

These stunning photograms are a meditative, poetic rumination on nature

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Photo editor

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Nadezda Nikolova-Kratzer's photograms are beautiful in their seeming simplicity. Looking at them can be a meditative experience. They seem to hover and shimmer before your eyes. I have only seen them in electronic form; the experience must be even more dramatic in person.

If you are lucky enough to be anywhere near London, you can see them at HackelBury Fine Art, where they will be on display in an exhibit called, "Elemental Forms, Landscape" from Sept. 9 to Oct. 30.

Nikolova-Kratzer creates her photograms using the wet plate collodion process, which involves using light sensitive salts to cover a glass plate and then exposing that to light in the darkroom. She says this, of her creative process, "I spray, dab and brush on the chemistry in a performative enactment rather than an image capture. (Sometimes, the brush strokes leave physical marks on the emulsion.) In essence, I am negotiating with the chemistry, guiding it. But only to a point. The chemistry has a say in the final image."

Nikolova-Kratzer's work is born from her daily experiences walking in the redwood forests near where she lives in Oakland, Calif. The abstract landscape series presented in this new exhibit are all responses to her surroundings on those walks.

The resulting photograms are a reflection of Nikolova-Kratzer's love of nature and her concern for the environment. The elegant simplicity of her sumptuous landscapes belie the fact that she creates them using a complex set of variables, "including temperature, humidity and the timing of the exposure," as stated by HackelBury Fine Art in a statement, required to bring all of the elements together into a finished print.

HackelBury Fine Art further illuminates Nikolova-Kratzer's process:

"Drawing on poetry, literature and a myriad of artistic influences including Japanese Notan design, Matisse paper-cuts and the organic landscapes of Georgia O'Keefe, Nikolova-Kratzer creates photographic compositions which become sculptural in their focus on the object yet have the depth and thought of a painting.

"Using geometrical shapes and floating planes, these works build on her preceding series of landscapes taking them to a higher level of abstraction. With the materiality of the photographic medium, she seeks to record intangible aspects of the landscape, as she experiences them, through immersion and observation, without the camera's capacity for transcription."

You can find out more about HackelBury Fine Art on its website, [here](#).