

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Utopian Reefscapes – Nikolina Kovalenko

October 9 – November 21, 2021

Opening reception: Saturday October 9, 4-8pm

Caldwell Gallery Hudson is pleased to present an exhibition of Nikolina Kovalenko's paintings of coral reefs from her ***Utopian Reefscapes*** series.

Kovalenko (b.1987) works with fragile ecosystems creating artwork inspired by locations specific to each project. *Utopian Reefscapes* address the effects of climate change on the health of the ocean's coral population. Scientists estimate 50% of the world's coral reefs have been destroyed, and expect another 40% to disappear over the next twenty years due to warming oceans, pollution, overfishing, and habitat destruction.



In 2019 the artist received her PADI license and began exploring coral reefs in person. She taught herself underwater photography to capture coral reefs as they are today. These images are the jumping off point for her work, which imagines what could be under the ocean surface if we all committed to taking better care of the Earth. In her efforts to bring awareness to this environmental calamity, Kovalenko's imagined *Utopian Reefscapes* depict an ocean of abundance, where corals of all shapes and colors thrive. These underwater Gardens of Eden take viewers to a world where one can't tell reality from fiction. "I'm hopeful these paintings will inspire viewers to feel joy, awe, curiosity – and a shared sense of stewardship toward our beautiful, fragile planet," says Kovalenko.

For this special exhibition, the artist will be in residency at CGH, painting a work live in the gallery's sidewalk window. The work will be raffled with 100% of the proceeds donated to the [Coral Reef Alliance](#). In addition, 20% of all painting sales will be donated to the Coral Reef Alliance. For each painting in the exhibition, the artist will create a "reflection experience" NFT (Non-Fungible Token), and 20% of those sales proceeds will also be donated to the Coral Reef Alliance.

The exhibition coincides with the launch of CGH's new venture CGH Blockchain. The exhibit's NFTs were minted on the environmentally friendly Polygon blockchain, and may be purchased on our [opensea.io](#) storefront. In addition, CGH Blockchain will exhibit the paintings and their reflection NFTs side-by-side in our brand new Metaverse (Decentraland) gallery and project space, in addition to our [oncyber.io](#) space.

Nikolina Kovalenko received her MFA from Moscow Surikov Art Institute (Moscow, Russia) in 2011 and studied at Universität der Künste Berlin in 2010. She holds a Gold Medal from the Russian Art Academy. The artist, now a dual Russian-American citizen, currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Caldwell Gallery Hudson is excited to represent Nikolina Kovalenko – our first ever contemporary artist – and to help bring awareness regarding coral's pre-eminent role in our fragile oceanic ecosystems.

About Caldwell Gallery Hudson:

For more than 48 years, the Caldwell family has bought and sold fine American art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 2014 we opened our gallery in historic Hudson, New York.

Press Enquiries:

Jay Caldwell, Principal

Phone: 518-828-7087

Email: jay@caldwellgallery.com