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LUMINIFEROUS AETHER Chandi Kelley & Marissa Long February 4 – March 11, 2017

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 4, 6-8pm

Artist Talk: Saturday, February 25, 2pm



Transformer is proud to present *LUMINIFEROUS AETHER*, an exhibition of new photographic works by **Chandi Kelley & Marissa Long** exploring immaterial passages, portals opening in space, and objects wavering between states of being.

In search of an explanation for how wave-based light could travel through empty space, scientists in the late 1800's offered the idea of *luminiferous aether* – a theoretical, invisible medium through which light could propagate. Until modern physics dispelled the notion, this ether permeated all of space in the minds of those who worked to confirm it. It provided a provisional solution to what was, at the time, an intangible phenomenon.

Drawing from narratives of metamorphosis and manifestations of the unknown, Kelley's body of work conjures the spirit of magic through photography. As objects waver between states of being, the camera is used as a tool for performing this magic and exploring unseen worlds. Inherently linked to trickery and provoking the tension between fiction and truth, the medium naturally forces the viewer to question reality while navigating the space between the visual and the ethereal. Ectoplasm, plaster materializations, and visible auras provide evidence of objects changing physical shape and occupying new space. By offering something tangible in exchange for the immaterial, the resulting images become visual documents of a world existing just outside the realm of our sight.

Long's work deals with the concept of portals, which, in traditional science fiction and fantasy, are magical or technological doorways through which distant locales are linked. A brave traveler enters that doorway and finds herself transported through impossible expanses of space-time. The photos in Long's series hint at the earlier stages of this improbable trip, when familiar matter has begun the silent work of rearranging itself. People and objects darken and brighten dramatically, and the space they inhabit is simultaneously flattened and deepened. Obliterated by light and shadow, finite details make way for the infinite, and unexpected apertures present themselves as solemn invitations. Regardless of where the channels lead, these liminal moments of transformation insist upon themselves with the power their possibilities imply. On both ends of the passage, inversions have occurred, reality has expanded, and science and magic may be one and the same.

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ARTIST BIOS

Chandi Kelley graduated with a BFA in photography from the Corcoran College of Art + Design in 2004. She was the recipient of a Young Artist Grant from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities in 2009, which led to her first solo exhibition. From 2010 to 2012 she was a member of the DC Arts Center artist collective, Sparkplug. In 2013 her work was exhibited at Hillyer Art Space in her second solo exhibition. She has presented her work at the NADA Art Fair in Miami, the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing, and is in the permanent collection of the U.S. Embassy in Malta as well as in private collections throughout the U.S. She is a Co-Founder and Administrator of the artwork subscription service, Project Dispatch, and Co-Founder of Outer Space. She has served on the Publishers Exhibition Committee for Fotoweeek DC, as Artist Nominator for the 2012 and 2014 Transformer Auctions, and currently serves on the Board and the Visual Arts Committee at the DC Arts Center.

Marissa Long is an Arlington, VA-based artist who received a BFA from the Corcoran College of Art + Design in 2006 with a concentration in fine art photography. Locally, her work has been exhibited at various DC spaces including Transformer, the Katzen Art Museum, and Civilian Art Projects, where she held her first solo exhibition. Her work is held in various private collections and has been exhibited internationally in cities like Cape Town, London, and Berlin. Recently, Arlington County commissioned Marissa to complete a public art project depicting Arlington's community gardens. She is the founder and director of Art Brains, a company that provides after school arts programming for elementary school students, and the creator and editor of the online arts publication, *Great Big Iceberg*.

Image Credit: Marissa Long, *Small Portal (Ceremonial)* & Chandi Kelley, *Ascending Cloud*

EXHIBITION HOURS: Wednesday-Saturday, 12-6pm and by appointment.

t r a n s f o r m e r is a Washington, DC based 501 (c) 3 artist-centered non-profit visual arts organization, providing a consistent, supportive, and professional platform for emerging artists to explore and present experimental artistic concepts, build audiences for their work, and advance their careers. A catalyst and advocate for contemporary artists and emergent expression in the visual arts, Transformer connects and promotes emerging visual artists within regional, national and international contexts through exhibition and programs partnerships with artists, curators, commercial galleries, museums and other cultural institutions.

t r a n s f o r m e r's 2016/17 Transformer's 2016/17 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Altria, The Artery Group, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, Philip L. Graham Fund, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts' Access to Artistic Excellence Award, The Robert Lehman Foundation, SunTrust, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer.