

## MACAULAY & CO. FINE ART

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293 EAST 2nd AVENUE  
VANCOUVER BC CANADA  
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### **JONAH SAMSON**

### **NOTHING TO BE DONE**

**Opening: Saturday, December 11th, 2021**

“Nothing to be done.” The opening line of Samuel Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot”. Perhaps never more relevant since it was first written over 50 years ago then during Covid-19 lockdowns. It’s a play in which little happens. A play about the process of waiting.

Over the course of the pandemic Jonah Samson spent days at his home next to the ocean on Cape Breton Island, and felt inspired not only by Beckett’s absurdist plays, but also by some of the earliest photographs made by Anna Atkins – considered as the first female photographer. In the 1840s she made cyanotype photographs of seaweed, and compiled them together in the first ever book of photography. Similarly Jonah Samson used Anna Atkins and Samuel Beckett as guides for his most recent exhibition at Macaulay Fine Art in Vancouver.

Gathering seaweed from the beach in front of his house, Samson began to print cyanotypes on antique linens which date back to the 19th century, close to the time Atkins was making her own prints. Samson’s cyanotypes expanded to other plants in the fields and forests near his home – their silhouettes recorded on fabric using the UV rays of the sun. Produced over the course of a year, his photograms on linen were then hand-stitched together inspired by traditional Acadian quilting techniques and Japanese textile work, including hand-dyeing with natural indigo. These photographic textile pieces are records of a location, it’s transition through the seasons, and are embedded with the power of the sun. And just as Atkins sourced plants to create the first ever book of photographs, Samson sources found photographs to produce a series of hand-made photo books. Each book references absurdist theatre by carefully sequencing images from the artist’s extensive collection of photos found at flea markets and on eBay. The exquisite hand-bound volumes of silver gelatin and archival ink prints are bound in indigo-dyed antique linen and handmade Japanese kozo paper.

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### **Jonah Samson**

(Lives and Works in Cape Breton Island)

Jonah Samson is a self-taught artist who has exhibited nationally and internationally. Samson creates work that merges photographic, filmic and painterly processes. Absurdist theatre and literature are often referenced in his evocation of the bizarre and offbeat. He presented his first solo exhibition with Macaulay & Co. Fine art in 2015, followed by a second solo show in 2018. His exhibition *Another Happy Day* (2013) at Presentation House was listed as one of the top 10 shows that season by Canadian Art. His work has been exhibited in North America, the United States and Internationally. He currently lives in Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia.