



Malia Jensen: Nearer Nature

February 5 – April 3, 2021

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present *Nearer Nature*, an exhibition of new video and sculpture by Malia Jensen. It opens Friday, February 5th, and continues through April 3rd.

This body of work is the culmination of *Nearer Nature Project*, a two-year endeavor which grew out of the artist's desire to explore our complex relationships with the natural world and with one another. Beginning in early 2019, Jensen carved six sculptures from livestock salt licks and installed them in carefully selected wild places across the state of Oregon. Over a year, eighteen motion-triggered cameras monitored the sculptures and the surrounding landscape, recording not only wildlife but also the dissolution of the carved salt and the changing seasons.

Using an intricate filing system and working closely with an editor, Jensen's trove of wildlife footage was compiled into a six-hour video entitled *Worth Your Salt*, displayed on three monitors in the gallery. Comprised of thousands of 30-second clips captured by the trail cameras, the video features four quadrants of sequential footage on each monitor, evoking the grid of closed-circuit surveillance. *Worth Your Salt* represents 24 hours of footage, compressed into a multi-channel format.

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As the surveillance concluded at each location, Jensen collected the deteriorated salt sculptures from their various sites, embracing the collaborative efforts of the animals and the corrosive effects of weather. Collaborating with fabricators at the Yucca Valley Material Lab in January of 2020, she created an edition in translucent white kiln-cast glass. The works showcase the effects of the outdoors on their surfaces but retain traces of the original designs, carved to represent different parts of the body: a Brancusi-esque head, a breast, two hands, a stack of doughnuts (the stomach), and a foot.

By commemorating the weathered human forms in glass, Jensen is creating both ode and cautionary tale, finding beauty in our vulnerability. The 6-hour video *Worth Your Salt* gives us a window into the ordinary life of the natural world and an immersive opportunity for contemplation. In the artist's words, "Patterns emerge: changing light, growing antlers, pairings, births, behaviors shifting with the seasons. The mundane becomes beautiful, the unfamiliar becomes intimate, underscoring our interconnections and the myriad ways we walk on shared ground."

Malia Jensen's (b. 1966, Honolulu, HI) diverse studio practice is informed by an interest in natural cycles and the fragility of the constructed systems we use to navigate the world. Her work has been exhibited at The Schneider Museum of Art, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Tacoma Art Museum, Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, Holter Museum of Art, Portland Art Museum, and Mesa Arts Center. She has been an Artist in Residence at the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, Ucross Foundation, Headlands Center for the Arts, and the Portland Garment Factory; and a visiting artist and speaker at Whitman College, Southern Oregon University, Pacific Northwest College of Art, and Massachusetts College of Art and Design. She has completed several public commissions in the Northwestern United States, and her work is held in numerous public and private collections. She received a BFA from the Pacific Northwest College of Art in 1989. Jensen lives and works in Portland, OR.

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