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## The Atlantic Basin Project / The World's Edge

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**Submitted by Thomas Joshua Cooper**  
Output No. 4



# OUTPUT

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To date this project has encompassed 23 years worth of field-work, research accumulation, exhibition and publication outputs.

Title

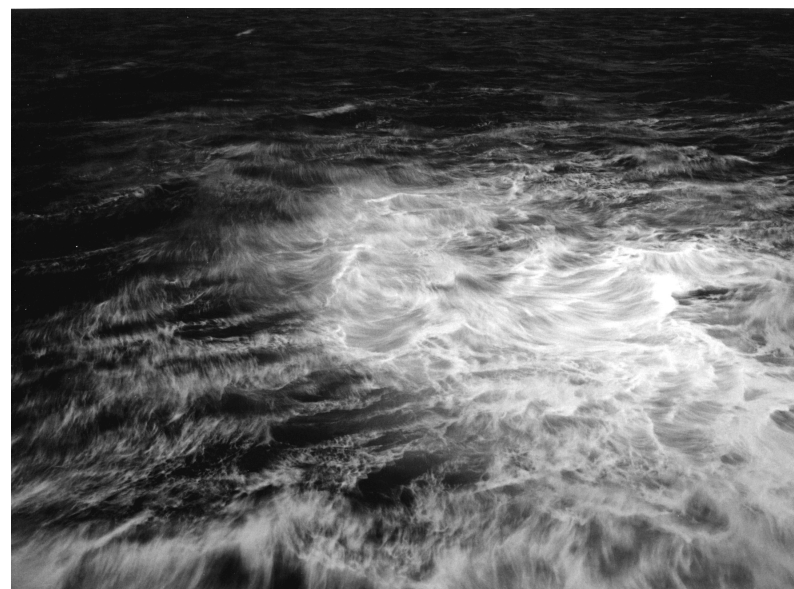
*The Atlantic Basin Project / The World's Edge*

Submission No.

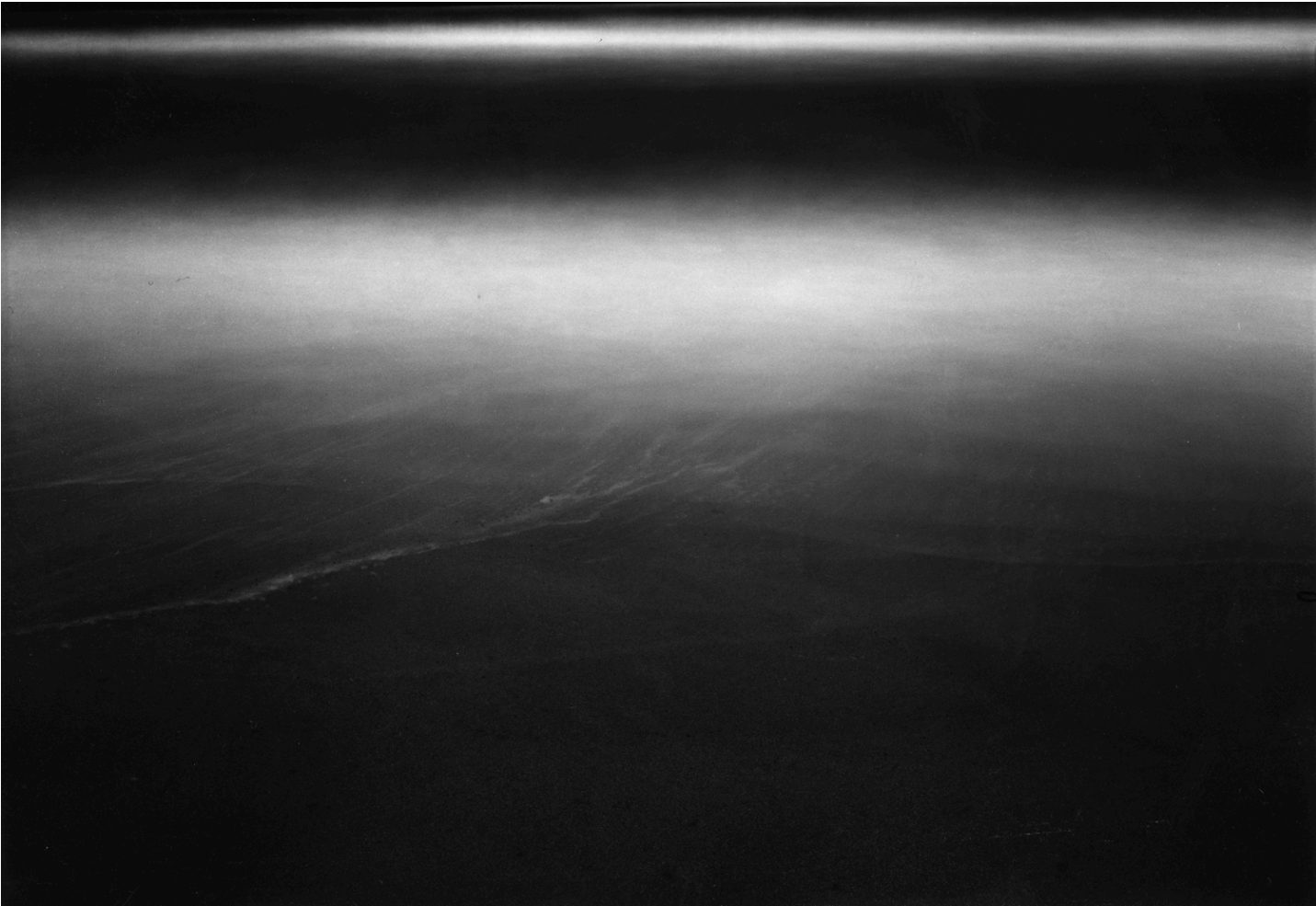
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Authors/Creators

*Thomas Joshua Cooper*































# CONTEXT

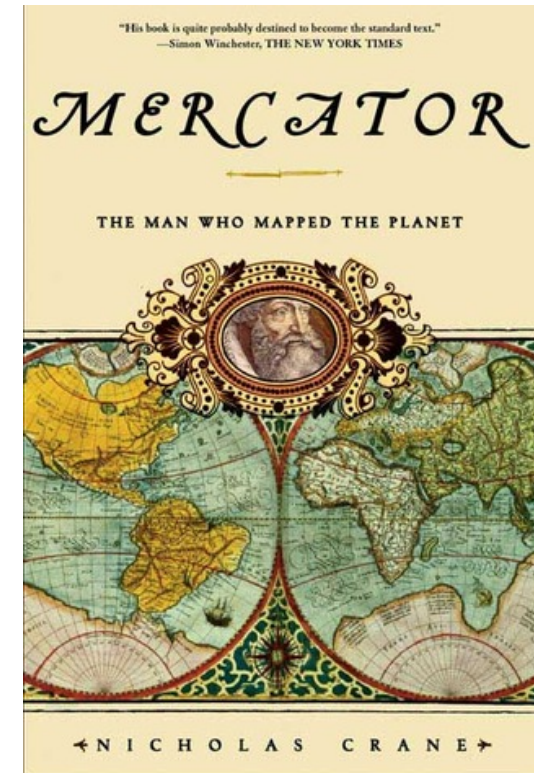
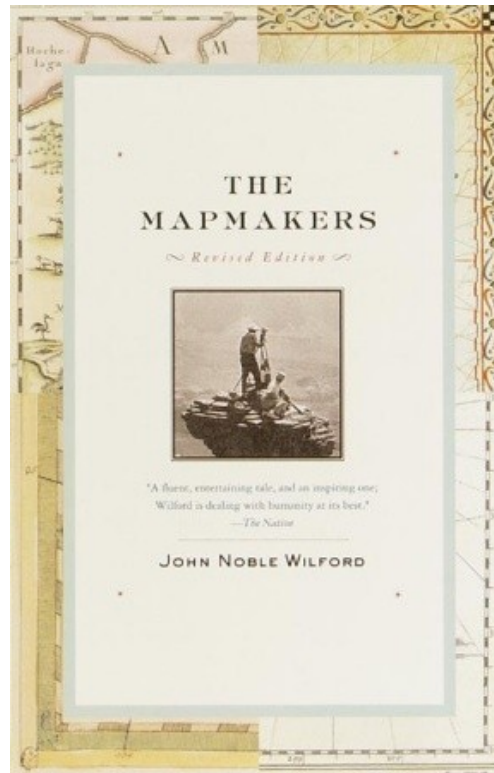
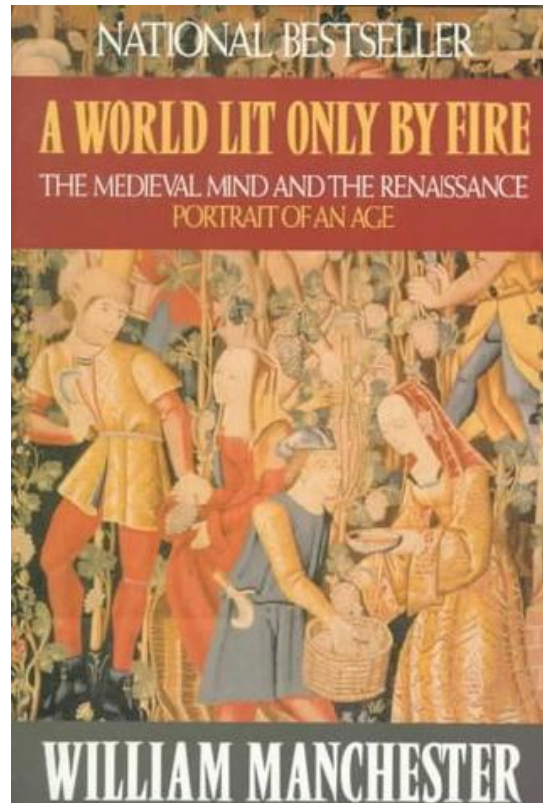
Cited such, and epic group of reflective and thematic sea-pictures have been undertaken. They investigate current debate and problems concerning both the actual 'physical condition' of the Atlantic basin itself, whilst using these investigations to parallel an investigation into the human condition

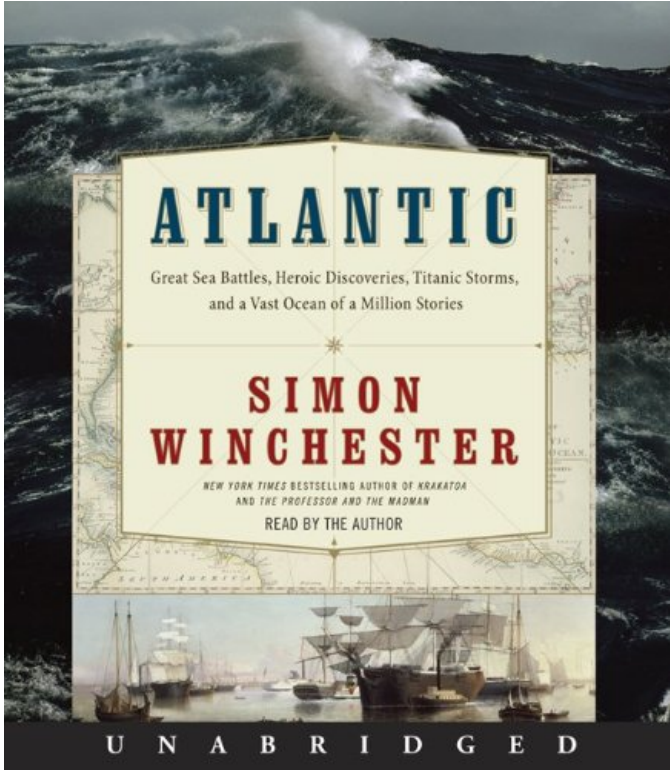
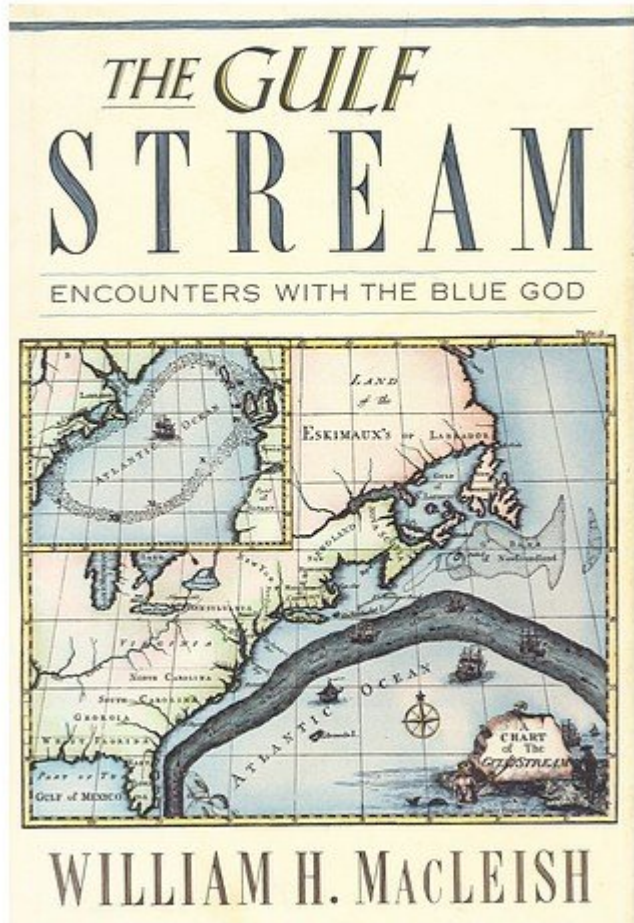
This process of review is based on investigations into specific problems facing 15th – through 19th century maritime navigators and explorers and, on parallel contemporary cultural concerns surrounding the effects of the actual beginnings of globalization: inter-continental trans-oceanic trade, militant colonization and proselytism, and often large-scale immigration and mass-migration.

Of further importance are issue arising from the new geographies and post-modern cartography regarding the study of the consequences of maps and atlases themselves, and including the attendant issues of how to properly describe and interpret any specific location and the problems of giving meaning to it by the formal naming of place.









The world has no name, he said. The names of the cerros and the sierras and the deserts exist only on maps. We name them that we do not lose our way. Yet it is because the way was lost to us already that we made those names. The world cannot be lost. We are the ones. And it is because these names and these co-ordinates are our naming that they cannot save us. That they cannot find for us the way again.

Cormac McCarthy - *The Crossing*, 1994

THE  TIMES

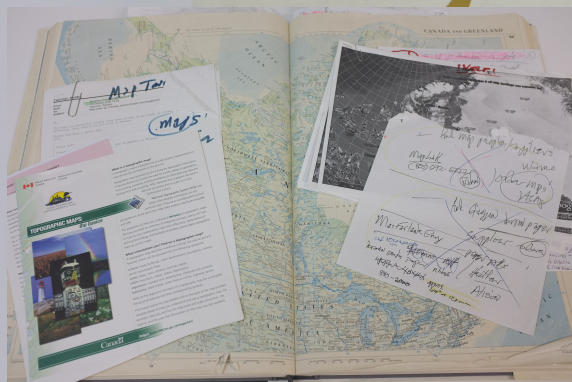
COMPREHENSIVE

ATLAS

OF THE

WORLD

ELEVENTH EDITION



# METHODOLOGY

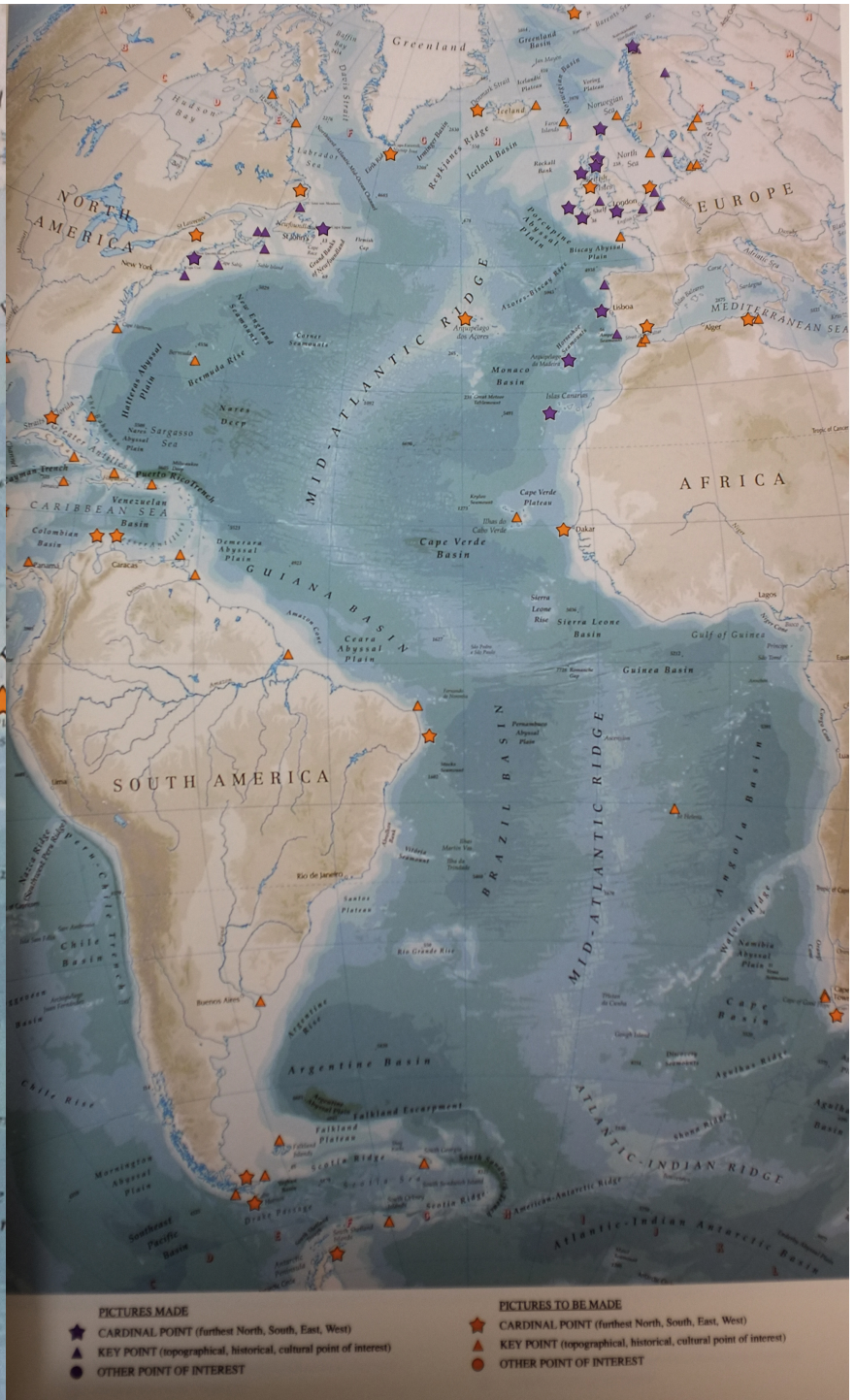
The research methodology consists of philosophical issues developed out of the physical act of mapping territory.

The actual method for gathering the field research is consistent across the many segments of this project. The study of historical geography and contemporary cartography locates the visual locales. From there one single picture is made and accumulated with others across the particular site map that has been constructed. The resulting images from these pictures are still made with film and photographic paper in the darkroom, using materials that have long ceased to exist and that are still available to me only through having secured the last remaining materials of this kind and working through them.

Each photograph is hand-printed in a traditional darkroom. Precisely aiming to explore and stretch the tonal material viability and through that limits of vision as registered through black and white film.







**PICTURES MADE**

- ★ CARDINAL POINT (furthest North, South, East, West)
- ▲ KEY POINT (topographical, historical, cultural point of interest)
- OTHER POINT OF INTEREST

**PICTURES TO BE MADE**

- ★ CARDINAL POINT (furthest North, South, East, West)
- ▲ KEY POINT (topographical, historical, cultural point of interest)
- OTHER POINT OF INTEREST

**Agfa**

**AC**

**POLAR BOOK PROOFS**

**Multicontrast**

**B/W Paper**

*2008*

*Agfa*

**Multicontrast**

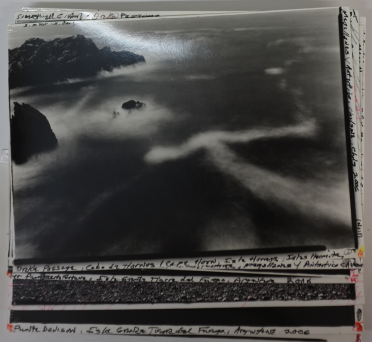
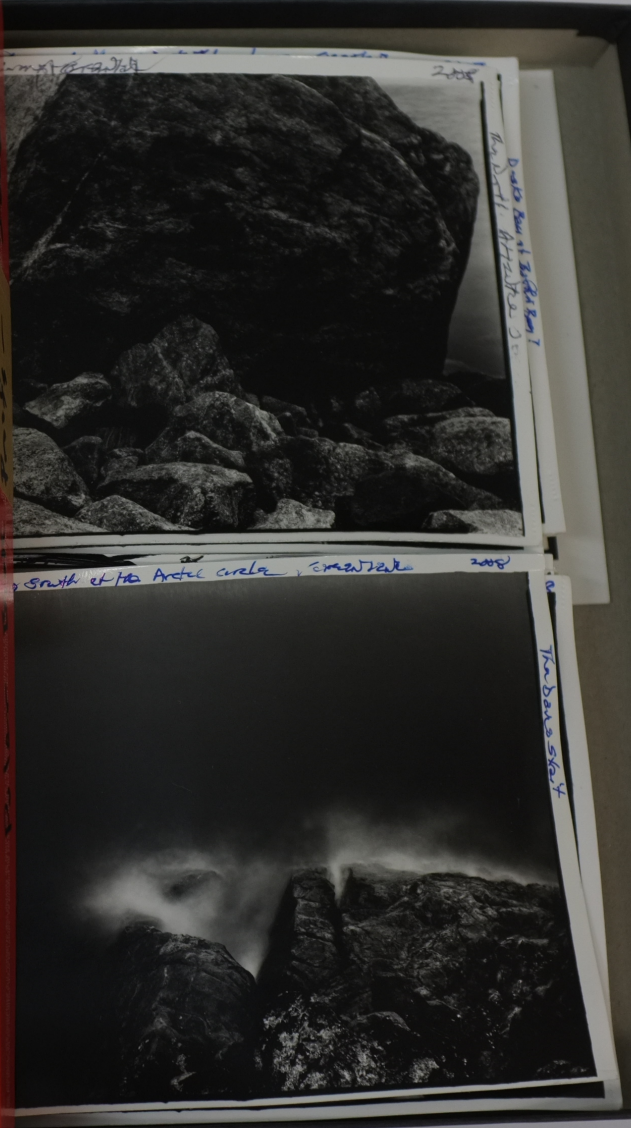
**Class - 2008**

**MCC 111 FB**

**Glossy**

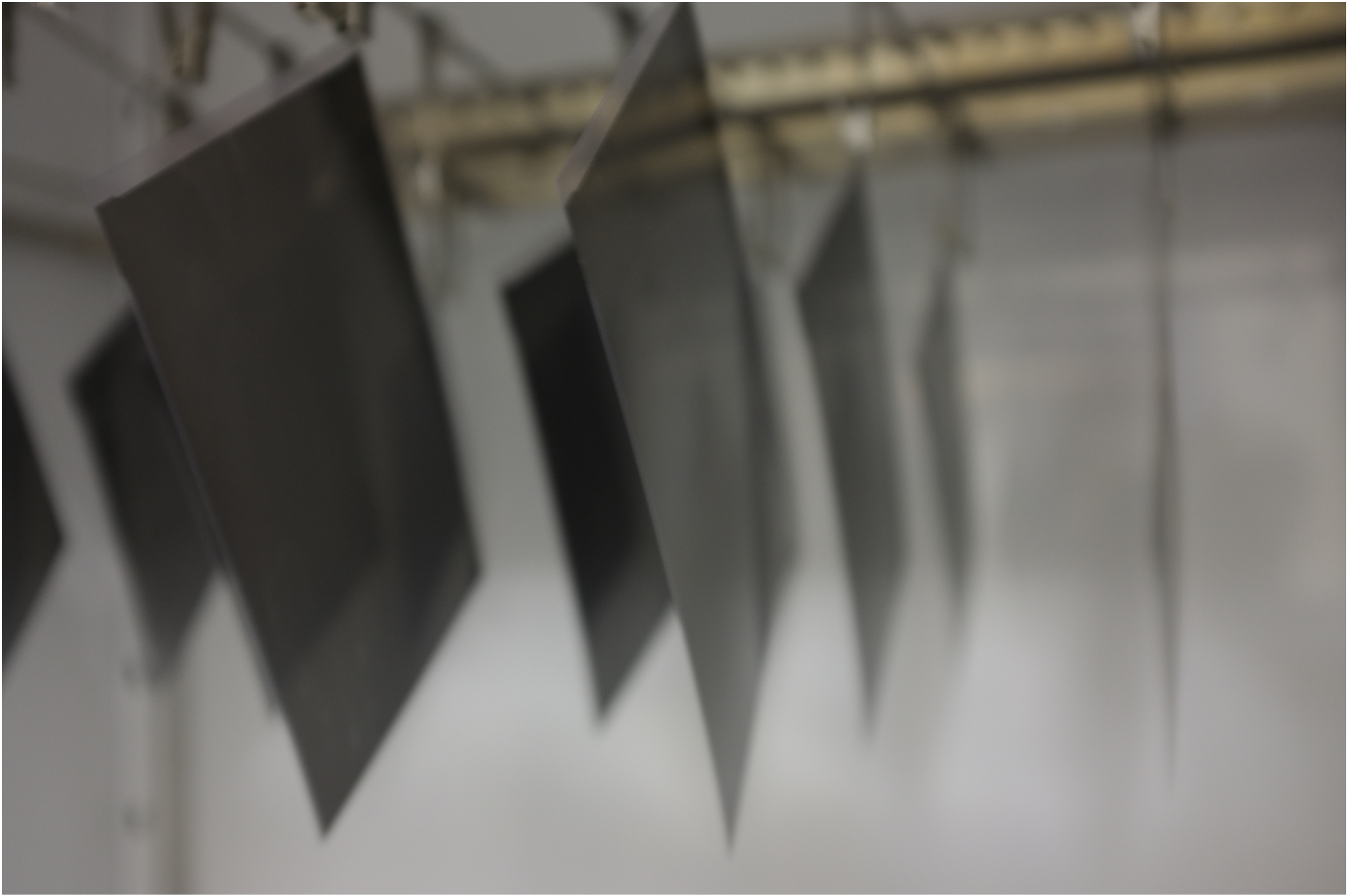
B/W Fiber Base Paper

Variable Contrast













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# DISSEMINATION

## AWARDS

2010 - Lannan Foundation, their first Visual Artist's Fellowship, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA.

2009 - John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, New York New York, USA.

## CRITICAL REFERENCES

•2012 Land Matters – Landscape Photography, Culture and Identity. By Liz Wells. Pages 292-94, critical text plus one photograph. I. B. Tauris, London, England; New York, New York, USA; ISBN 978 1 84511 864 8 (pb).

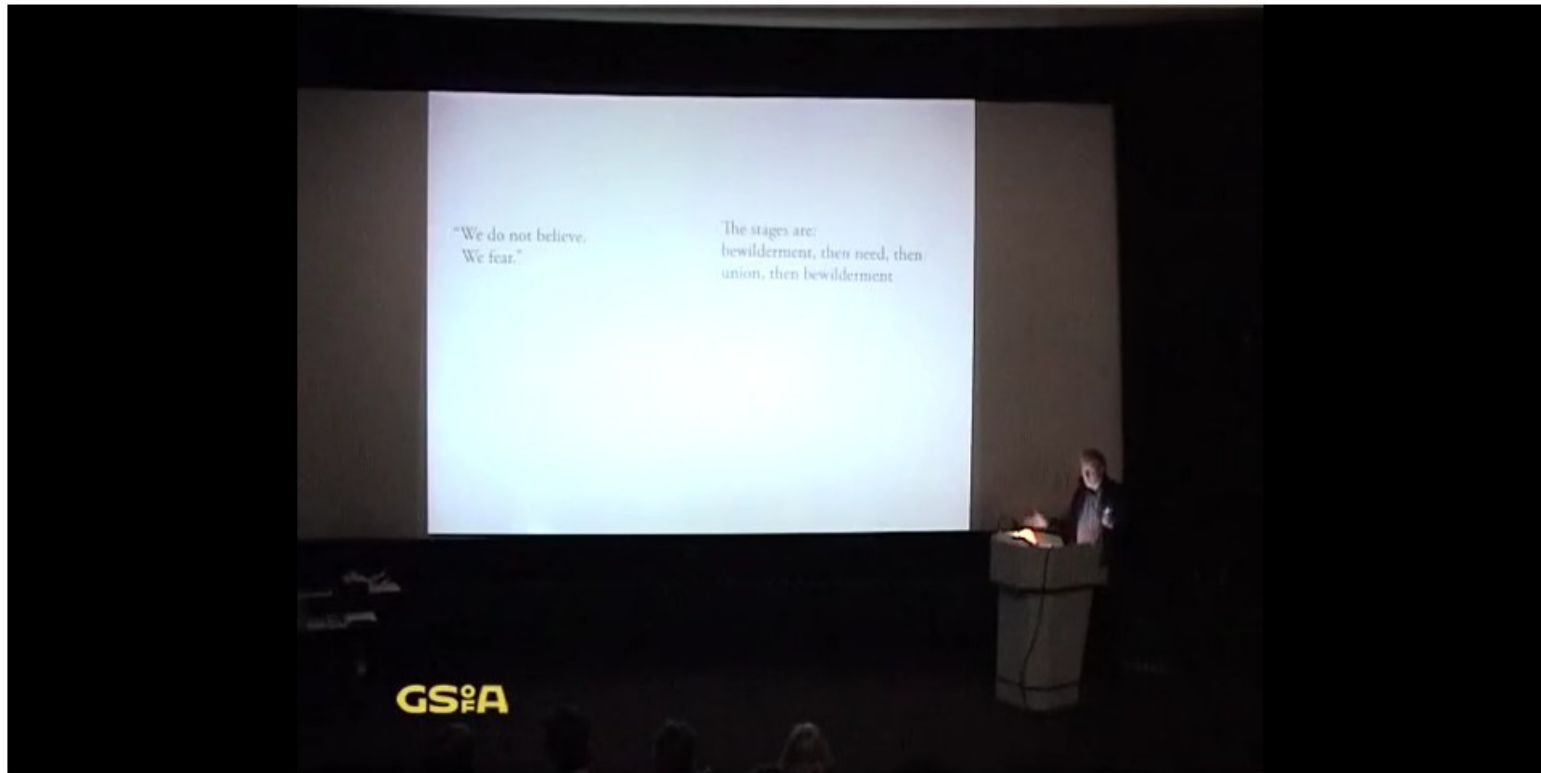
•2008 Encyclopaedia of Native American Artists – Artists of The American Mosaic. By Deborah Everett and Elayne Zern. Entry, "Thomas Joshua Cooper" by Deborah Everett, pp 27-30. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, USA and London, England. ISBN: 13:978-0-313-33762-8. ISSN: 1939-1218

•1999 – An American Century of Photography – from Dry-plate to Digital. By Keith Davies. Pages 443, 493. Hallmarks Card INC in Association with Harry N. Abrahams INC, New York and London. ISBN 0-8109-6378-7 (cloth ISBN 0-87529-811-7 ppk)

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2010 - Lannan Foundation. Selections from the Collection - Thomas Joshua Cooper - Photographs 1998-2009. Santa Fe, New Mexico.

2008 - The Ingleby Gallery. Thomas Joshua Cooper and David Bellingham. Edinburgh, Scotland. Curated by Catherine Mooney and Jade Awdry. Roma, Italia.



## Thomas Joshua Cooper, 'The World's Edge: The Atlantic Basin Project'

from The Glasgow School of Art PLUS 7 months ago / NOT YET RATED

Artist Talk – The Glasgow School of Art

<http://vimeo.com/63318647>

**02/10** Chris Wainwright, Roger Wilson  
& Thomas Joshua Cooper  
Regarding Journeys

This open conversation, facilitated by the artist Roger Wilson, provides a unique opportunity to be party to an in-depth discussion between artists about complementary practices involving journeys to remote locations which employ opposing but not conflicting working methods.

Most of Chris Wainwright's journeys are made in the company of others: either with technical assistants for the making of complicated images or with artistic collaborators. In contrast, Thomas Joshua Cooper undertakes arduous journeys during which social contact is either eliminated or, at least, minimized. These artists, however, have a shared approach to what they do. They both say that they 'make' pictures, and that the journey and the specific place/site of the picture making is vital, as is the intensity of engagement with a site. In terms of common journeys they have both travelled to remote and endangered places: The High Arctic and areas of South America, in particular.

What do these extraordinary experiences mean when brought back in to the context of the Art School? How do these experiences register with our current assumptions about the content and purpose of the art school curriculum? Do they pose questions about the social responsibility of the artist and educator? The motivation for making and disseminating their work in the way that they do, and their individual relationships to these wild places will be unfolded through the dialogue and viewing of the very different kinds of pictures that these artists make.

*Professor Chris Wainwright is an artist, curator and academic. Formerly Dean of the School of Art at Central Saint Martin's, University of the Arts London, he is currently the Head of Colleges of Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon, University of the Arts London. He is also President of ELIA, (The European League of Institutes of the Arts) and Acting Director of ICFAR (The International Centre for Fine Art Research). His work has been shown extensively worldwide and is currently part of the UK touring exhibition *Fleeting Arcadias - Thirty Years of British Landscape Photography* from the Arts Council Collection. His work is held in public collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Arts Council of England; Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris; and the Polaroid Corporation, Boston, USA.*

*Thomas Joshua Cooper is Professor and Senior Researcher of Fine Art at The Glasgow School of Art, where he has worked for 27 years. This event is the sequel to the Friday Event Lecture that Thomas delivered in 2008 on *The World's Edge* project, in which he described himself as "a picture maker and a story teller" who began his commitment to the making of photographic pictures in and of the land in 1969. He was recently awarded an American Guggenheim Fellowship for his work.*

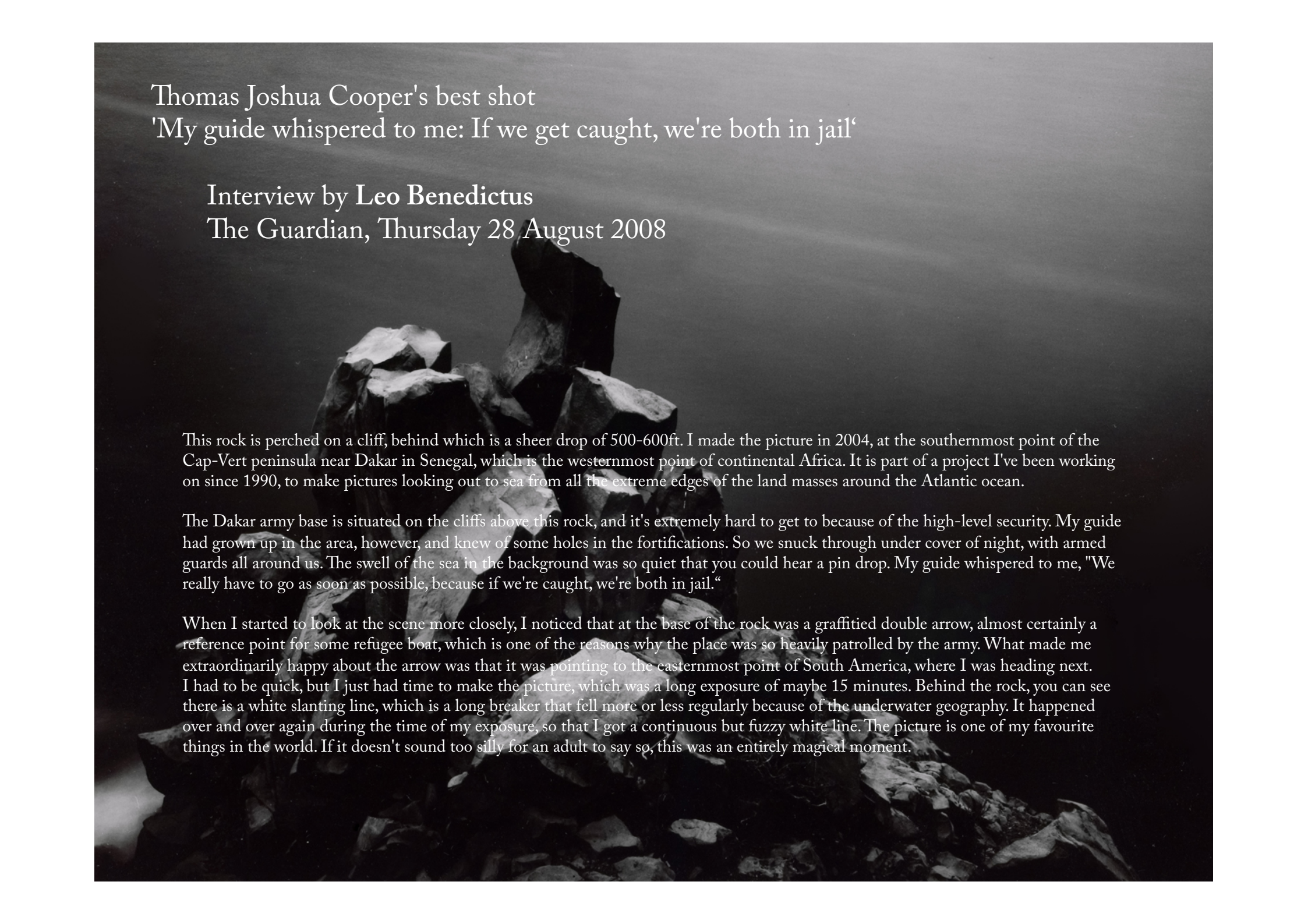
*Professor Roger Wilson is an artist and academic who, until recently, was Head of the Chelsea College of Art, University of the Arts London where he is now an Emeritus Professor. Over the last 35 years he has worked in colleges and universities in the UK, America and Europe. He has exhibited extensively over that period and has contributed to international publications on the arts and education.*



Artist Talk – The Glasgow School of Art

<http://vimeo.com/63318647>





Thomas Joshua Cooper's best shot  
'My guide whispered to me: If we get caught, we're both in jail'

Interview by Leo Benedictus  
The Guardian, Thursday 28 August 2008

This rock is perched on a cliff, behind which is a sheer drop of 500-600ft. I made the picture in 2004, at the southernmost point of the Cap-Vert peninsula near Dakar in Senegal, which is the westernmost point of continental Africa. It is part of a project I've been working on since 1990, to make pictures looking out to sea from all the extreme edges of the land masses around the Atlantic ocean.

The Dakar army base is situated on the cliffs above this rock, and it's extremely hard to get to because of the high-level security. My guide had grown up in the area, however, and knew of some holes in the fortifications. So we snuck through under cover of night, with armed guards all around us. The swell of the sea in the background was so quiet that you could hear a pin drop. My guide whispered to me, "We really have to go as soon as possible, because if we're caught, we're both in jail."

When I started to look at the scene more closely, I noticed that at the base of the rock was a graffitied double arrow, almost certainly a reference point for some refugee boat, which is one of the reasons why the place was so heavily patrolled by the army. What made me extraordinarily happy about the arrow was that it was pointing to the easternmost point of South America, where I was heading next. I had to be quick, but I just had time to make the picture, which was a long exposure of maybe 15 minutes. Behind the rock, you can see there is a white slanting line, which is a long breaker that fell more or less regularly because of the underwater geography. It happened over and over again during the time of my exposure, so that I got a continuous but fuzzy white line. The picture is one of my favourite things in the world. If it doesn't sound too silly for an adult to say so, this was an entirely magical moment.

# DISSEMINATION

## SELECTED RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

- 2011- Mannerism and Modernism: The Kasper Collection of Drawings and Photographs. Pages 214-215. One photograph + critical commentary by Jordan Bear. The Morgan Library and Museum, New York, New York. ISBN: 978-0-87598-156-7.
- 2010-The British Journal of Photography. Articalised interview, with 8 photographs, by Bill Kouwenhoven. London, England. April 2010. ISSN: 0007-1196.
- 2009-Manmade- Notions of Landscape from the Lannan Collection. One photograph with critical text by Laura M. Addison, Curator of Contemporary Art, New Mexico Museum of Art. Unpagged. Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A. No ISBN.
- Source – The Photographic Review. Autumn, Issue 60. Eight photographs. Pages 16-25. Selected by John Duncan, Co-Editor. Belfast, Northern Ireland. ISSN: 1369-2224
- 2009 - Sea – An Anthology of Maritime Photography since 1843. By Peter Borhan. One photograph with descriptive and interpretive text. From section “The skin of the sea – artistic transformations – contemporary photography: exploration and reflection.” Pages 201 and 213. English edition. Flammarion, Arthaud, Paris, France. Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., New York, New York, U.S.A. ISBN – 13:978-2-08-030063-8. Depot legal 09/2009.
- 2008 - BESart - Banco Espirito Santo collection - The Present: An Infinite Dimension. Collection Curator Alexandra Fonseca Pinho. Three photographs with critical text by Maria do Mar Fazenba, Maria de Corral and Lorena Martinez de Corral, pp 15, 192-193, 394. Lisbon, Portugal. Deposito Legal 285251/08, ISBN 978-989-8239-01-3. 2G, n.47,
- 2008 - International Architectural Review. “Nexus: Learning the way back” by Paulo David. Two photographs plus commentary pp28, 135. Spanish/English. Editorial Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, Spain. ISSN 1136 - 9647
- 2008 - Water – Prix Pictet 2008. 12 photographs plus commentary, pp53 -54, 92-93. PrixPictet Ltd., te Neues Verlag GmbH & Co., KG, Kempen, Germany. ISBN 978-3-8327-9289-3
- 2008 - Index: Fotografie – DZ Bank Collection in the The Städel Museum, Frankfurt. Edited by Luminta Sabau. Nine photographs plus critical text by Gunter Englehard, pp62 – 65. Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern, Germany. ISBN 978-3-3757-2282-7
- 2008 - On Edge. 30th Anniversary group exhibition catalogue for the Travelling Gallery. Edited by Alison Chisholm. One photograph plus critical commentary. The Travelling Gallery, The Scottish Arts Council and The City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh, Scotland. No ISBN

exposures

## Photography and Travel

Graham Smith

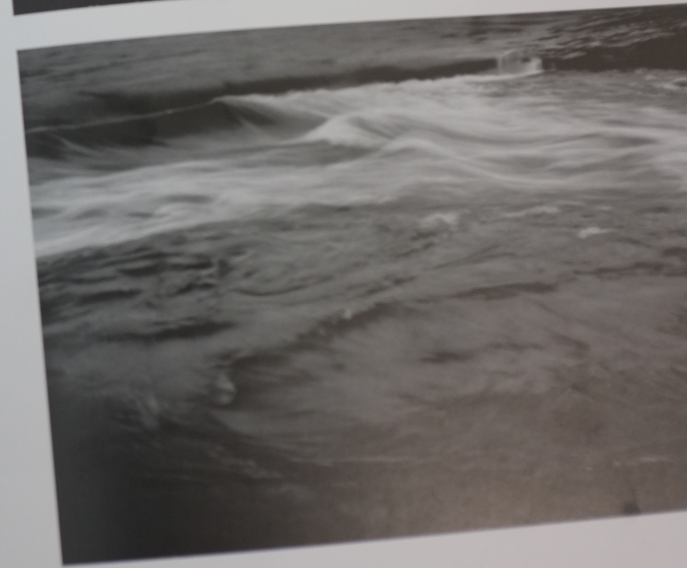
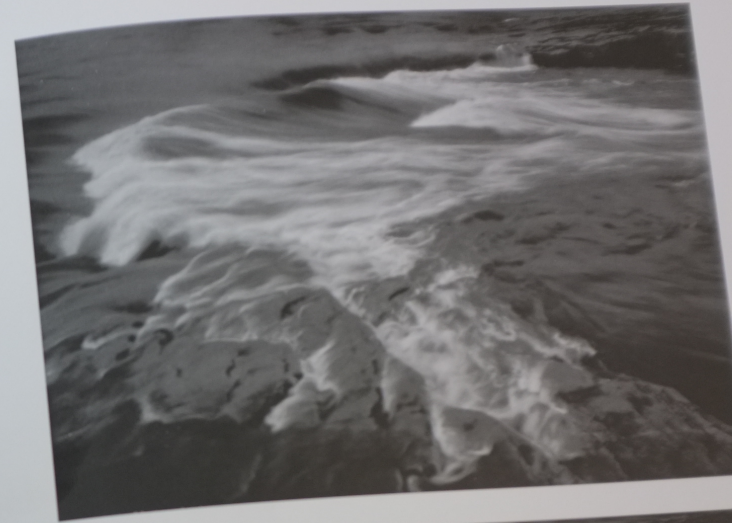


102 Tom Wood, Stanley Road, Bootle, 1998.

Thomas Joshua Cooper, a contemporary of Long and Fulton, has made epic journeys to many of the most remote regions in the world in order to make photographs for *An Atlas of Emptiness and Extremity – The World's Edge – The Atlantic Basin Project*.<sup>85</sup> On those expeditions he uses a cumbersome field camera and limits himself to a single plate at each location. Cooper, who is part Cherokee, grew up in California, where he assimilated the classic tradition of landscape photography in the American West. He is therefore a spiritual descendant of Timothy O'Sullivan, and his most recent book, *Shoshone Falls*, is in essence a dialogue with O'Sullivan, for it contains nine plates by the nineteenth-century photographer and eighteen by Cooper himself.<sup>86</sup> Cooper makes

149

103 Thomas Joshua Cooper, First Foot –  
The North Circle of the River  
at Midnight, San Lorenzo  
Night, The Swedish Coast  
1871–1908, two silver plates  
developed and printed by the





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# DISSEMINATION

## SELECTED ARTICLES, INTERVIEWS AND REVIEWS

- 2011- New Linear Perspectives. "Sojourns in the Archive: Photographs of the Atlantic's Edge" (Thomas Joshua Cooper). By Allan Harkness. 2 photographs. A critical article discussing the "Atlantic Basin" project. <http://newlinearperspectives.wordpress.com/photography/sojourns-in-the-archive-photographs-of-the-atlantics-edge/>. Downloaded 2011.
- 2010 – British journal of Photography April 2010 Issue, Capturing the Void by Bill Kouwenhoven, pp. 42-49. A critical article discussing the "Atlantic Basin" project, 8 photographs.
- 2010 - Visual Culture in Britain – North, Vol 11, No. 3, November. "Contemporary Scottish Art and the Landscape of Abandonment" by Craig Richardson. One photograph. Pp 391-405. Routledge, London, England and New York, New York, USA. ISSN: 1471-4787. 2009
- Notes for Scottish Photographers. Winter 2008/9. Number Sixteen. Organised and edited by Sandy Sharp. "Thomas Joshua Cooper at Glasgow Film Theatre" by Stewart Shaw, pp 10-13. Motherwell, Scotland. No ISSN. 2008
- The Guardian, August 28. "G2 Section, 'Arts/ Photography'" An Interview (with Thomas Joshua Cooper) by Leo Benedictus, p29. London, England.

# THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Media release  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2009

## Thomas Joshua Cooper awarded an esteemed Guggenheim Fellowship

The Glasgow School of Art's Professor and Senior Researcher in Fine Art, Thomas Joshua Cooper has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, one of the highest international academic accolades available. A highly prestigious acknowledgment of exceptional creative ability in the arts, just 220 fellowships are awarded each year across the entire spectrum of academic disciplines by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, based in New York, New York, USA.

Cooper joins a long list of previous fellows including scores of Nobel, Pulitzer and other prize winners such as Edward Weston, Ansel Adams, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, W. H. Auden, Aaron Copland, Martha Graham, Langston Hughes, Henry Kissinger, Vladimir Nabokov, Isamu Noguchi, Linus Pauling, Philip Roth, Paul Samuelson, Wendy Wasserstein, Derek Walcott, James Watson, and Eudora Welty.

Thomas Joshua Cooper's award will help support him in finishing his project of the last 19 years which has involved travelling to, and photographing in detail, all the cardinal and extreme land masses surrounding the entire Atlantic Basin - work which spans five continents. The completed work, to be entitled *An Atlas of Emptiness and Extremity*, has so far taken him to the far reaches of the North and South Poles, Atlantic Coastal Europe and Africa, Antarctica, Central America and South America, giving him access to some of the most inhospitable environments on the planet and the chance to discover new sites which have never been recorded before. The final stage of the project, for which Cooper received the Guggenheim Fellowship, will see Cooper circumnavigate The Atlantic Seaboard of North America, from the border with Central and South America to the northernmost tip of Canada.

A Glasgow resident for the past twenty seven years, during which he has founded the only fine art photography course in the UK, Cooper has held over ninety solo exhibitions since 1971 across Europe and America. He has also published ten books, nine of which have been published during his tenure at The Glasgow School of Art. His work can be



## John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation

Fellowships to Assist Research and Artistic Creation

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# DISSEMINATION

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2011

Morgan Library and Museum. Mannerism and Modernism – the Kasper Collection of drawings and photographs. Two photographs. New York, New York, USA.

Galleria Repetto. Tribute to Ansel Adams – Stone Cathedrals – Soul Cathedrals. Three photographs. Rome, Italy. The Hospital Club. Small curated group exhibition, by Sam Chatterton Dickson. Two photographs. London, England.

2009

New Mexico Museum of Art. Manmade – Notions of Landscape from the Lannan Collection. Curated by Laura M. Addison, Curator of Contemporary Art. Ten photographs. Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A. Lillie Art Gallery. Worlds – Scottish Photographers. Curated by Sandy Sharp and Keith Ingham. Two photographs. Milngavie, Scotland.

2008

Museu Coleção Berardo, Fundação de Arte, Moderna e Contemporânea, Centro Cultural de Belém. BESart - Banco Espírito Santo collection - The Present: An Infinite Dimension. Curated by Maria de Corral and Lorena Martinez de Corral. 10 photographs. Lisbon, Portugal. The Städel Museum. Index Photographie - DZ Bank Collection. Curated by Luminta Sabau. 12 photographs, Frankfurt, Germany. The Travelling Gallery. On Edge, Curated by Alison Chisholm. Two photographs. Edinburgh, et al, Scotland. The Royal Scottish Academy. RSA Membership Presentation, Curated by Sandy Moffat. Eight photographs. The Mound, Edinburgh, Scotland. The Rubicon Gallery, Point of No Return. Curated by Sherman Sam. 10 photographs. Dublin, Ireland. St Mungo Museum of Religious Life. Beyond Visibility – Exploring the spiritual in contemporary art practice. Curated by Tara Beal. 4 photographs. Glasgow, Scotland. Museo de Arte Contemporânea de Vigo. Paraisos Indomitos/Untamed Paradises. Curated by Virginia Torrente. Eight photographs. Vigo, Spain.

## Acknowledgements

- The Lannan Foundation
- The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
- Kate Mooney
- David Bellingham
- Michail Mersinis
- PACE / Wildenstein Gallery NY City
- Haunch of Venison, London
- Sean Kelly Galley, New York City