



JOHN FOLSOM

reception june 4TH 6-9 PM

COASTAL CARTOGRAPHY

Artist John Folsom brings his complex and poetical integration of painting and photography to Callan Contemporary in a suite of new works, entitled *Coastal Cartography*. With his nuanced technique of merging the photographic image with densely layered and excavated oil paints, Folsom creates haunting odes to the natural world. For this body of work, the Atlanta-based artist photographed low-lying areas on the coast and inlet marshes of Georgia—primeval landscapes experiencing rising sea levels as a result of global warming. He captured images of lush swampland and evocative “bone-yards” of driftwood and live oak: lone trees with their trunks in the surf, waves washing over their roots, their contours suggesting a sculptural simplicity. These tableaux, by turns luxuriant and desolate, are harbingers of a changing world. “I feel an urgency to document these landscapes,” Folsom explains. “To me they’re an invitation to preservation.”

After perfecting a given image, Folsom prints it on archival paper, subdivides it into a grid, then painstakingly affixes the component parts onto wood panels. The grid superimposes a rigorously prismatic structure atop organic subject matter, emphasizing the artworks’ cartographic quality. Next, he layers on paint, wax, and other media, achieving subtle gradations of color and a misty *sfumato*, which lends an air of spatial and psychological ambiguity. To encounter such vistas is to enter a lost world, drawn from the realms of myth and collective memory.

Folsom’s photographic paintings have been exhibited in North America, Europe, and Africa, and are included in prestigious corporate, museum, and private collections. The recipient of numerous grants and awards, he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in cinema and photography from Southern Illinois University and has participated in artist residencies in the United States, Germany, and Switzerland.

The new photo-paintings, with their grayscale palette and intricately worked surfaces, exude a reductivist elegance. “In this work,” he notes, “everything is going toward the minimal. It’s about de-saturating the image: stripping it down to its bare essence. There’s a lot of room for the viewer to get inside there and imprint their own experience.” With their immaculate beauty and reverence for the landscape, the artworks honor the grandeur of nature while inviting viewers into a contemplative, meditative space.

RICHARD SPEER

EXHIBITION DATES: JUNE 2nd - JULY 30th, 2016

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Estuary IX, 2016

archival pigment print with oil and wax medium, 64" x 80"

Front Cover:

Refuge III, 2016

archival pigment print with oil and wax medium, 40" x 32"



Inlet, archival pigment print with oil and wax medium, 40" x 60"





Little Tybee I, 2016

archival pigment print with oil and wax medium, 60" x 48"



Refuge I, 2016
archival pigment print with oil and wax medium, 40" x 32"

CALLAN CONTEMPORARY

518 Julia Street | New Orleans, LA 70130



Silent Witness, mixed media, 30" x 24", 2016

ARTWORK © JOHN FOLSOM 2016

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