

Psychedelic Solstice with Michael Ballou, KK Kozik, Katia Santibanez and James Siena opens Saturday, December 16, 4-6

Dear Friends,

I'm excited to announce that ICEHOUSE Project Space will celebrate the winter festival of Yule with Psychedelic Solstice, a group project. Four long-time friends and collaborators will present work appropriate to this pagan fest which, on the shortest day and longest night of the year, merrily embraces rebirth, transformation and creativity and the turning point that takes us from darkness into light.

With its 17th project, ICEHOUSE Project Space is embracing this otherworldly duality through a group project of collaborative ceramics by Michael Ballou, Katia Santibanez and James Siena and window lightboxes by me.

As Christoph Grunenberg points out in *Summer of Love: Art of the Psychedelic Era* (2007), "Psychedelic art ... is a visionary art....It opens doors to new universes, captures the flights of the imagination and often has a deeply mystical, and religious quality." Psychedelic Solstice is intended to explore this path:

Michael Ballou: On the sidewalk one night I saw all these dented plastic jugs, alone and naked, waiting to be picked up in the morning. I took a few to the studio. I began to cover them in mud (clay), staying very much as close to the undershape as possible. As the dressing (covering) continued the more the jugs began to reveal. Which reminded me of a haiku I once heard: Dormant energy,
Reawakens in the dark, To release again.

Katia Santibanez: I have been exploring the spiral since 2012. Over the years, its shape became more and more distorted. When Mike showed me his jugs, I thought: well, someone else is thinking about distortion too! Our collaboration combines our twisted worlds.

James Siena: A couple of years ago Mike called me to propose trading work. He was making these distorted jugs based on detergent bottles, and when I saw a picture of one, I responded by proposing

that I paint two and keep one and send him the other. Our trade would include both of us in each work. That's how it started. Now he's a ceramicist, Katia is mastering glazes, and I plod along slowly.

All three of us are into warping space!

KK Kozik: During my stint hosting artist projects at ICEHOUSE Project Space one project in particular, Ryan Frank's *Dead Sea* has inspired me to create my own version. My window light boxes will transform the icehouse into a super-scale lantern entitled "Ribbon in the Sky" and will be constructed of backlit drawings on plexi.

Come revel with us on the 16th, but dress warmly -- we will be inside the icehouse and outside under the winter sky, drinking Glühwein, warming our hands by the fire and listening to a playlist of psychedelia compiled by Peter Zaremba, frontman for [The Fleshtones](#) and aka the Psychedelic Count, a DJ on Sirius Satellite Radio. After the opening, the project will be open by appointment through January 16. Reach out here or text me at 917-488-8740 to set something up.

Warm regards,
KK

Michael Ballou has shown extensively across the United States and internationally, including at [Xavier Hufkens](#) in Brussels, [David Zwirner Gallery](#) and [Pierogi Gallery](#) in New York, and the [Kienzler Art Foundation](#) in Berlin, and has been the recipient of awards including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pollock-Krasner and Adolf Gottlieb Foundations. Ballou co-directed Four Walls in Williamburg and its spin-off Slide and Film Club from 1990 to 2015. The archives of Four Walls and Slide and Film Club were recently acquired by the Smithsonian Institute. Ballou was a visiting artist at the International Art Academy of Palestine.

KK Kozik is an artist based in Sharon, Connecticut where she also directs ICEHOUSE Project Space. She is Senior Editor and writer for COCOA (the Journal of Cornwall Contemporary Art) and a longtime writer for the Brooklyn Rail. Her work has been shown across the country and abroad and is in numerous public and private collections. She has won awards including most recently the William

and Susan Picotte Award from the Albany Institute of History and Art and a Connecticut Artist Fellowship in Painting and she has received public art commissions from the MTA of New York City, Weir Farm National Historic Site and Fitchburg State University. During her Brooklyn days, she collaborated with Ballou on a number of projects, including leading two panel discussions/exhibitions at Four Walls and a group quilt project for Scope Art Fair and a group mural for White Box. She is represented by [Kenise Barnes Fine Art](#) and will have a solo exhibition there in spring of 2024.

Katia Santibanez is an American multidisciplinary artist. She is represented in New York by [DC Moore Gallery](#) and in Houston by [Texas Gallery](#). In 2021 she received a grant from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation. She has a solo exhibition currently on view at [Reynolds Gallery](#) in Richmond, VA until December 22, 2023. Santibanez lives and works in the Berkshires and New York City.

James Siena is an artist based in New York and the Berkshires. He is represented by [Miles McEnergy Gallery](#) in New York and [Galerie Xippas](#) in Paris. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2022 and was a member of of the Corporation of Yaddo from 2005-2023. He also sits on the Board of Governors of the National Academy of Design. He has taught in the MFA program at the School of Visual Arts in New York since 2005. An exhibition of his works on paper will open at Miles McEnergy December 14 and run through February 4, 2024.

And a Poem!

The Shortest Day, by Susan Cooper

***And so the Shortest Day came and the year died
And everywhere down the centuries of the snow-white
world***

***Came people singing, dancing,
To drive the dark away.***

***They lighted candles in the winter trees;
They hung their homes with evergreen;
They burned beseeching fires all night long
To keep the year alive.***

And when the new year's sunshine blazed awake

*They shouted, reveling.
Through all the frosty ages you can hear them
Echoing behind us—listen!
All the long echoes, sing the same delight,
This Shortest Day,
As promise awakens in the sleeping land:
They carol, feast, give thanks,
And dearly love their friends,
And hope for peace.
And now so do we, here, now,
This year and every year.
Welcome, Yule!*