

BERGGRUEN

GALLERY

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JANE HAMMOND

Endless Forms Most Beautiful

October 19th – November 22, 2023

Berggruen Gallery is proud to announce *Jane Hammond: Endless Forms Most Beautiful*, an exhibition of new botanical collages and compositions. This show marks her second solo exhibition with the gallery. *Endless Forms Most Beautiful* will be on view from October 19 through November 22, 2023. The gallery will host a reception for the artist on Thursday, October 19, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

Endless Forms Most Beautiful showcases a series of large, expansive botanical compositions exploring the relationship between physical elements and their symbolic associations. Each botanical exists slightly outside of the realm of possibility, featuring flora and fauna from disparate continents in atypical scales and colors. Some featured species, like the *Xerces Blue butterflies in San Francisco Yacht Club Trophy with Paradise Flycatcher, Nigella and Xerces Blues*, are extinct, but retain historical and ecological significance to the multi-layered interactions of Hammond's work, which can be simultaneously allusive and explicit. The compositions' symbolic precision results from what the artist describes as descending into a "rabbit hole," where each detail of each element is meticulously researched and expanded upon to initiate historical, environmental, and allegorical relationships between every component in the composition. These underlying attributes, often obscure or esoteric, instigate a chain reaction which physically and metaphysically tenses the work. It is from these tensions that Hammonds' works derive their central potency, culminating in a dynamism that arrests the spectator visually and intellectually.

Hammond creates her artworks attentively but improvisationally, working off a color palette or composition which metamorphosizes as she experiments with different elements and tensions. She uses a variety of media to create each unique artwork—including hand painting, digital printing, linocutting, and assemblage—before finally fastening her combinations using a German dry adhesive and a PVA glue used in archival bookbinding. The piece is then dampened with water and leveled with flat pressure. What emerges is a flamboyant collection of flora and fauna which is at once visually stimulating and almost fantastical. This process allows the artist a vivid playfulness with color, light source, and scale as each artwork's visual and philosophical scope ascends.

Endless Forms Most Beautiful takes its name from Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, in which Darwin writes: "There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone circling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." As such, each composition celebrates life's cyclicity and interconnectedness, highlighting ecological and symbolic relationships which exist outside of a defined place or time. Hammond's practice thereby hinges on the balance between materiality and transcendence, resulting in beautiful works which rigorously and repeatedly challenge spectators from every angle.

Jane Hammond was born in 1950 in Bridgeport, CT. She received her B.A. from Mount Holyoke College in 1972 and her MFA from University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1977. Her work is in the permanent collections of over seventy-five museums, including the National Gallery of Art, SFMoMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art. In 2019, she was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship. Hammond currently lives and works in New York City.

Jane Hammond: Endless Forms Most Beautiful, October 19 – November 22, 2023. On view at 10 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Images and preview are available upon request. For all inquiries, please contact the gallery by phone at (415) 781-4629 or by email at info@berggruen.com.