

A.I.R.

Coming Up for Air

Liz Surbeck Biddle

July 2 – August 1, 2021

Opening Reception: Friday, July 2, 12-6pm

GALLERY I

Liz Surbeck Biddle's latest exhibition, *Coming Up for Air*, presents a fantasy world of far-off landscapes and strange creatures, an escape from the uncanny reality of the past year. The included works on paper, three-dimensional collages and cyanotypes, give the exhibition a prominent blue tenor, recalling deep water, dusky evenings, and roiling skies. Dense with detail and swirling with energy, Biddle's new body of work invites the viewer to submerge themselves in her world.



Liz Surbeck Biddle & Michael Biddle, *Coming Up For Air*, 2020, cyanotype, printed matter, ballpoint pen, acrylic, Okawara paper, 12 x 12 x 3/8 inches.

During the last year, Biddle was cloistered in her home with her husband Michael, also an artist. They often sat together in their kitchen, making work to pass the time, a means of coping with the sudden isolation and reclaiming a sense of togetherness. Biddle at the time was making three-dimensional collages and Michael was often sketching on scraps of paper, which he offered to her for use in her collages. Many of the works in *Coming Up for Air* are thus collaborations, cyanotype landscapes populated by Michael's fine line drawings.

Biddle works by cutting out shapes that she then draws on or paints. The subsequent colors and forms initiate an intuitive process of assembly and layering on paper. Having worked in ceramics for many years, she is drawn to the hands-on approach of cutting and pasting, finding its sculptural logic quite familiar. The works in *Coming Up for Air* represent the first time that Biddle's collages have escaped two-dimensionality, rising like underwater peaks into the three-dimensional realm.

Here It Comes (2020), a collage of rusty coralline forms and bulbous, pop-out cyanotype blues, was made at the onset of the pandemic and conjures a world halted with fearsome anticipation. Another work takes inspiration from Kazuo Ishiguro's post-Arthurian fantasy novel *The Buried Giant*; *Chaos, Huffing and Puffing* (2020) sees a fiery blue dragon blowing a fierce red flame, drawing a connection between plagues past and pandemics present. *Maelstrom* (2021), with its swirling fractal forms, images an oceanic storm gone awry in a time of climate change and pollution.

Liz Surbeck Biddle lives and works in Croton-on-Hudson, NY. She has exhibited widely in solo and group exhibitions in the US and abroad and has received public commissions from the Arts for Transit MTA Program at the Croton/Harmon Railroad Station. Her work is held in the Library of Congress, The American Craft Museum, Museum of Art Brut, DeStadshof Museum, IWCAT Association Collection in Japan, and Sandy Besser and Ruth Siegel Collection among others.

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains is the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact info@airgallery.org for more information.

