

**Emma Summerton – 14 Spells (to save your life)**

7 September – 19 November 2023

Christophe Guye Galerie, Dufourstrasse 31, 8008 Zurich/Switzerland

**Press release free for immediate publication**

'A new series of transformative self-portrait photographs by Emma Summerton will be presented at Christophe Guye Galerie from September 6 – November 19, 2023. The solo exhibition, entitled "14 Spells (to save your life)," features 13 large-format unique photographs as well as a grouping of Polaroid enlargements, partly enhanced with hand-painting, made during an escape to the Scottish wilderness and in New York City in the summer of 2023. Mixed in with her world-renowned signature style of surrealism, mythology, and the erotic is a return to her early creations and influences as a young woman in Australia just beginning to embark on a career that would quickly identify her as one of the leading fashion photographers of her time. Summerton has participated in one solo exhibition, "LANDED" in 2019 at Christophe Guye Galerie since their partnership began the previous year, including other group shows. A special publication will accompany this event.

Following a tumultuous and introspective year, Summerton spent a period of time working alone while revisiting and reflecting on the earliest imagery she created as an emerging talent. This intimate inquiry into her past, present, and future reconnected her to her original impulses on a much deeper level. "Using your art to understand yourself is key," she explains. "Your work will always save you."

The meditative essence underpinning this new series lacks none of the startling beauty, mischievous quality, and visual richness for which Summerton is known; these images expand and breathe with newfound awareness, vulnerability, and humor. Much influenced by the art and lives of female Surrealists such as Leonora Carrington, Vali Myers, and Remedios Varo, the work is infused with a stronger sensibility of her body, her inner characters, and the selves she has never lived. Communing with the vital, timeless energies of nature was a primal draw. This was sparked by a previous visit to Scotland, to an ancient estate surrounded by trees, rivers, and waterfalls. Seeking remoteness, Summerton returned there to find quiet, freedom, oneness, "an entrance to the Earth." Gathering all these ideas together, she has produced a folkloric world strictly of her own design, pulling viewers in with a profound instinctive allure.

In turns wearing a latex bodysuit, a prosthetic pregnancy bump, red heels, a white dress, and a black hat, Summerton approaches her own representation as symbolic of these potent emotional states and self-interrogation, raising questions about love, birth, selfhood, the shadow, motherhood, the feminine, death, and the mystical.'

– Alex Zafiris

Alex Zafiris is a writer and editor based in New York. She is currently the writer-in-residence at the Center for Collaborative Arts and Media at Yale University, where she edits the journal *Maquette*. She has contributed to *Bomb*, *The Paris Review Daily*, *The New York Times*, *Daisy Chain*, *Guernica*, *Tokion*, *Paper*, and the United Nations.

## Christophe Guye Galerie

### About Emma Summerton

Australian born Emma Summerton (\*1970) graduated from the National Art School in Sydney, where she studied fine arts majoring in Photography. Summerton moved to London in 1998, where she worked as an assistant to artist Fiona Banner while starting her career as a photographer. Her first published fashion editorial was a Self Portrait Polaroid story shot for Dazed & Confused in 2005. Since then Summerton has established herself as one of the most talented photographers to emerge in the mid 2000's. Her in-depth technical knowledge coupled with her eye for detail and love for fashion have made her images not only unique but very distinctive, setting her apart from other photographers working in the industry today. Editorial clients include: *Italian, British, American, German, Australian, Spanish, Japanese* and *Chinese Vogues, i-D, Self Service, Dazed & Confused, The Last Magazine, 10, and Big Magazine*. The artist was also chosen to shoot the 49th Pirelli Calendar 2023.

### About Christophe Guye Galerie

Founded in Los Angeles in 2006 by Christophe Guye, the gallery is one of the leading galleries for contemporary fine art photography. The gallery represents national and international artists who consider the medium of photography within the larger context of current art practices. Using a camera or light-sensitive material to express their artistic practices, their works notably contribute to the historical discourse of art, as well as to the expanding medium of photography and to the evolution of contemporary art at large.

### Interview opportunity

The artist will be in Zurich from 2 – 9 September and is available for interviews. Please write to [contact@christopheguye.com](mailto:contact@christopheguye.com) for interview requests.

### Reception for the artist

The opening of the exhibition in the presence of the artist will take place on Wednesday 6 September 2023 from 5.30-7.30pm. A personal invitation will follow.

# Christophe Guye Galerie

## Biography

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[www.emmasummerton.com](http://www.emmasummerton.com)

## Education

National Art School Sydney, Australia

## Selected solo exhibitions

2023

14 Spells (to save your life), Christophe Guye Galerie, Zurich, Switzerland

2019

Landed, Christophe Guye Galerie, Zurich, Switzerland

2005

Installation of the Terry de Havilland Self Portraits SS05, Comme Des Garçons Dover St Market, London, UK

## Selected group exhibitions

2023

MIA Art Fair, Milan, Italy

Beyond Fashion, IPFO Haus der Fotografie, Olten, Switzerland

2022

Beyond Fashion, ALT.1, Hyundai Seoul, South Korea

2021

Paris Photo, Paris, France

Beyond Fashion, Xie Zilong Photography Museum, Changsha, China

2020

Beyond Fashion, Shanghai Center of Photography, Shanghai, China

2019

Photo London, London, UK

Body Beautiful, National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, UK

Beyond Fashion, ArtisTree, Taikoo Place, Hongkong

2001

Insider Trading, Mandeville Hotel, London, UK