

Vol. 3/No. 2
February 2013

Loupe

**Journal of the
Photographic
Resource Center**
at Boston University



MFA in Photography

The Art Institute of Boston (AIB) MFA in Photography program led by artist and photographer Christopher James, featuring a strong and talented core faculty, and a major collaborative Visiting Artist component, is seeking dynamic and talented artists to join our Fall 2013 class.

The AIB MFA in Photography program emphasizes the hand-made image, craft, and concept driven photography. Our program is built upon photographic history, the fluid integration of contemporary media with traditional art forms, critical and professional studies, and alternative photographic practice.

Application deadline for Fall 2013 is March 1, 2013. Learn more at: aiboston.edu/mfa/photo



MFA class orientation, by Rebecca Welsh, September 2012

LESLEY
UNIVERSITY

AIB 100

Where ideas
take shape

Faculty

Christine Collins
David Hilliard
Christopher James
Matthew Nash
Bonnell Robinson
Ben Sloat
Jane Tuckerman

Visiting Artists/Critics (current and upcoming)

Susan Bright
Keith Carter
Dan Estabrook
Roy Flukinger
Vicki Goldberg
Luis González Palma
Lyle Rexer
Holly Roberts
John Stilgoe

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Dan Borden, *My Mother's Vase*,
February 2012.

From the Publisher

This issue of *Loupe* is focused on abstraction in photography—a genre nearly as old as photography itself and a central theme in the history of the medium since Daguerre first created his lens-based capture of the human landscape 174 years ago. I will leave a further discussion of this topic to *Loupe* editor Francine Weiss in her fascinating essay on *The Allure of the Abstract* on page 24. What I would like to address in this letter is an appreciation for the community of photographers, artists, and art connoisseurs whom the PRC interfaces with through *Loupe* and all of our other programming.

One thing that I am truly proud of about the PRC is that for 37 years, we are one place in the Boston culturesphere that can embrace all the different genres of photography—fine art, documentary, commercial, portraiture, abstract, landscapes, etc.—and we can all agree that what matters most is our love and fascination for the both the art and craft of the photographic image. At the PRC, we can embrace the likes of Dominic Chavez, who travels the world documenting global health; Dan Borden, who makes multiple exposures using Polaroid film of abstract subject matter; Peter Vanderwarker, who has made a career as an architectural photographer; and so many other photographers working in diverse genres.

The question of whether photography is a fine art was definitively answered more than a generation ago with a resounding yes. There is less agreement on the genres within photography. Clearly the work we had in the *Global Health in Focus* exhibition last year was unambiguously documentary. But what about the work of Rania Matar and Nancy Grace Horton? Is this work documentary? In the end it does not matter because we all recognize that each photographer brings tremendous insight to both the medium of photography and significantly more interesting, insight into our understanding of the human psyche. What makes the PRC such a special place is that we suspend such formal judgment here, and as Rodney King so famously, said, "Can't we all just get along?" Here at the PRC we can and do, as is evidenced by the turnout at our lectures, exhibitions, workshops, and Nights at the PRC.

In closing, I hope while reading this issue of *Loupe*, you are all as taken by the beauty of these abstract images as I am. Dan Borden, William Miller, and Emma Livingston each in their own way show us an interpretation of our world using abstract forms that make us question, and cause us to marvel, at the rich visual world around us.

Glenn Ruga

PRC Executive Director and *Loupe* Publisher

Emma Livingston

NOA

**Livingston's images communicate a sense of “endlessness”—
an endlessness that she says is not a part of our daily lives.**

For British artist Emma Livingston, photographing the Argentine Northwest, referred to as the Noroeste Argentino, or simply NOA, comes naturally. With family roots in Argentina and following several visits to the country, she found herself captivated by the beauty of the Argentine Northwest, which she discovered during a trip in 2004. It was the region's deserted and seemingly infinite landscape that inspired Livingston to purchase and use a medium format camera. Although she initially printed on paper from slide film, she switched to printing digitally from her scanned slide film when her preferred slide film paper was discontinued. Focusing on a section of the NOA landscape using a telephoto lens, Livingston aims to deviate from a conventional landscape format. Lacking any references to a horizon, Livingston's images communicate a sense of “endlessness”—an endlessness that she says is not a part of our daily lives.

With their textures, colors, and depictions of space, Livingston's square format images of the Argentine Northwest are abstract ruminations of landscape that engage, intrigue, and sometimes disorient the viewer. Although drawn to the fragility and vulnerability of nature, Livingston does not intend to present a social commentary on the environment. Rather, she hopes to communicate and share her “visceral fascination with the natural world.” Nevertheless, as empty and otherworldly as Livingston's NOA appears, there are inevitable traces of the increasing presence of mining companies in the region; the occasional discernible man-made track is evidence of this permutation of the landscape.



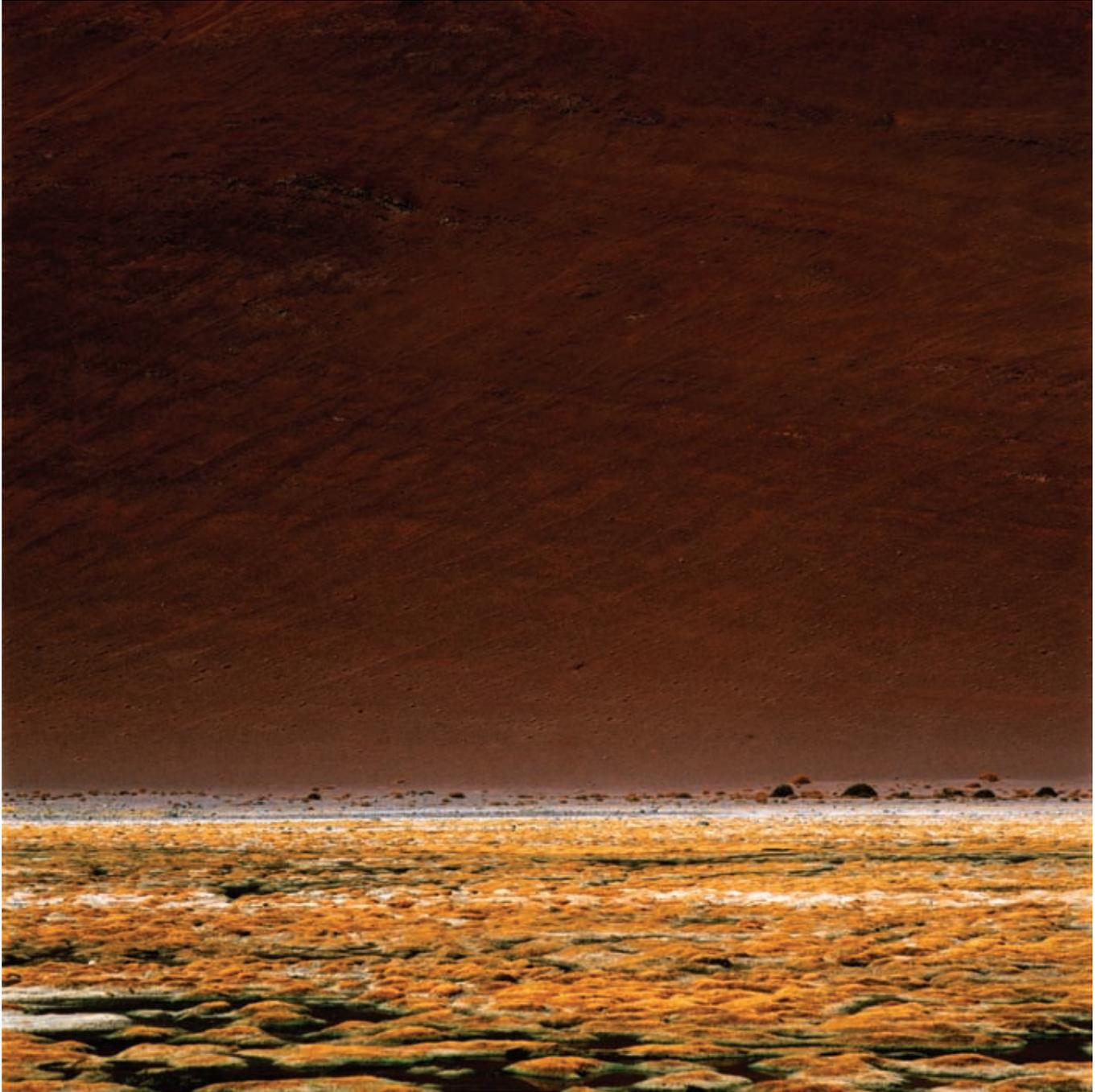
Livingston received her B.A. in art history from the University College London and lives in Buenos Aires, where her abiding interest in nature has inspired her to embark on two new photographic projects—a series focusing on the woodlands and another on the ocean. Her solo shows include exhibitions at the Ateliê da Imagem, Brazil, as well as RO Galería de Arte and Galería Riva Zucchelli, Argentina. She has also exhibited in *Discoveries of the Meeting Place* at FotoFest and at the Southeast Museum of Photography, Florida and has won awards from FotoFest, the London Photographic Association, and Px3 Prix de la Photographie in Paris. In 2008, Livingston was selected as one of the *PDN 30*. She has photographs in the permanent collection of FOLi, Lima, Peru. Livingston is represented by RO Galería de Arte in Buenos Aires and Klompching Gallery in New York.

— Francine Weiss



NOA1-5, 2006.

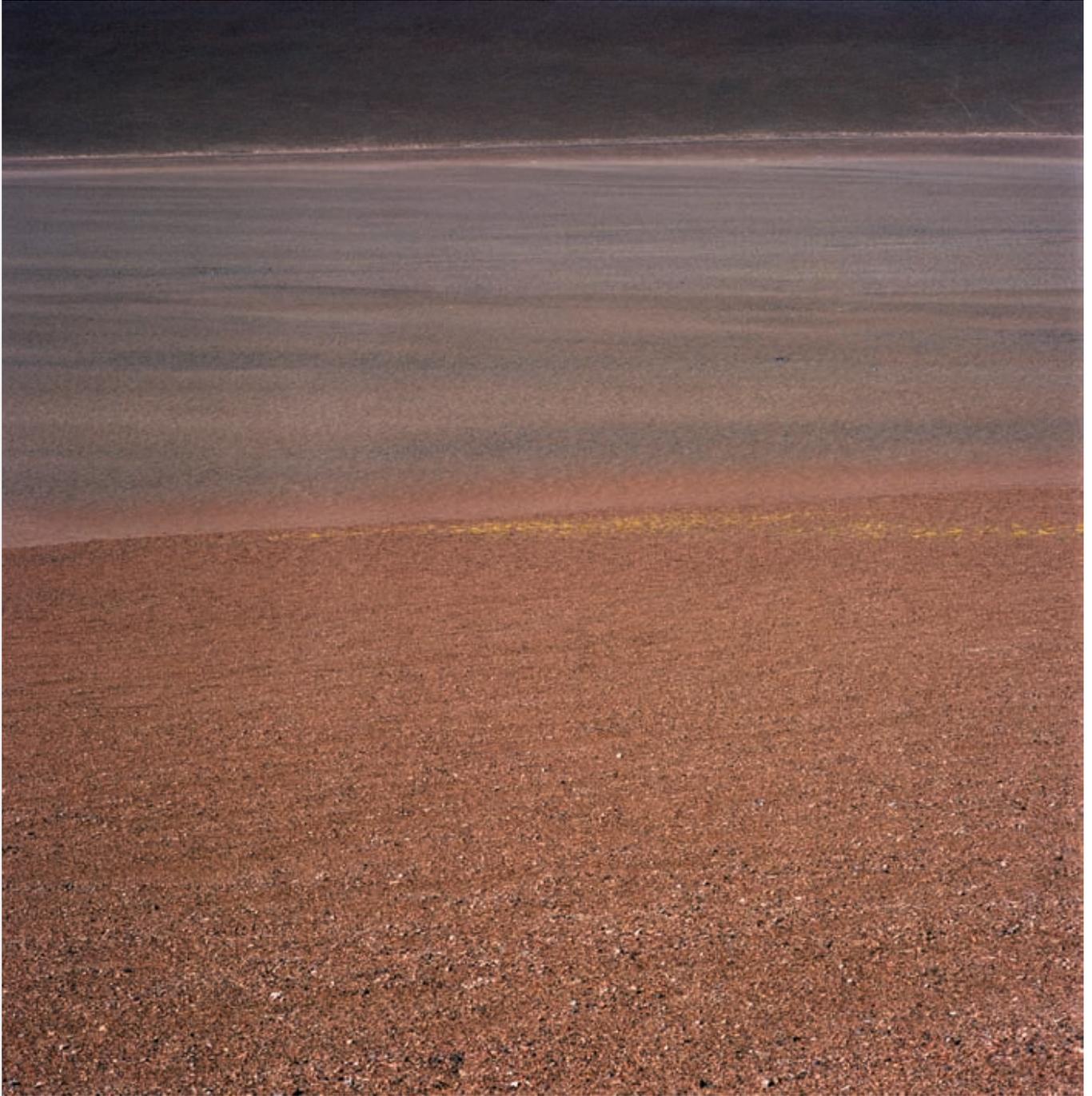
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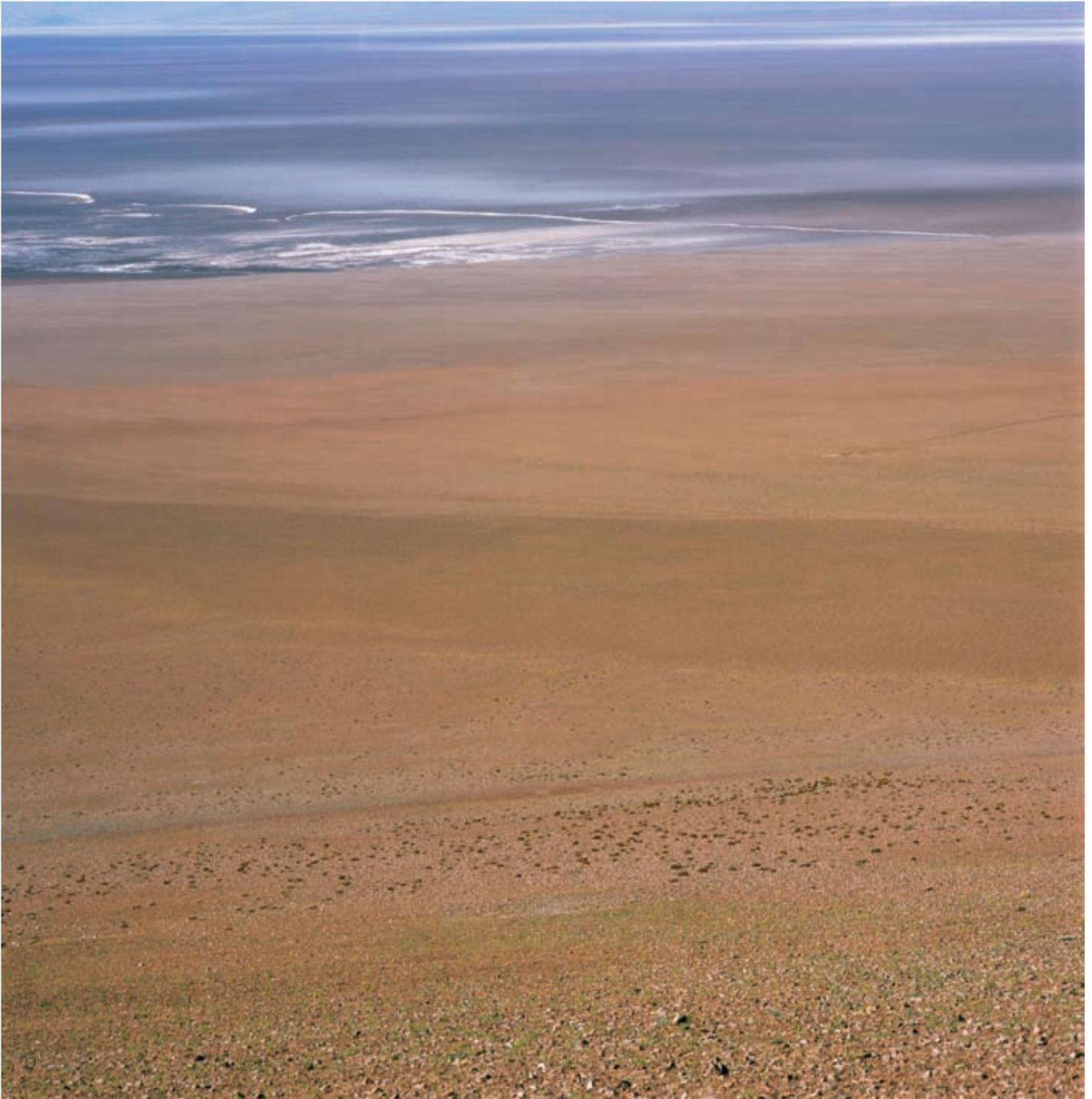
NOA21-7, 2005.



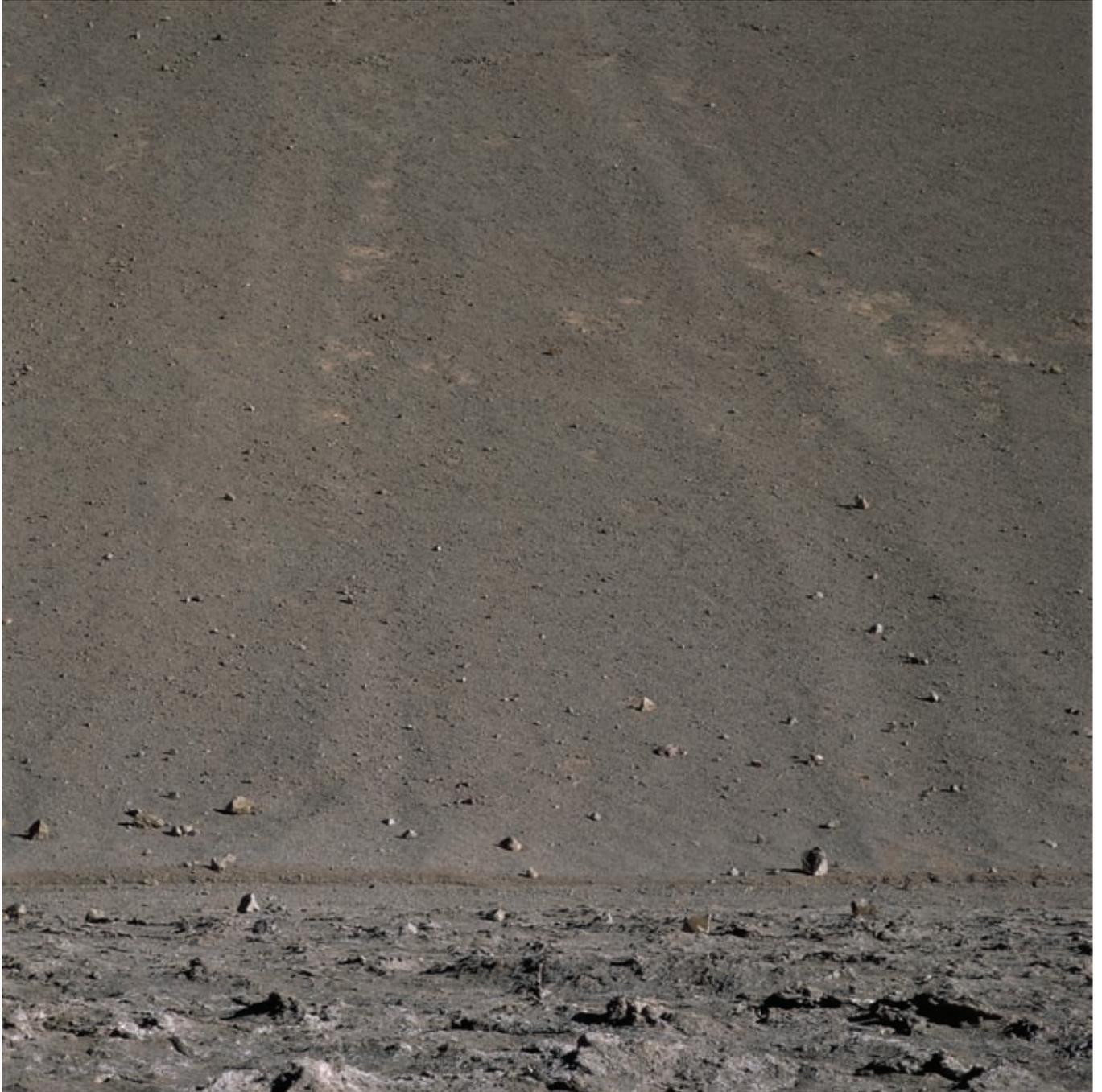
NOA17-6, 2007.



NOA17-8, 2006.



NOA18-5, 2006.



NOA15-5, 2007.



NOA14-5, 2007.

William Miller

Ruined Polaroids

An accomplished documentary photographer, William Miller turned to the Polaroid to escape his professional routine and embark on a concentrated study of form, shape, and color. Finding an old Polaroid SX-70 at a yard sale was a fortunate discovery, as were the many “ruined Polaroids” he later made with it. Upon making his first photographs with the Polaroid, Miller quickly discovered that the camera was broken, but the mangled and abstract images that it produced became a path to artistic exploration and expression rather than a technical obstacle.

In a process that he calls “a controlled failure,” Miller works with his broken Polaroid’s proclivity for “ruining” and destroying prints to create images that self-consciously reference the medium of photography. With streams, drips, and shapes in a riot of dynamic colors—produced by the camera and its chemistry—Miller’s photographs appear to have no relation to the real world. In fact, he chooses photographic subjects only to achieve a desired palette. Yet even that outcome is somewhat unpredictable: unstable, a blue photograph stored in a drawer might turn to orange with time. Both in appearance and philosophy, his abstract photographs are reminiscent of Abstract Expressionist paintings (and just as so many Abstract Expressionist action paintings revealed the artist’s process, Miller’s photographs reveal the camera’s chemical process). Miller’s outcome, however, is more challenging for him to anticipate because much of it happens inside the camera. Nevertheless, he relishes in this element of chance.

Although Miller began scanning and enlarging his prints to see the details in them better, this



Ruined Polaroid #52, 2011.

technique also became a way to fix unstable photographs, as well as to engage the viewer up close and at a distance. He prints his three-inch originals as large as three to five feet in size. Carrying his interest in abstraction to the outside world, Miller is currently working on an abstract series of compositions of the Gowanus Canal.

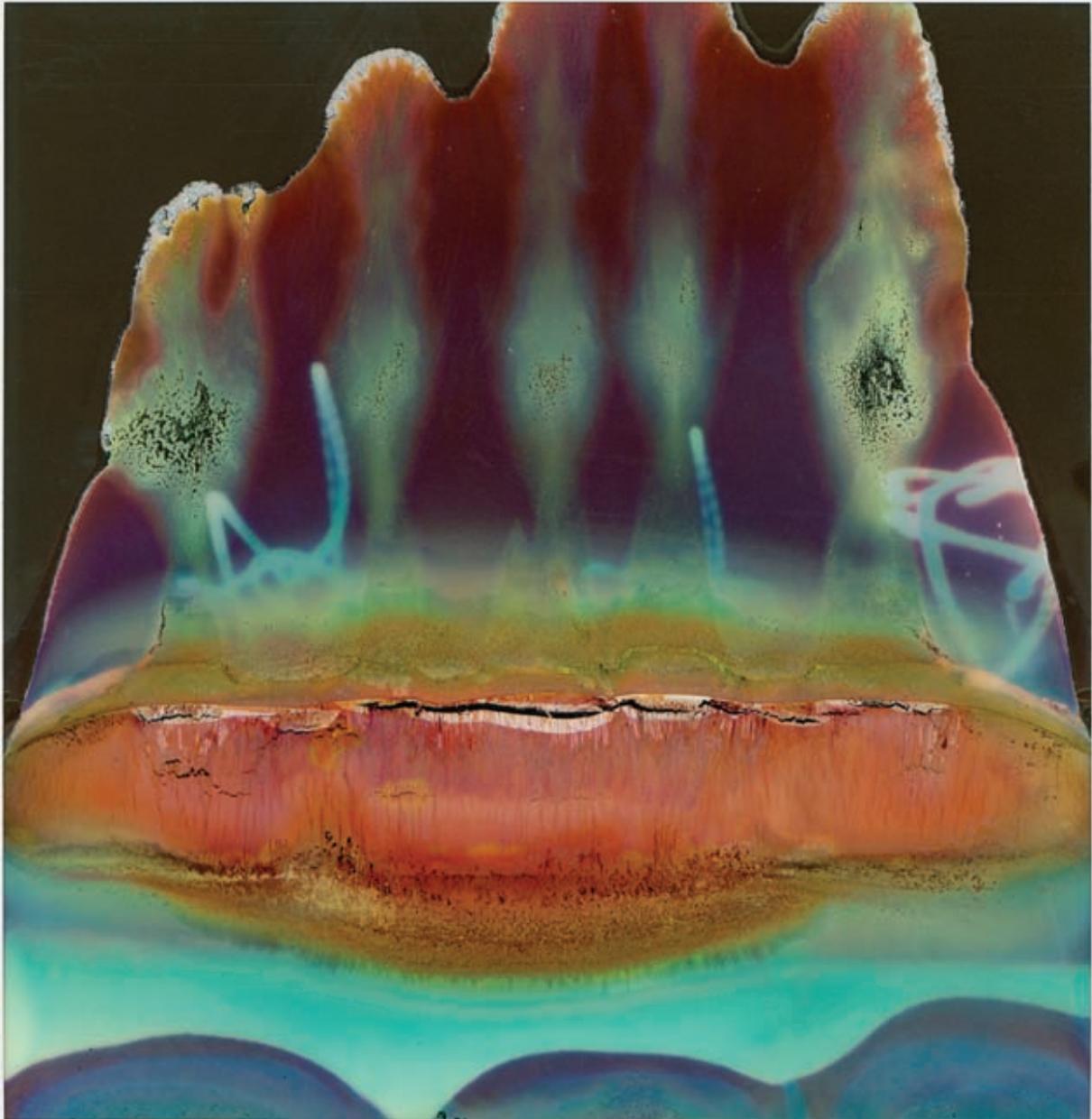
Miller studied photography at Bard College with Larry Fink and Stephen Shore. With photographs published in magazines such as *Harper's*, *Spin*, *Paris-Match*, and the *New York Post*, Miller has begun showing and publishing his art photography more frequently; he has had exhibitions at the Griffin Museum of Photography, MA; PhotoPlace Gallery, VT; K Space Contemporary, TX; The Kiernan Gallery, VA; and Wall Space Gallery, CA to name a few. In 2011, he was awarded the Celeste Prize for Photography. Miller resides in New York.

— Francine Weiss

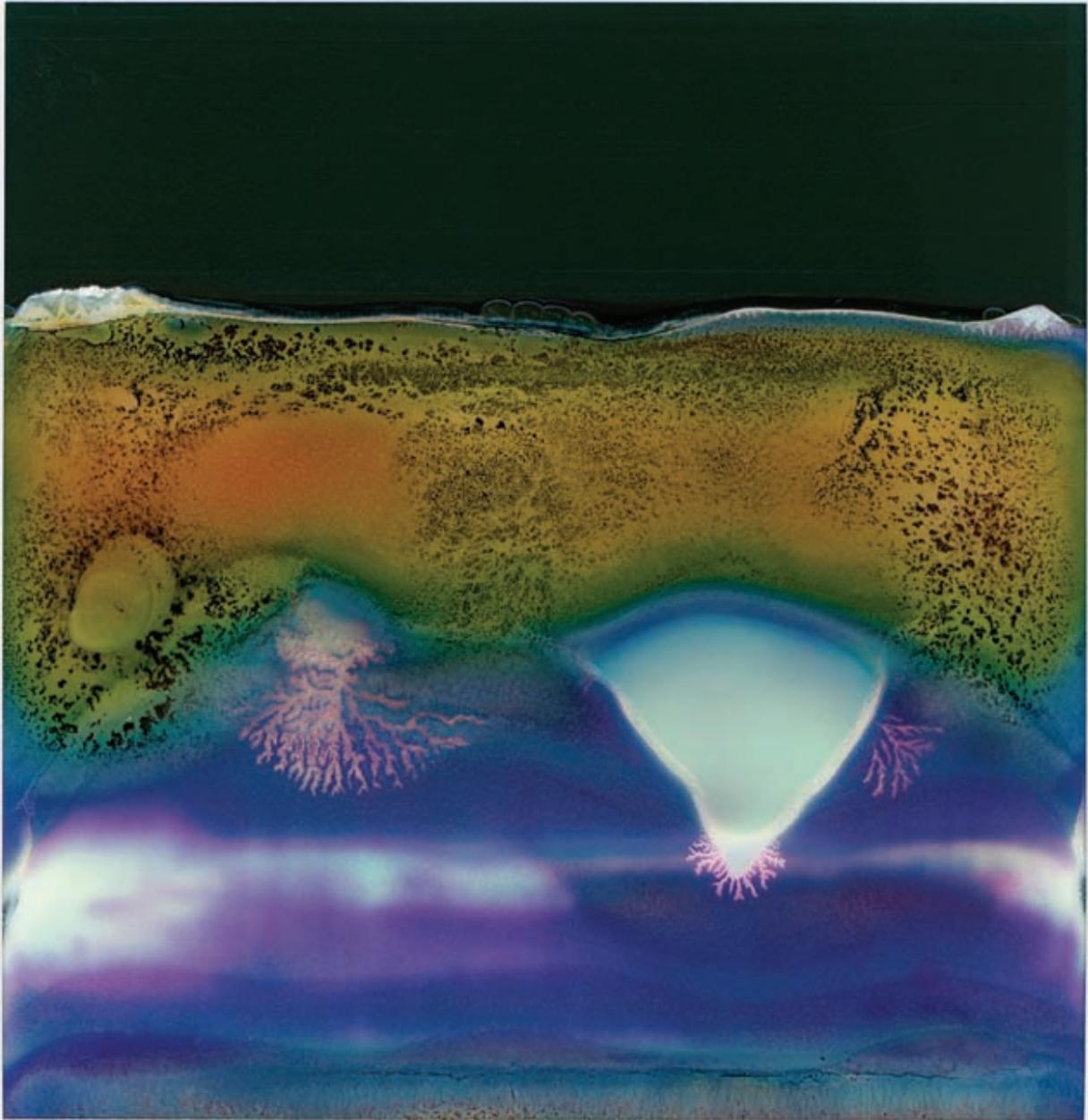
In a process that he calls “a controlled failure,” Miller works with his broken Polaroid’s proclivity for “ruining” and destroying prints to create images that self-consciously reference the medium of photography.



Ruined Polaroid #40, 2011.



Ruined Polaroid #45, 2011.



Ruined Polaroid #47, 2011.



Ruined Polaroid #51, 2011.



Ruined Polaroid #20, 2011.

Daniel Borden

Eureka Moments

Dan Borden finds the subjects for his abstract photographs in the outside world. Eschewing the use of a digital camera, he uses an old Polaroid to create unique in-camera multiple exposures. By photographing everyday subjects and scenes, Borden aims to transform the “mundane” or “ordinary world” into multi-layered and compositionally complex images that encourage the viewer to form new and “untethered meanings.”

His original photographs are 3 ¼ x 4 ¼ inch analog instant color prints. Borden neither crops nor trims his original images, and he uses digital technology only to scan and print his work at the larger size of 16 x 20 inches for exhibition. Both sizes promote viewer engagement but in different ways: while the diminutive scale of the smaller prints inspires the viewer to peer into complex and intricate worlds, the larger versions fill the viewer’s field of vision encouraging more immersive experiences.

Using a multiple exposure technique, Borden recombines and reinvigorates photography’s past. Because he makes the exposures over the course of seconds, minutes, and even sometimes months, he captures time and movement in the same spirit as the Cubist painters. The sharp angles, multiple viewpoints, and fragmented realities in many of his photographs further suggest Cubist sympathies. Borden’s multiple exposures also recall the experimentation of the New Vision photographers in the 1920s in Europe, who used photomontage to create complex compositions. And, like the New Vision photographer László Moholy-Nagy,

who championed the study and representation of light, Borden views his approach as an examination of light itself: “My subject is light—reflecting off the world into my eyes and mind, and then if the Muse favors me—I point the camera in the right direction, and click the shutter at the right moment(s). The flow is as important as light, its momentum leaves me no choice but to jump off its moving train, grab the light, and hop back on the train until the light pulls me off again.” With their varied colors, rich textures, and evocative forms, Borden’s abstractions suggest something altogether new while concomitantly recalling these historical movements and approaches.

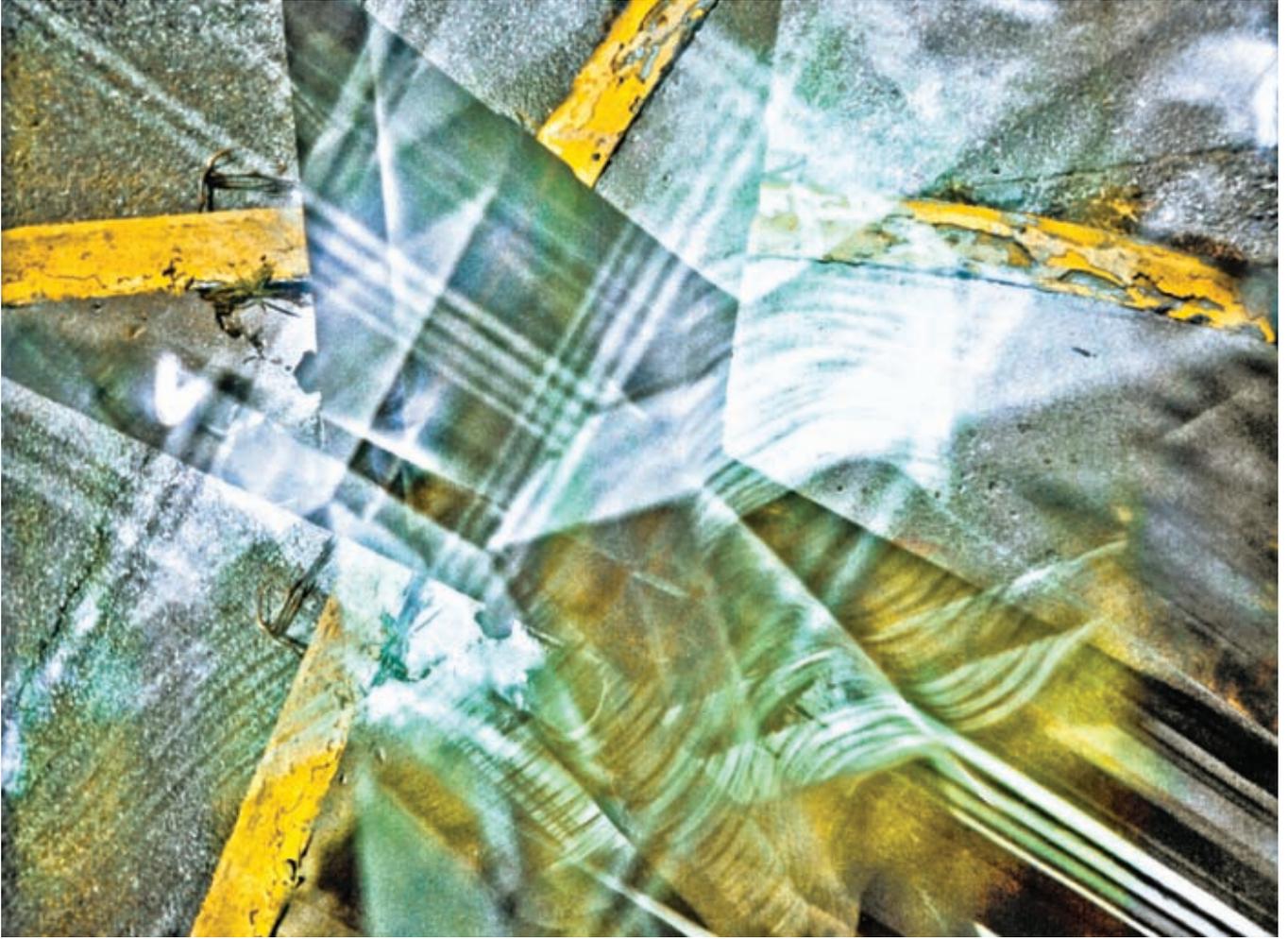
Philosophically, Borden embraces unpredictability in much the same way as the Dadaists welcomed “accident” in their works. Creating in-camera multiple exposures means he cannot always predict the outcome. There is uncertainty yet immediacy as the Polaroid print comes out and Borden waits sixty seconds for it to develop. It is this moment of “surprise” or “Eureka Moment,” often lost in the era of digital photography that Borden regains when he photographs.

After receiving his B.A. from Harvard University in Visual and Environmental Studies and Fine Arts, Borden earned an M.S. in Library and Information Science from Simmons College. A resident of Massachusetts, Borden recently had solo shows at Lasell College in Newton and Simmons College in Boston. He has also made several experimental 16 mm and Super 8 films.

— Francine Weiss



Kid Dreams, August 2012.



Madras, June 2012.

Once Upon a Time, August 2012.





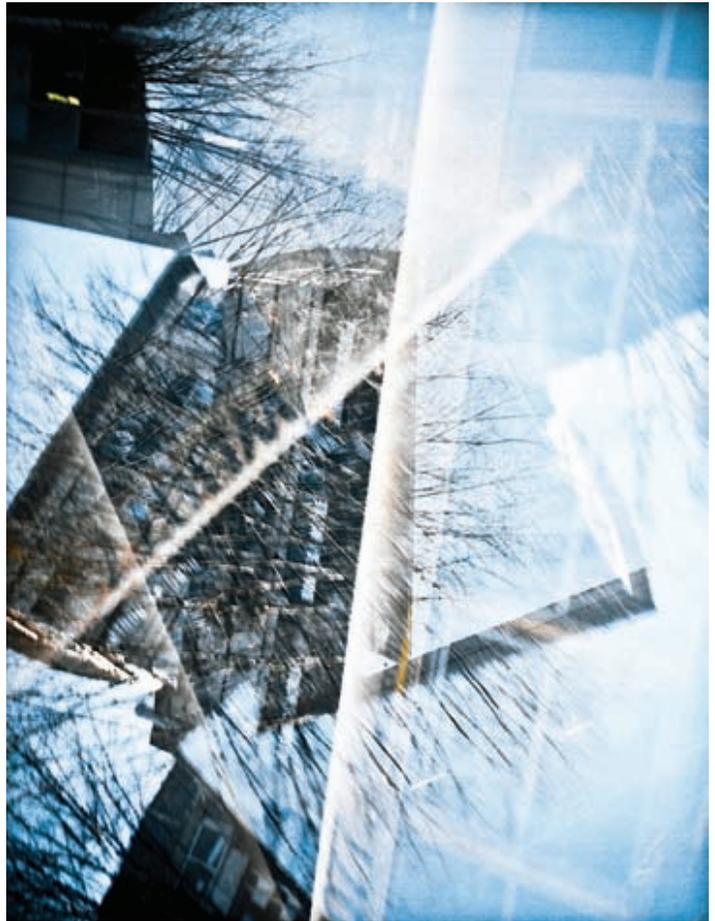
Swing, March 2012.

Back Yard, June 2012.





Blue FireWorks, July 2012.



Flyer, December 2012.

The Allure of the Abstract

by Francine Weiss

“All good art is abstract in its structure.”

—Paul Strand

“There is no abstract art. You must always start with something. Afterward you can remove all traces of reality.”

—Pablo Picasso

From its invention, photography was both praised and feared for its ability to capture or represent “reality.” An indexical medium, its role as an art form was somewhat unclear. With strides made toward photography’s acceptance as an art form starting in the mid-nineteenth century, photography achieved the status of “high art” with the pictorialist movement of the late nineteenth century. Pictorialists established photography as a fine art by emulating the appearance and content of the paintings of their day. Yet it was not long before the soft-focus painterly appearance of pictorialist photographs (and their emphasis on allegory and narrative) gave way to photographic abstraction. By the early twentieth century, pictorialism’s chief proponent in America, Alfred Stieglitz, began promoting and celebrating the new aesthetic of modernism. His praise and promulgation of Paul Strand’s more abstract photographs in *Camera Work* in 1917 signaled this shift in art photography.

Glancing back through the history of photography, the push toward abstraction seems almost inevitable. Picasso’s suggestion that art originates with reality, and the reality must be removed, is even more true for the photographer who



Penelope Umbrico, *541,795 Suns (from Sunsets) from Flickr (Partial) 1/23/06*, 2006, detail of 2,000 machine c-prints, each 4" x 6", © Penelope Umbrico, 2006. Created by assembling photographs of sunsets resulting from a Flickr search, Umbrico’s *Suns from Sunsets from Flickr* project is an example of what Rexer refers to as “conceptual or critical abstraction.”

works in a medium inextricably linked to reality. The very medium invites challenge; anyone seeking to push the boundaries of the photographic medium would begin by tackling its core limitation. Looking to the moderns and observing what he called their “scintillating vision,” art photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn saw the fresh future of photography in abstraction. If in literature, music, and painting (specifically Gertrude Stein, Igor Stravinsky, and Henri Matisse), artists could “throw off the shackles of convention” or representational art, why couldn’t photographers? In his 1916 essay, “The Future of Pictorial Photography,” Coburn wrote:

... If we are alive to the spirit of our time it is these moderns who interest us . . . it has occurred to me why should not the camera also throw off the shackles of conventional representation and attempt something fresh and untried? Why should not its

subtle rapidity be utilized to study movement? Why not repeated successive exposures of an object in motion on the same plate? Why should not perspective be studied from angles hitherto neglected or unobserved? Why, I ask you earnestly, need we go on making commonplace little exposures of subjects that may be sorted into groups of landscapes, portraits, and figure studies? Think of the joy of doing something which would be impossible to classify, or to tell which was the top and which was the bottom!

Essential to the reinvigoration of photography, according to Coburn, was the organization of an exhibition of abstract photography.

An essential figure in art photography, Stieglitz created just the types of works that Coburn yearned for. His cloud studies, also known as the *Equivalent* series, of the 1920s and 1930s took the raw material of nature and rendered it as abstract



György Kepes, *Solid Forms*, 1939, printed c. 1988, gelatin silver print, 10" x 8." Kepes is one of the three historical abstract photographers featured in Sullivan's exhibition at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum.

form. Intended to represent the equivalents of feelings or psychological states, Stieglitz's photographs imbued abstraction with emotion, and he often changed the orientation of them, realizing Coburn's desire for photographs that did not have a distinguishable top and bottom.

The exploration of abstract photography continued in the 1920s and 1930s with Group f/64 in America and the New Vision photographers in Europe. A group of California photographers who rejected the earlier movement of pictorialism, Group f/64 prized "pure photography." Members, such as Edward Weston and Imogen Cunningham, made highly-detailed close-ups of still lifes and nudes that tended toward the abstract. Curating the American section of the seminal *Film und Foto International Exhibition* in Germany in 1929, Weston included some of Cunningham's abstractions.

Bringing together photographic experimentation in Europe and the United States, *Film und Foto* celebrated the breadth of approaches

to photography and suggested that the camera possessed the potential not only to revolutionize vision and creativity but also the world. This belief was espoused by the New Vision photographers of the 1920s and 1930s, many of whom were included in the exhibition. Influenced by the European art movements of Cubism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and contemporary filmmaking, the New Vision photographers embraced different types of photographs and techniques; using unconventional vantage points, mirrors, typography, collage, photomontage, and camera-less techniques, they pushed the boundaries of photography. Among the New Vision photographs were a number of abstract images.

The popularity of abstract photography is an attempt to re-experience the uncertainty and unpredictability of pre-digital photographic processes.

New Vision photographer László Moholy-Nagy experimented with abstraction both in photographs taken from high vantage points and his abstract photograms. When he moved to the United States, he carried his dedication to experimentation to Chicago, where he founded the Institute of Design in 1937 and taught techniques such as photogram and solarization. György Kepes joined the faculty that same year to teach color and light. And in 1946 and 1951 Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind had both joined the faculty as well. Both were art photographers, and Siskind in particular created abstract photographs that closely resembled the paintings of the Abstract Expressionists whom

he had befriended in New York City.

It is no surprise that around this time, Director of Photography of the Museum of Modern Art (and former pictorialist associate of Alfred Stieglitz) Edward Steichen organized a show entitled *Abstraction in Photography* (1951). Exhibiting the work of 75 photographers, Steichen chose works to "illustrate abstract images ranging from the scientific document to contrived arrangements and from mechanical pattern to organic design." Focusing mostly on recent examples of abstract photographs, Steichen described the spectrum of images as "purely scientific photographs with resulting incidental abstractions," "images by photographers interpreting scientific subjects," and "photographs of purely inventive intent and light drawings without resource to camera." Some of the images were "accidental" while others were "intentional." Steichen's exhibition also included experimental films. The exhibition included recent works by Henry Holmes Smith, Aaron Siskind, Isamu Noguchi, and Barbara Morgan, and presented a historical survey of abstract photography with works by Alvin Langdon Coburn, Paul Strand, Christian Schad, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Alfred Stieglitz (the *Equivalents*), Edward Weston, Charles Sheeler, and others.

Alvin Langdon Coburn's call for abstraction in photography and an exhibition of abstract photography has been answered again today. At least two recent exhibitions have attempted to organize the vast and varied approaches to abstract photography in the twenty-

Continued on page 28.

By Erin Wederbrook Yuskaitis



Artists Nancy Grace Horton and Rania Matar at the opening reception of their respective exhibitions. Photo by Helena Goessens.

From the Gallery

From September 6 – November 3, 2012, images of teenage girls in various states of emotional dissonance covered the walls of the PRC Gallery. Curated by Glenn Ruga, Executive Director, two powerful exhibitions, Rania Matar's *Girls in Between: Portraits of Identity* and Nancy Grace Horton's *Being 13*, invited the viewer into an intimate world where the girls pictured are on the brink of becoming women. Instantly relatable, the subjects simultaneously exuded a vulnerability and a ferocity peculiar to females in their teens. Together, Matar and Horton provided a gripping portrayal of girlhood in the 21st century: Matar presented the viewer with telling moments from the lives of many girls from two distinct cultures (Lebanon and the U.S.) while Horton gave the viewer a unique understanding of one particular girl from New England. Viewed as one show, the intriguing similarities between the girls became quite apparent; viewed as separate subjects, however, the individuality of each girl jumped out of the frame and instilled hope in the viewer that the future of these subjects is rich with potential.

Focusing on built environments in urban settings that reflect our current cultural vulnerability, *The Space in Between: Daniel Feldman, Stefanie Klavens, and Lynn Saville* took viewers to a place where voids are full of

emotional weight. On view from November 15, 2012 – January 19, 2013 and curated by Program & Exhibition Manager Erin Wederbrook Yuskaitis, this exhibition elicited a sense of loss and loneliness within the viewer, often counteracted by the pure aesthetic energy of the images. The absence

of human subjects—directly antithetical to Matar's and Horton's work—forced the viewer to contemplate the space in between the human-made structures. While firmly rooted in the present day, these architecturally based photographs also portrayed a timeless feel, as if the artists froze the frame at the initial moment of abandonment, preserving a particular constructed expression of culture for generations to come. All of the work by the featured photographers fell into three distinct categories that provided an overarching context for the show: *Lonely Places*, *Storefronts in Flux*, and *Destruction/Construction*.

Did you miss an exhibition at the PRC? Do you want to remember the details of a show you did attend? Remember that the PRC posts

“virtual tours” of each exhibition on our Flickr site in addition to posting links to all exhibition reviews on our website under Past Exhibitions. We are also selling our exhibiting artists' books. To purchase Rania Matar's *A Girl and Her Room* or *Ordinary Lives* please stop by the PRC or call Laura Norris at 617.975.0600.

PRC 2012 Benefit Auction

On Saturday, October 13, the 808 Gallery at Boston University buzzed with the activity of an art-filled extravaganza. The PRC 2012 Benefit Auction featured 202 pieces of photography, over 300 guests, 35 volunteers, a jazz trio, a five table buffet, a DIY coffee and hot chocolate station, specialty apple martinis, and a partridge in a pear tree. Due to the contributions of generous artists, collectors, galleries, sponsors, benefactors, buyers, and attendees, the auction raised more than \$50,000 to support New England's premiere nonprofit photography center.

The structure of the evening followed last year's model, with the live auction and silent auction split into two separate events. This year, the live auction event featured a special curator-led tour of select items with Francine Weiss, the PRC's Curator & *Loupe* Editor. She discussed work



Artists Daniel Feldman, Lynn Saville, and Stefanie Klavens with Erin Wederbrook Yuskaitis at *The Space in Between*. Photo by Helena Goessens.



PRC Board President Vittorio Mezzano with wife Janet Lill and Denise Gilardone discussing artwork at the PRC 2012 Benefit Auction. Photo by Helena Goessens.

by such prominent artists as Robert Capa, Bradford Washburn, Ernest Withers, Henry Horenstein, and Neal Slavin providing a helpful context for interested buyers and collectors. Stuart Whitehurst, now with W&W Appraisers and Consultants, returned as the auctioneer, and the Mark Zaleski Trio kept the tempo of the night upbeat and fun with improvisational jazz music. If you missed this incredible auction, often referred to as *the* photography event of the year, check out our pictures on Flickr and make plans to participate in next year's fundraiser!

Surprisingly, fundraising events make up only 12% of the PRC's annual income. The remainder of our budget comes from (in descending percentage order) individual contributions, membership, artwork sales, fee for service programs, and corporations/foundations. We rely on the generosity of our supporters, and your assistance is vital to the organization's continued operation. If you would like to make an individual contribution to support the PRC today, please contact Julie Kukharensko, Membership, Finance, & Operations Manager, at 617.975.0600 or jkukharensko@prcboston.org. Thank you for being part of our community!

Master Lecture Series

This fall's lecture lineup featured three titans of the photography world, each from a different genre. On September 18, Henry Horenstein gave a hilarious and informative talk

on his experiences photographing everything from the country music scene to animals to his family. In honor of the re-release of his book *Honky Tonk* and his subsequent show at Carroll & Sons Art Gallery in the fall, Horenstein regaled the New England photography community with personal stories and advice. Ernesto Bazan presented his documentary work on Cuba in

a lecture held on October 24. His piercing and thought-provoking visual analyses of Cuba's Special Period and the culture of its countryside farmers comes from two particular projects and books: *Bazan Cuba* and *Al Campo*. Additionally, on December 5, *The New Yorker* photographer Platon enraptured the audience with tales of taking portraits of heads of state, Hollywood stars, civil rights heroes, and military soldiers. His penchant for animated storytelling complemented his exquisitely intimate photographs, resulting in one compelling evening. Question-and-answer sessions and book signings followed all three lectures, providing more personal interaction with these established luminaries.

Educational Programming

In addition to lectures, the PRC also offered three informative workshops with established photographer-instructors. In September, Jesseca Ferguson led "Pinhole Madness," focusing on the creation and use of pinhole cameras. Assisted by Liz Ellenwood and Julie Kukharensko, Ferguson presented a fun and active one-day exploration into the wonderful world of lensless cameras. Glenn Ruga, Executive Director, taught our first extended workshop, an eight-week master class on documentary photography. This format offers a more in-depth opportunity for students to hone their skills and receive continued critical feedback from the instructor and their peers. We received very positive comments on this model, so we plan to continue offering master classes as part of our workshop program. Rick Friedman rounded out our workshop lineup in December with his well-known Location Lighting workshop. Taking over the PRC Gallery for a weekend, Friedman kept his students in stitches while demonstrating lighting techniques using natural and artificial light. Keiko Hiromi, Friedman's assistant, and Stefanie Klavens, PRC member and featured exhibition



Rick Friedman's workshop attendees get "framed." © Rick Friedman 2012 / Location Lighting Workshops™

Center Weighted

Continued from previous page.

artist, kept the intense workshop running smoothly despite the tables, equipment, gear, and people filling our gallery with excited activity.

Our Nights at the PRC program remains as popular as ever. Designed to provide a casual get-together for photographers and photo enthusiasts in our gallery, our Nights are open to all and anyone can sign up to be a presenter based on the theme. Their popularity is a testament to the need for a supportive, positive environment in which to share work with emerging and established artists. This fall, we held three Nights: Fashion Photography Night with guest host Sybylla Smith; Portrait Night; and Architecture Night with guest host Peter Vanderwarker. Nights at the PRC are a wonderful opportunity to see contemporary work, rub elbows with notable photographers, get to know the PRC staff, and hone your skills at presenting your work. For our current spring line up of Nights, please see ad on page 29.



David Finks presents his work to the audience at Fashion Night at the PRC. Photo by Helena Goessens.

PRC Interns Make Our World Go Round

This past fall the PRC was lucky to have three stellar interns who helped tremendously with our busiest season of the year. We'd like to thank these students for their hard work and dedication to the PRC while juggling their academic commitments: Meredith Hoobler, a returning intern from the spring semester and an art history/journalism undergraduate at Boston University; Jessica Ladd, a full time intern and recent BFA gradu-

ate of Endicott College who became a part of our day-to-day team; and Zach Hoffman, a technology guru and MFA student at the Art Institute of Boston who will return for the spring semester to assist specifically with our upcoming *Unconventional Inventions* satellite exhibition. For more information on our internship program, please see the Information tab on our website. PRC internships allow students to learn firsthand the inner workings of a small nonprofit visual arts institution.

The Allure of the Abstract

Continued from page 25.

first century. In her exhibition at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, *second nature: abstract photography then and now*, curator Lexi Lee Sullivan posits an explanation for the burgeoning interest in abstract photograph in the twenty-first century: it is a response to the "snapshot culture" popularized by cell phone photography. Juxtaposing the works of contemporary abstract photographers with historical examples by György Kepes, Aaron Siskind, and Harold Edgerton, Sullivan analyzes contemporary abstract photography as a return to photography's history.

Showcasing the work of twenty international contemporary photographers, Lyle Rexer organized *The*

Edge of Vision at the Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. In his accompanying book by Aperture, Rexer presents a history of abstract photography, artist by artist, from William Henry Fox Talbot to present. In contemporary abstract photography, Rexer argues, three categories emerge: photographs in which the familiar is defamiliarized, photographs that are so manipulated they no longer possess any relationship to reality, and "conceptual or critical abstraction" (such as the work of Penelope Umbrico and Idris Kahn).

Always in search of what Coburn calls the "untried" and "fresh" approaches to their medium, contemporary photographers are experimenting with abstraction

using various processes and techniques: multiple exposures, cameraless images, the photography of fabricated objects, and the use of unusual vantage points. If nothing else, the popularity of abstract photography represents the desire to re-experience the uncertainty and unpredictability of pre-digital photographic processes, as well as the opportunity to create a unique and inimitable image produced by an unusual collusion of factors and methods. With this experimentation, photography is fulfilling Alvin Langdon Coburn's deep-rooted wish that "photography may fall in line with all the other arts, and with her infinite possibilities, do things stranger and more fascinating than the most fantastic dreams."



Spring 2013 Programs

Exhibitions

The Space In Between
Daniel Feldman, Stefanie Klavens,
and Lynn Saville

Boston Properties Atlantic Wharf
Gallery

January 28 – March 22

The Doors of Perception

Ron Cowie, Jesseca Ferguson,
Gretjen Helene, Scott McMahon,
Mark Osterman and France Scully
Osterman, and Jerry Spagnoli

February 5 – March 23
Reception: February 7, 6:30 – 8 pm

**Unconventional
Inventions**

Endicott College Carol Grillo Gallery

March 11 – April 26

Reception: March 14, 5 – 7 pm

**PRC 2013 Student
Exhibition**

April 11 – May 4, 2013

Reception: April 11, 5:00 – 8:30 pm

Exposure 2013

June 4 – July 27

Reception: June 6, 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Lectures

**France Scully
Osterman**

The Light at Lacock

Thurs., March 7, 6:30 pm

Neal Rantoul

New Works and New Shows

Wed., March 27, 6:30 pm

**New Techniques
in Narrative
Documentary**

*A Conversation with Stephen Ferry
and Joseph Rodriguez*

Thursday, April 4, 6:30 pm

Abelardo Morell

My Life in Pictures – So Far

Presented by the Photographic
Historical Society of New England
and the PRC

Sunday, April 21, 2:00 pm

Visit the PRC website
for complete details on
these and other programs
www.prcboston.org

Workshops

**Vision and Voice:
Master Class with
Lisa Kessler**

Mondays, March 4 – May 6

Ernesto Bazan

Sequencing and Editing

Sat. & Sun., June 15 – 16

Collectors Focus

**PRC Gallery with
Francine Weiss and
Ron Cowie**

In conjunction with *The Doors of
Perception* exhibition

Wed., February 20, 6 – 8 pm

**Gallery Kayafas with
Robert Richfield**

Wed., April 24, 6 – 8 pm

Nights at the PRC

6 – 8 pm at the PRC Gallery

**Experimental Observa-
tion Night: Feb. 27**

Guest Host: Sharon Harper

**Unconventional Night:
March 20**

Guest Host: Francine Weiss

Nudes Night: April 30

Guest Host: Karin Rosenthal

**Assignment/Pin-Up
Night: May 15**

Hosted by the PRC staff

**Urban Landscape Night:
June 26**

Guest Host: Phillip Jones

Special Events

**North Shore Student
Photo Slam**

Hosted by Endicott College & the PRC
Wed., April 17, 7 – 9 pm

**New England
Portfolio Reviews**

Boston University Photonics
June 7-8

New England PORTFOLIO REVIEWS

Griffin Museum of Photography / Photographic Resource Center



Arlette Kayafas from Gallery Kayafas reviewing Michael Seif's portfolio at the 2012 New England Portfolio Reviews. Photo by Robert Hunt.

The New England Portfolio Reviews (NEPR) is an opportunity for emerging and established photographers to meet with curators, teachers, gallerists, and other image professionals. NEPR will serve individuals just embarking on their careers and those who have several years of experience and are hoping to reach new audiences by initiating connections with leading figures in the busy New England photography world.

Friday-Saturday, June 7-8, 2013

Boston University Photonics Center, Boston, MA

For more information and to register, visit

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The Photographic Resource Center is a vital forum for the exploration, interpretation, and celebration of new work, ideas, and methods in photography. We inspire our members and the broader community with thought-provoking exhibits, educational programs, and resources that support the advancement of the photographic arts.

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LECTURE

Abelardo Morell

My Life in Pictures – So Far

Sunday, April 21, 2013, 2:00 pm

Morse Auditorium, 620 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA

Free Admission!

This lecture will focus on Abelardo Morell's early work and how it has influenced and informed his more recent images involving principles of optics and time in the Camera Obscura and Tent/Camera work. Morell will show how his artistic production has been closely married with his technical investigations of finding new ways to make photographs. He will also discuss and present his other photographic projects dealing with Books, Photograms, and Cliché Verres.

Photo: Abelardo Morell, *Tent-Camera Image on Ground: View of the Golden Gate Bridge From Battery Yates*, 2012. Courtesy of the artist and Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York.



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