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CHRIS MCCAW

Time and Tides

March 2 – April 29, 2017

Opening Reception: Thursday, March 9, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Chris McCaw in conversation with Julian Cox: Wednesday, March 8, 6 pm | RSVP to irene@hainesgallery.com



Chris McCaw, *Cirkut #3 (Dietrich River, Alaska, Within the Arctic Circle, 29 Hours)*, 2015
Silver-based paper negative
8 x 49.5 inches



Chris McCaw, *Cirkut #4 (Dietrich River, Alaska, Within the Arctic Circle, 48 Hours)*, 2015
Silver-based paper negative
8 x 77 inches

Haines Gallery is pleased to present *Time and Tides*, an exhibition of recent work by Bay Area photographer Chris McCaw (b. 1971; lives and works in Pacifica, CA). *Time and Tides* marks McCaw's first solo exhibition in San Francisco since 2012, and debuts new works on the West Coast, including a selection from two never-before seen series, *Cirkut* and *Tidal*. This is the artist's first solo exhibition at Haines Gallery.

McCaw's innovative practice is firmly rooted in the history of photography while simultaneously pushing the medium in new directions. Often, the high-caliber lenses on his handmade cameras essentially function as magnifying lenses, allowing the sun to blaze a traceable, visceral path across light sensitive photographic paper over several hours of exposure. The resulting works harness the tension between destruction and creation, their elegant and polished style belying a dependence upon the brute contribution of light and the spin of the earth.

Cirkut (all 2015) takes the artist's documentation of the sun to ambitious new lengths. Here, the sun rises and falls behind faraway peaks in a graceful, rhythmic sine wave that stands apart from the angular scorches it creates in McCaw's iconic *Sunburned* pieces. Working with a modified 1913 Cirkut camera—a rotating camera that, mounted on a tripod, captured the earliest panoramic images—and a 10-foot long scroll of vintage silver-based paper, these new works track the sun's movement in the Arctic Circle, capturing multiple sunsets and sunrises in a single, continuous exposure lasting up to 80 hours. The making of these photographs involved a constant dialogue between careful planning, calibration, and an element of chance. The irregularity of earth's orbit around the sun required McCaw to manually adjust the speed of his camera's rotation every 15 minutes, an exercise in physical and mental endurance. Weather, a constant

if unseen force in McCaw's work, becomes all the more tangible in this series. The frequent interruptions of Arctic winds and storms, often in the evenings, appear as flashes of white against an otherwise calm, grey horizon. The works in *Cirkut* embody both the immediacy (and dramatic unpredictability) of nature, and the languid passing of time.

McCaw's *Tidal* series (2013-present) finds the artist training his lens away from the horizon and towards the shore. In these works, the sun is less visible, yet no less present or powerful, its reflection on the water's surface creating the solarized image. In some works, rocks appear as dark orbs against the holographic whiteness of the surrounding water; in others, branches and rocks are partially or fully revealed beneath a linework of solarized ripples, marking the ebb and flow of the tide during exposure time.

McCaw's recent *Poly-optic* and *Heliograph* series (both 2012-present) make use of multiple lenses or exposures to explore the mark-making possibilities of his practice as it shades into abstraction. *Poly-optic* utilizes a custom-built lens board mounted with sixty-three lenses. By selectively opening groupings of lenses at different times of the day, McCaw creates on a single piece of paper a choreographed pattern of nearly identical sunburns that knowingly recall Eadweard Muybridge's motion studies. In *Heliograph*, a single piece of paper undergoes multiple exposures at different times, on different days, or at different locations. In the resulting works, solar trajectories playfully interact as parallel or intersecting lines, and landscapes at opposite ends of the earth may be layered against one another. These photographic experiments inadvertently invite us to reconsider our ideas of time and place.

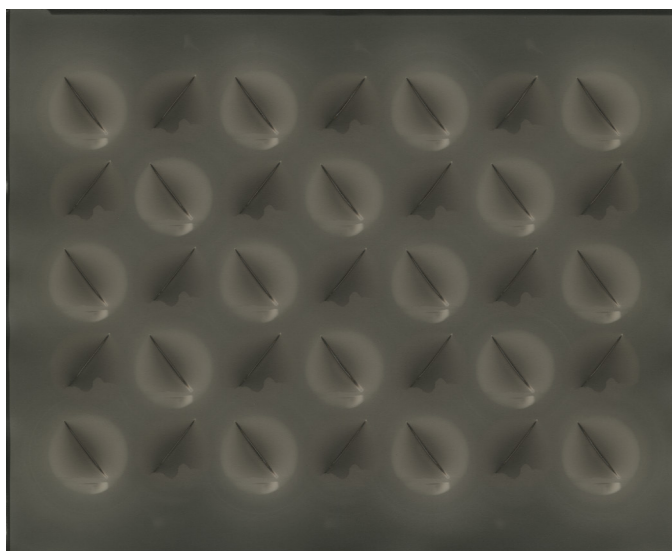
Chris McCaw's work has been widely exhibited domestically and abroad, and is included in the collections of major institutions such as the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; Oakland Museum, CA; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Chrysler Art Museum, Norfolk, VA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C; Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK.



Chris McCaw, *Tidal #4*, 2013
Unique gelatin silver paper negative
8 x 10 inches



Chris McCaw, *Heliograph #130 (Double Day)*, 2016
Four unique gelatin silver paper negatives
Four images: 10 x 8 inches each; overall: 10 x 32 inches



Chris McCaw, *Poly-optic #55*, 2016
Unique gelatin silver paper negative
16 x 20 inches