

# MODERNIST CUISINE GALLERY

## Winter Has Arrived at Modernist Cuisine Gallery



*"Snowflakes are a great example of hidden beauty. Water, an incredibly familiar thing to all of us, is quite unfamiliar when you see it in this different view. The intricate beauty of snowflakes is derived from their crystal structure, which is a direct reflection of the microscopic aspects of the water molecule."*

—Nathan Myhrvold

### About the Artwork

Capturing the image of a snowflake is difficult, which is one of the reasons photographer Nathan Myhrvold felt compelled to tackle the subject matter. Only a few millimeters across, snow crystals present a challenge due to their size and fragility.

Snowflakes both melt and sublime, causing the sharp features of the crystal structure to degrade over time. With a subject as delicate as snowflakes, time, temperature, weather conditions, and equipment are extremely important for a photographer.

Myhrvold spent about 18 months designing and building a custom snowflake camera so that he could photograph snow crystals with this degree of detail and clarity. The highest-resolution snowflake camera in the world, it uses a Phase One sensor (100MP) adapted to a microscope objective. Myhrvold developed an optical path to fill a medium-format digital back, allowing him to obtain a larger, sharper image than most microscopic photographs.

To keep the snowflakes from melting or vaporizing too quickly, the microscope has a cooling stage, giving Myhrvold more time to capture and focus-stack images.

The camera is paired with short-pulse, high-speed LED lights, typically used for industrial purposes, to reduce the heat they put out and increase the speed at which a photographer can capture the image. With this innovation, the camera has a minimum shutter speed of 500 microseconds.

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These photographs were shot on location in Fairbanks, Alaska, and Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada. Some of the best snowflakes Myhrvold found were at temperatures between -15 and -20 °F (-26 to -29 °C).

Snowflakes are categorized by shape. The snow crystals in these images are sector plates, stellar dendrites, and fernlike stellar dendrites.

## Artwork Details

Title (L-R): No Two Alike, Yellowknife Flurry, Ice Queen

Release date: November 2020

All artwork is limited edition, framed, and shippable worldwide.

Size options range from 50 × 37.62 cm (-20 × 15 in) to 200 × 150 cm (78 3/4 × 58 1/16 in)

## About the Artist

Nathan Myhrvold is a photographer, chef, scientist, and an author. A physicist by training, the former chief technology officer of Microsoft draws on his passions for food, science, and invention to push photographic limits. He and his team build custom cameras, robots, microscopes, and software to capture food from new and surprising perspectives.

Myhrvold's photographs have been featured in *Smithsonian Magazine*, *Popular Photography*, *Digital Photo Pro*, *Galerie Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Vanity Fair*, *WIRED*, *The New Yorker*, *Bloomberg Pursuits*, and more.

He is the founder of Modernist Cuisine, author of *The Photography of Modernist Cuisine*, and coauthor of *Modernist Cuisine: The Art and Science of Cooking*, *Modernist Cuisine at Home*, *Modernist Bread*, and the forthcoming *Modernist Pizza*.

He pioneered food photography techniques to take the avant-garde photographs in his award-winning cookbooks. The images garnered worldwide recognition and led to the opening of Modernist Cuisine Gallery, the first gallery in the world devoted to food photography.