, nearly half of U.S. wetlands have been eradicated and continue to be threatened. Throughout history swamps have also carried negative associations with witches, monsters, concealment, and decay.

Nelson harnesses these connotations as well as the site's resilience to explore its generative potential. The title of the exhibition, *Sublunary*, is a term that points to the terrestrial world, that which is situated below the moon, the mundane. Nelson, however, reclaims the sublunary realm as a site of higher possibilities, one that stems from interconnectivity and regeneration, and reveals the expansive, healing potential of the non-human world.

Enacting an ephemeral performance over several visits to the swamp, the artist photographed various life forms, created self-portraits, made drawings, and placed her ceramics along the water. The shapes of her compositions stem from these observed visual references and her glazes emphasize the wetness of the environment and its varied textures. Throughout the swamp, the blackwater reflects its surroundings with unsettling clarity, blurring boundaries and eliminating any hard edges. The artist channels the subsuming quality of this murky space to speculatively explore the intermingling between her body and the swamp itself.

Erin Jane Nelson (b. 1989, Neenah, Wisconsin) lives and works in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2011 she received her BFA from The Cooper Union. She has had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, Atlanta; Chapter NY, New York; DOCUMENT, Chicago; and the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, Atlanta; among others. Her work was included in the *2021 New Museum Triennial* and has been included in group exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Aspen Art Museum, Aspen; the Fries Museum in Leeuwarden, NLD; La Galerie, centre d'art contemporain, Noisy-le-Sec; Deli Gallery, Brooklyn; Van Doren Waxter, New York; and the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich.