

Once the Ocean Floor

John Chiara, Linda Connor, David Maisel, and
Meghann Riepenhoff

Exhibition Dates: May 8 – July 3, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, May 8, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Haines Gallery is pleased to present *Once the Ocean Floor*, a group exhibition of photography featuring works by **John Chiara**, **Linda Connor**, **David Maisel**, and **Meghann Riepenhoff**. Working across a range of photographic processes, these artists foreground the natural world not simply as subject, but as an active force—an agent, collaborator, and historian.

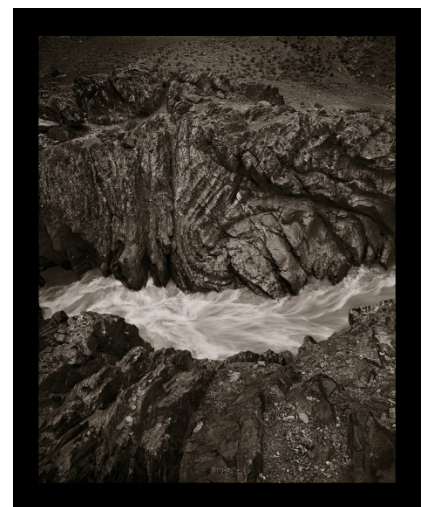
John Chiara's (b. 1971, lives and works in San Francisco, CA) luminous Ilfochrome prints, made using hand-built camera obscuras, are both a window onto the world and a physical object shaped by time, light, and touch. Printed directly onto photographic paper as unique positives, his images possess an uncanny clarity—at once dreamlike and sharply lucid. Through layered exposures and subtle filtration, Chiara produces richly saturated, atmospheric scenes that openly register the conditions of their making. Light leaks, chemical drips, tape marks, and other material traces refuse the illusion of a seamless image. *Once the Ocean Floor* presents a suite of new prints made during Chiara's 2025 artist residency in Georgia, including a mysterious, shaded thicket of trees and two meditative 10 × 8-inch works that find quiet beauty in drifting clouds and wooded meadows.

Linda Connor's (b. 1944, lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area, CA) photographs offer a foundational perspective within the exhibition, lending the show its title. *Once the Ocean Floor* is Connor's series depicting the exquisitely craggy rock faces of Ladakh, India—Himalayan terrain that lay submerged beneath an ancient ocean more than 100 million years ago. Today, marine fossils and bands of limestone embedded in these mountains bear witness to this profound geological transformation. Drawing from a variety of related series, Connor's works in the show reflect her long-term engagement with the elemental forces of spirit and nature that continuously reshape our world. A beacon within the photo community, Connor's longtime role as an educator, mentor, and advocate for young photographers has been deeply influential throughout the Bay Area and beyond.

David Maisel's (b. 1961, lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area, CA) *Spiraling* series offers an aerial perspective on the environmental crisis rapidly unfolding across the Great Salt Lake region. Gravely impacted by climate change and reshaped by mining toxins and agricultural runoff, the lake's size has diminished by more than



John Chiara, *Hutcheson Ferry Road at Selborne Lane, South of Atlanta, Georgia, 2025*
Camera Obscura Ilfochrome Photograph,
Unique, 10 x 8 inches



Linda Connor
The Indus River, Ladakh, India, 2026
Sublimation on aluminum, 30 x 23.75 inches

two-thirds since Maisel began photographing there, nearly 40 years ago. Seen through his lens, evaporation ponds and mineral extraction sites become nearly unrecognizable abstractions that pulse with otherworldly colors and geometries—endangered landscapes imbued with a disquieting allure. In the two prints on view—and throughout much of his work—Maisel uses beauty “as a tool, a device for helping us focus our attention,” creating space for us to contemplate what might otherwise be unthinkable.

Meghann Riepenhoff (b. 1979, lives and works in Bainbridge Island, WA) creates her cyanotypes directly within the landscape, allowing the elements to leave physical inscriptions on paper coated with light-sensitive materials. Prominently featured in the exhibition, works from Riepenhoff’s recent *State Shift* introduce new materials and gestures, borrowing its title from a scientific term describing sudden, dramatic changes that occur when ecosystems cross critical thresholds. In the diptych on view, freezing water forms crystalline passages that sweep across the paper, underscoring nature’s force as an agent of transformation. “The physical nature of my work, where photography-based media come in contact with rain, waves, wind, and wintry environments, is a call to be in closer contact with our environment,” Riepenhoff has said. In issuing this call—to herself as much as to viewers—the artist invites us to consider the personal and collective shifts needed to preserve our shared home.

Together, the artists in this exhibition propose a reorientation of photographic practice—one in which authorship is shared with and inspired by the natural world. Across these works, the earth is not merely represented, but an active participant. In this sense, photography becomes less a tool of depiction than a site of encounter, where the forces of nature, human intervention, and material processes converge.

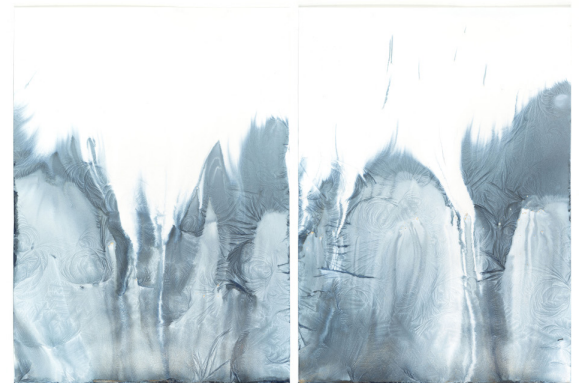
###

PRESS INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Irene Fung
irene@hainesgallery.com / 415.397.8114



David Maisel, *Spiraling 6*, 2024
Archival Pigment Print, 30 x 40 inches
Edition of 6 + 2 AP



Meghann Riepenhoff, *Day 391.11: mushroom spore ink + organic and inorganic pigment + Prussian Blue pigment + waves + freezing flung water + chanting*, 2025
2 Unique Dynamic Cyanotypes, 42 x 61 inches