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Seeing The Unseen

Kireilyn Barber, Meg Madison, Laura Parker, Ram Dharam Walker

April 1, 2022 – April 30, 2022

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Los Angeles, March 15, 2022 – Tufenkian Fine Arts is pleased to present, *Seeing the Unseen*, an exhibition of artworks by Kireilyn Barber, Meg Madison, Laura Parker, and Ram Dharam Walker. *Seeing the Unseen* explores the duality between the conspicuous and the undefined using old-school photographic processes. The exhibition will be on view from April 1 through April 30, 2022, with an opening reception taking place on Saturday, April 2 from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm.

Photography and its related methods have long been hailed for their precision in representing what is seen. The unseen, however, is immeasurable. Inspired by such rudimentary yet practical materials, these artists offer an investigation of making the unseen visual. Their recent investigations have collectively explored contemporary notions of place, association, permanence, memory, perception and abstraction.

The title of the exhibition takes inspiration from the essay "The Invisibles", by the cultural ecologist David Abram. In this writing, Abram delves into the unseen world, isolating various levels of invisibility and cultivating an almost mystical fascination with these subtle aspects of experience. An early statement references "encountering the real only within the depths of itself":

"The other side of things, the inside of things, and the medium (atmosphere) between things. Three aspects of depth, each of which corresponds to a unique form of invisibility that haunts the visible world."

By lifting the status of the discrete to the level of the discernible, Abram asks the reader to consider the equal importance of the two forces in every-day life. Similarly, these artists engage with the photographic medium in a manner that allows the subconscious to be an intuitive pathway to their process.

It would be reasonable to ask: isn't digital photographic technique also intuitive? Rather than establish points of contradiction, instead this grouping of artists is meant to emphasize their "living" process, their abandonment of the slick and the idealized. Their artistic approaches delicate and establish their methods, which embrace chance, handcraft, and the build-up of time, materials, and perception. These four artists engage with light,

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objects, nature, and a variety of photographic practices as they reflect upon the other side, the inside, and the spaces in between.

Kireilyn Barber's work experiments with random/chance events, systems, structures, and controlled tableaux and narratives, while routinely utilizing the visually compelling mix of materials and structures that suburban and urban environments provide. Barber's random double exposed images on color film establish a relationship between the photographer's and the camera's "eyes" and the spatial juxtapositions that are accidentally created.

Meg Madison's photograms of an ordinary object, a 100-foot length of rope, printed in cyanotype and developed on-site in an existing body of water transcend the object and indicate the atmospheric elements - the sun, wind, and water - which are apparent in their making. With this work, Madison explores the conception of the "invisible." The rope, having left its mark the paper, is embedded inside the artwork but is not visible.

Laura Parker's multi-image, perception-driven structures engage the viewer with the artist's investment in her process: out of necessity, the photographs structured into these installations combine a projected negative and a photogram in a two-step process created in total darkness. Parker's work, a nod to the kinetics of experimental film, reveals the artist's ongoing interest in time, structure, and a playful dissection of the act of looking itself.

Ram Dharam Walker's roughly hewn black and white photograms on silver gelatin paper are deeply interior and fragmented, like representations of the subconscious, and call to mind alchemy's collision with the optical world. These images erupt from darkness and are made in darkness - a sort of nothingness of unknown and unseen content. They live in a world that is slightly on the edge of knowing, of beginning to understand what is here, but not quite fully formed into something we have seen, that we can recognize and put into some sort of context.

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