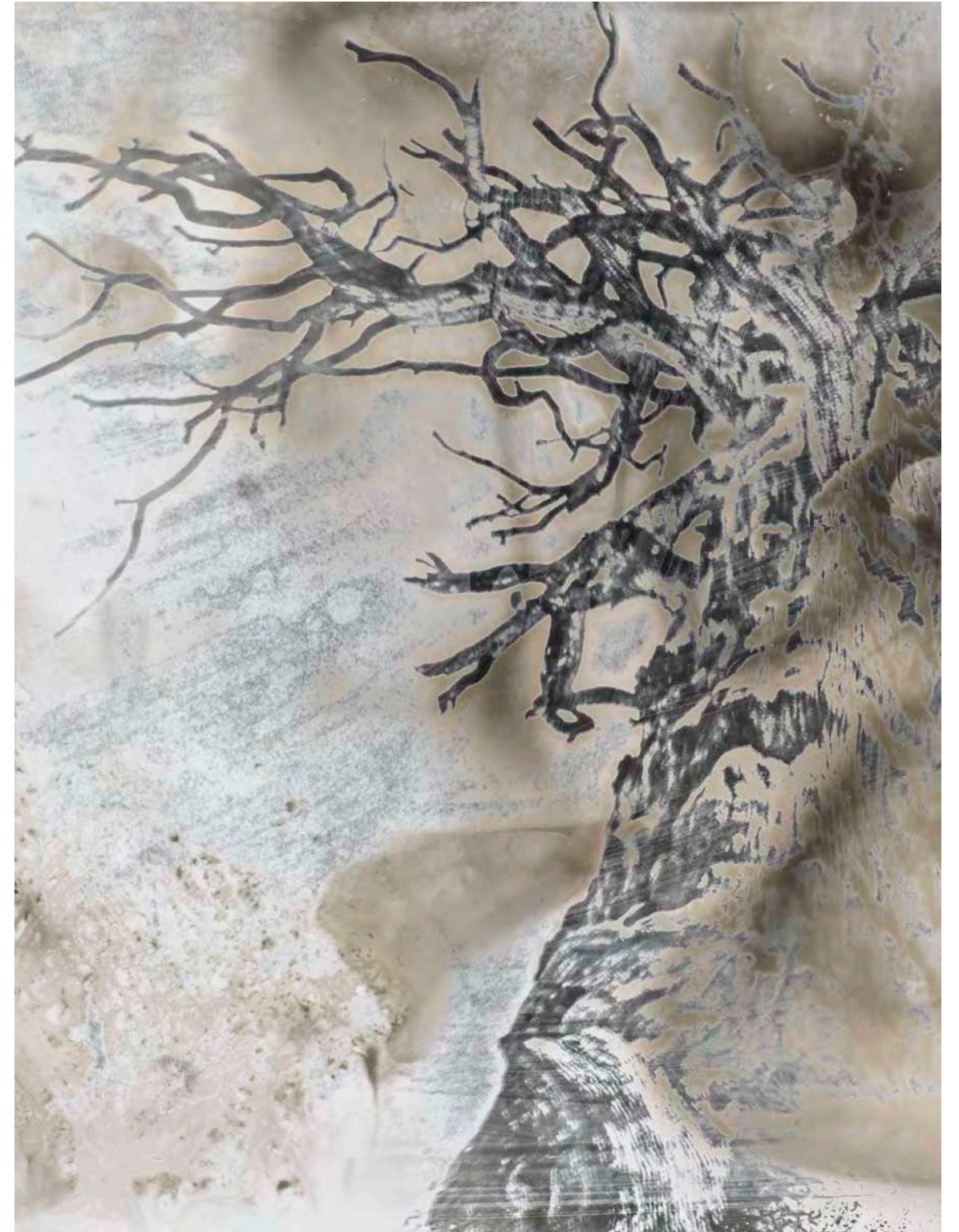


JANE OLIN BEYOND
MY REASONABLE SELF

“THERE ARE NO RULES.
THAT IS HOW ART IS BORN,
HOW BREAKTHROUGHS HAPPEN.
GO AGAINST THE RULES OR IGNORE THE RULES.
THAT IS WHAT INVENTION IS ABOUT.”

HELEN FRANKENTHALER



JANE OLIN

Beyond My Reasonable Self

Jane Olin shares the philosophy of a long line of photographic innovators. From the start, select practitioners recognized the medium's avant-garde potential, and conceived a variety of surrealist manipulations and compositional experiments. Man Ray's rayographs, André Kertész's distortions, Lucas Samaras's Polaroid manipulations, and even David Hockney's composites are just a small sampling of the range of creative possibilities in photography. Olin also likes to challenge expectations, and similarly, she has found her milieu beyond the more traditional approaches to image making. Using all the photographic tools at her disposal she makes intuition and chance the primary allies of her practice.

Although Olin began working with West Coast straight photographers over twenty-five years ago, she quickly took off on her own path. The traditional photography prerequisite of documenting the natural environment did not inspire her very much. Instead she wanted to depict what lies beyond ordinary perception, and she was unafraid to break photographic rules in order to do so. Olin experimented from the start, with simple pinhole cameras and with focus and exposure in the darkroom. She found that using unconventional adjustments could influence perception and capture the subtle mystery she was looking for. This approach is reflected in Olin's deep appreciation of Japanese

aesthetics, particularly the concept of *Yugen*. Arising from Zen Buddhism, its definition is elusive, but it refers to the profound subtlety or mystery within or beneath the surface of things. It also indicates a "paring down to the essence of a thing," and suggests a delicate harmony or quality of beauty that is apparent yet remains somehow intangible. As she continued to work, Olin's personal aesthetic developed along these lines, and found true expression in her groundbreaking series, *Site/Sight Unseen*.

Site/Sight Unseen originated with a trip to Havana, Cuba, where Olin photographed a patch of intertwined sticks falling against a wall. While working on the negatives, one unfixed print was inadvertently forgotten, and lingered in the darkroom sink all day. This incident gave the chemicals time to act on the silver gelatin paper. When she rediscovered the print, its unexpected beauty startled her. As she says, "it upended my darkroom methodology. I switched from working with a preconceived idea to interacting with the print in process." Olin continued to work with the Havana negatives, developing an astonishing variety of images based on them. Ranging from intergalactic apparitions, to fire, or storms of submerged cloud, or trails of wind, or water, they radiate subtle tonalities of pale gold, bronze, iron and silver. Despite their diversity, these otherworldly images remain bound together by the intertwined

sticks that mark each one. In some instances they are merely shadow, in others they are clear and anchoring, but taken together they act like a mantra that infuses the series with the spirit of place and maker. A practitioner of mindfulness meditation, Olin feels that each print is an expression of present moment awareness.

Working this way led Olin to consider how she might expand on its potential, and what came to her mind were trees. As a child, she and her sister spent hours playing in the forest just outside their door. Being surrounded by trees gave her a sense of comfort and peace, and she has imagined them as protective friends ever since. Olin has always photographed trees, but never felt satisfied that she had captured what she sought. But in adopting the process developed for the Havana photographs, she found the right voice. The series title, *Intimate Conversation*, suggests her deep connection to the subject. Yet these images also convey a vaguely ominous undertone, in recognition that one can no longer think of trees without an awareness of the threats they face.

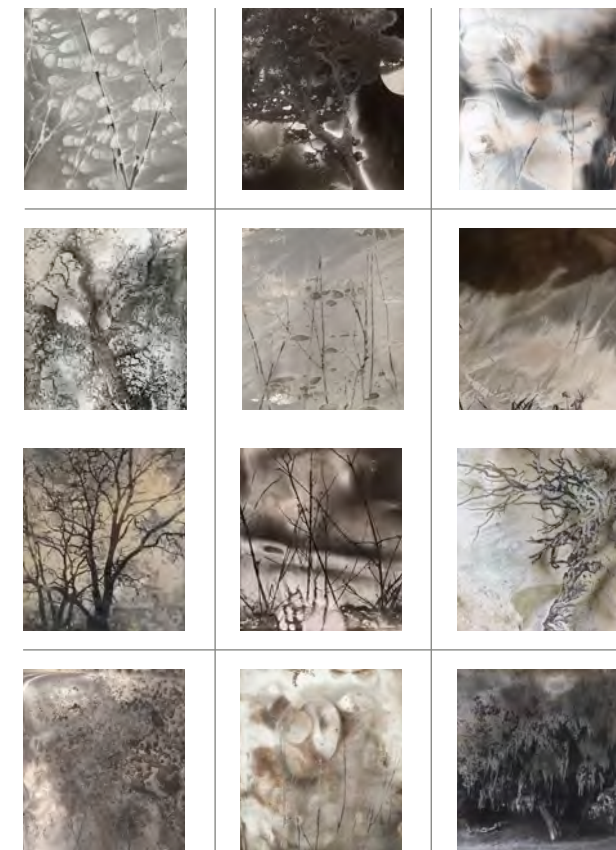
Changing climate means potential weakening from the stress of higher temperatures, or the struggle of navigating to cooler elevations through seed dispersal, leaving many species' future in doubt. Olin freely acknowledges that this perspective is active in her work, in the same way that the shock of a clear-cut forest she saw as a child has never left her. But although there are uneasy undercurrents in her images, there is also sparkle and light. Shadowy elements meet others that gleam, and luminous auras emerge from the dark to

collaborate and contend, lending her trees a dynamic energy that reveals their grandeur. Like a poem, *Dark Moon Midnight* or *The Stars Align* reorganizes our perceptions to reveal the familiar in a startling new way. These trees arise from the ordinary world and take their place in an extraordinary one.

Jane Olin's daring photographic inventions capture barely controlled chemical interactions in astonishing variations. She composes her images in the traditional darkroom over many hours and, in a kind of alchemical transformation, brings them to fruition through a succession of moment-by-moment choices. Attending to and building upon each change as it occurs, she cultivates the striking forms and tonalities of her prints. Working at the border zone of accident, skillful focus, and intuition, she reinterprets Henri Cartier-Bresson's iconic photographic approach of "the decisive moment" to her darkroom. In moving beyond convention she has liberated her process and brought forth an innovative and deeply engrossing body of work.



Site | Site Unseen



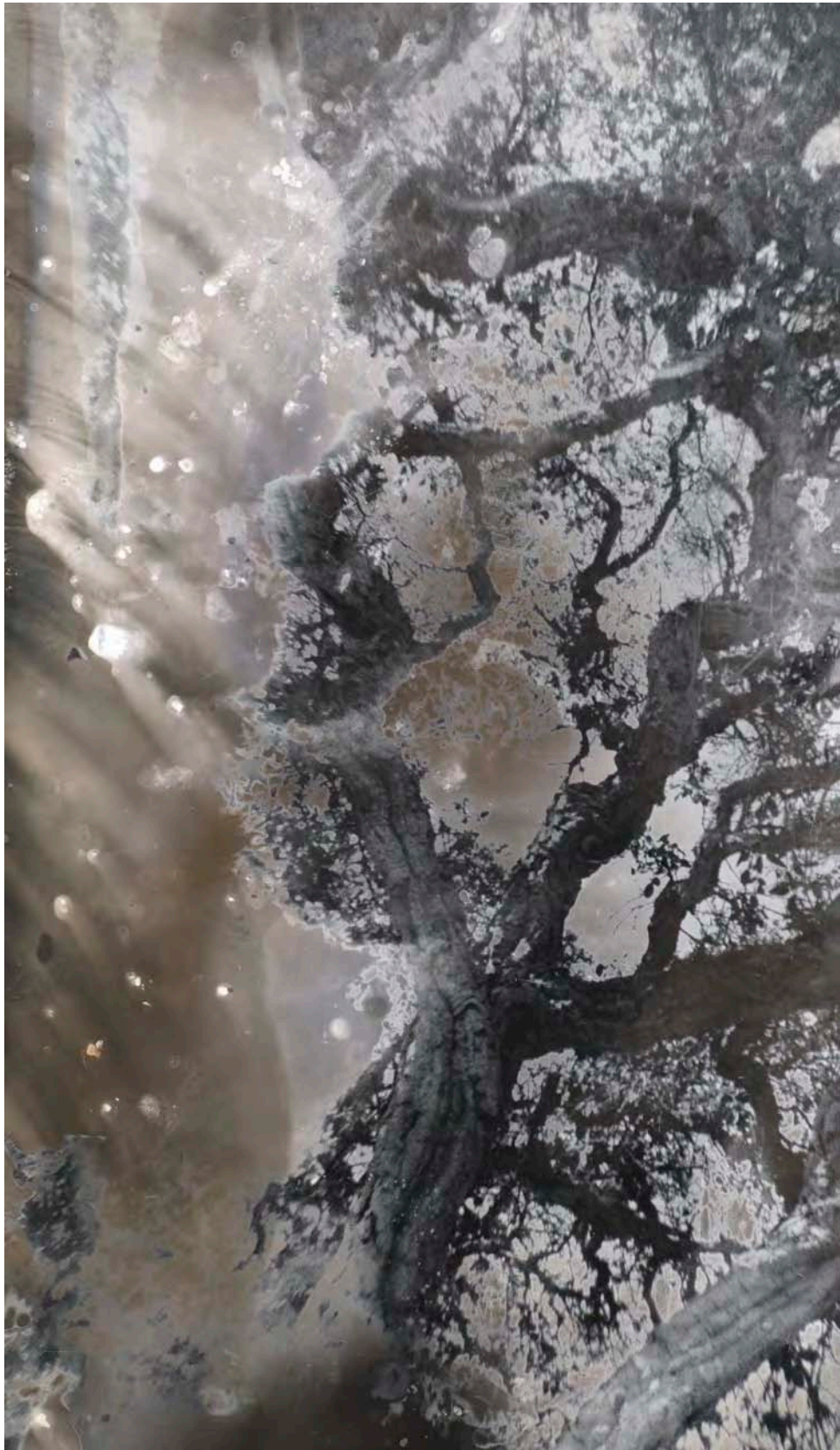
Intimate Conversation







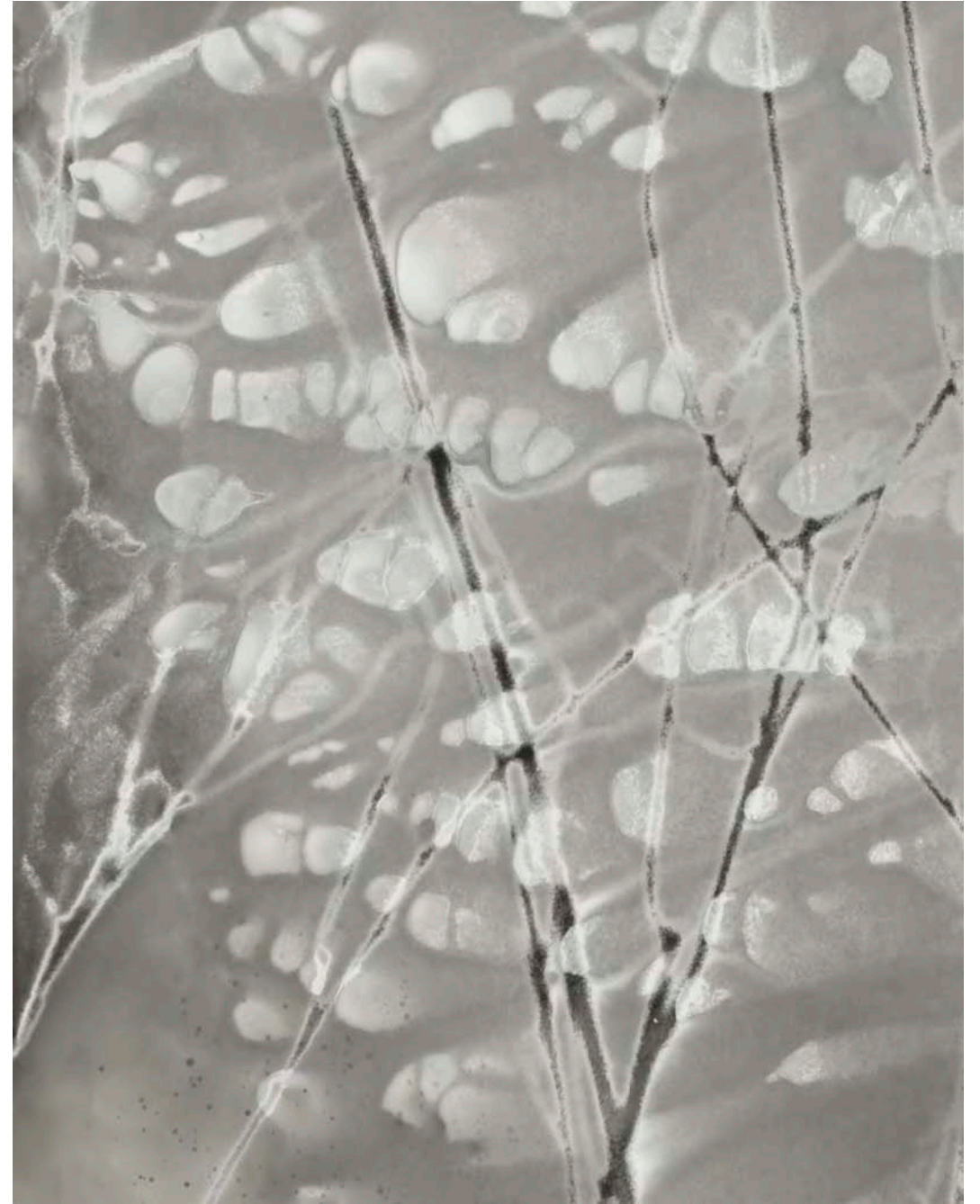




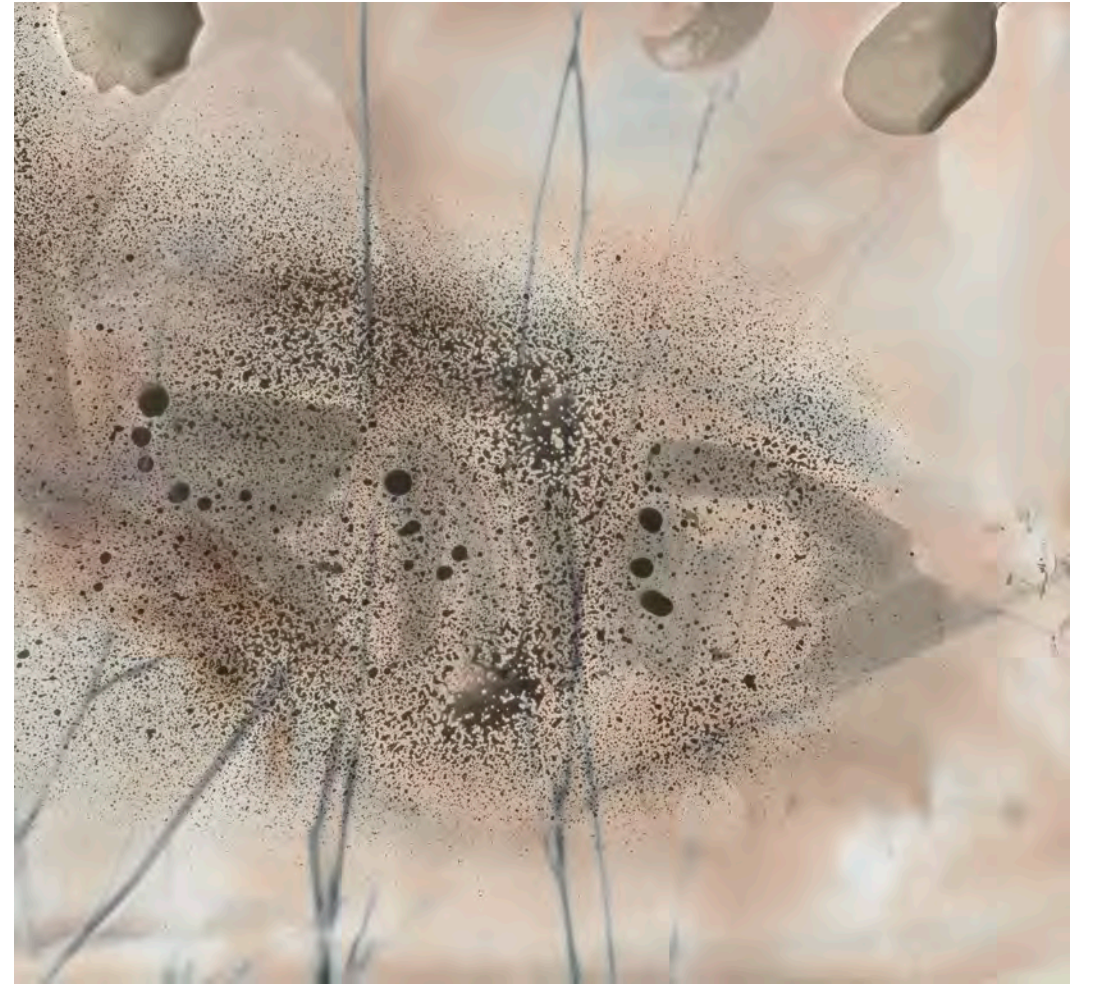


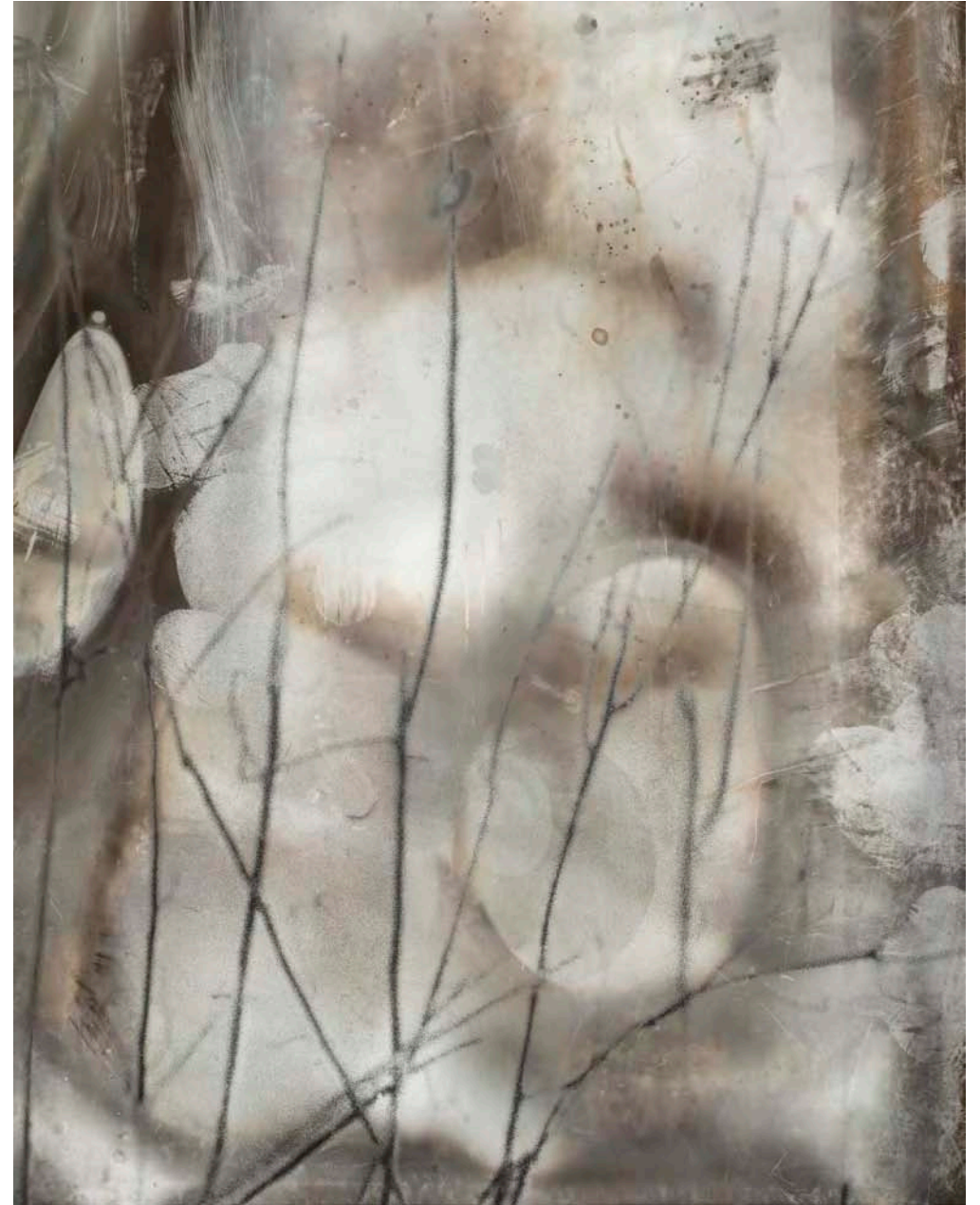
“IF ONE REALLY WISHES TO BE MASTER OF AN ART,
TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE IS NOT ENOUGH.
ONE HAS TO TRANSCEND TECHNIQUE SO THAT ART
BECOMES AN ‘ARTLESS ART’
GROWING OUT OF THE UNCONSCIOUS.”

D.T. SUZUKI







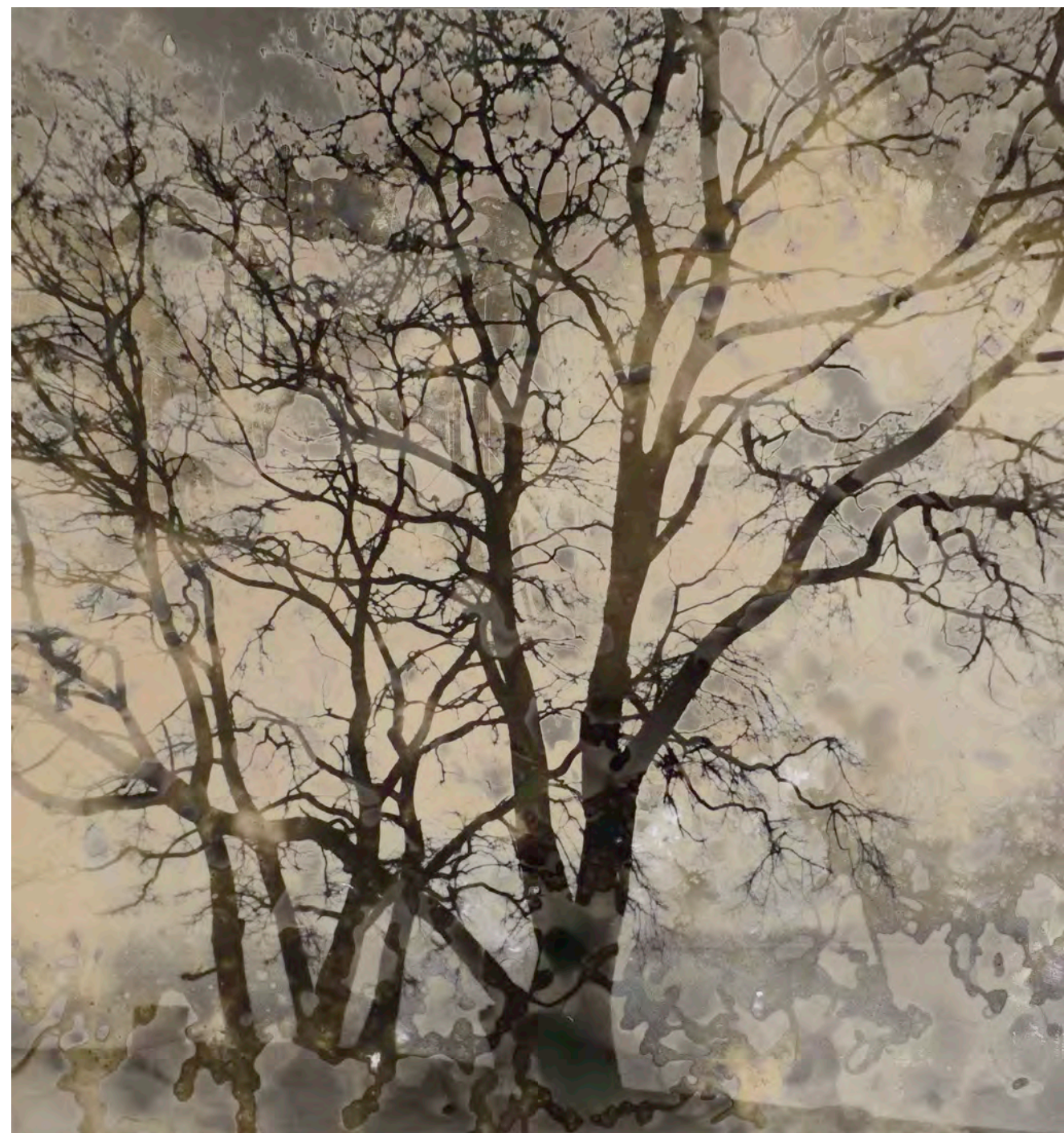


*"NO MATTER HOW SLOW THE FILM,
SPIRIT ALWAYS STANDS STILL
LONG ENOUGH FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHER
IT HAS CHOSEN."*

MINOR WHITE







Images

Page 3
Intimate Conversation 11
(I Thought I Heard the Wind Whisper)
2017, 27 x 21.5 in, 69 x 55 cm

Page 10
Site | Sight Unseen 25
2015, 24 x 20 in, 61 x 50.75 cm

Page 11
Intimate Conversation 3
(Dark Moon Midnight)
2017, 22 x 20 in, 56 x 51 cm

Page 12
Site | Sight Unseen 17
2014, 24 x 20 in, 61 x 50.75 cm

Page 13
Site | Sight Unseen 22
2015, 20 x 24 in, 50.75 x 61 cm

Page 14
Intimate Conversation 1
(Tree with Moon)
2017, 24 x 20 in, 61 x 50.75 cm

Page 15
Site | Sight Unseen 11
2012, 24 x 20 in, 61 x 50.75 cm

Page 16-17
Intimate Conversation 4
(Dali's Dream)
2017, 24.5 x 20 in, 62.25 x 50.75 cm

Page 18
Intimate Conversation 2
(The Stars Align)
2017, 27.75 x 16.25 in, 70.50 x 41.25 cm

Page 19
Site | Sight Unseen 6
2013, 19 x 24 in, 48.25 x 61 cm

Page 20
Intimate Conversation 8
(Walk in the Woods)
2017, 20 x 25.5 in, 50.75 x 64.75 cm

Page 22
Intimate Conversation 5
(White Shadow)
2017, 27 x 19 in, 69 x 48.25 cm

Page 23
Site | Sight Unseen 26
2015, 24 x 20 in, 61 x 50.75 cm

Page 24-25
Site | Sight Unseen 16
2014, 18 x 26 in, 45.75 x 66 cm

Page 26
Site | Sight Unseen 21
2015, 24 x 20 in, 61 x 50.75 cm

Page 27
Site | Sight Unseen 23
2015, 20 x 20 in, 50.75 x 50.75 cm

Images *(continued)*

Page 28

Site | Sight Unseen 3

2013, 24 x 18 in, 61 x 46 cm

Page 29

Site | Sight Unseen 19

2015, 24 x 19 in, 61 x 48.25 cm

Page 31

Intimate Conversation 7

(Reaching Toward the Light)

2017, 40 x 32.5 in, 102 x 82.55 cm

Page 32-33

Site | Sight Unseen 24

2015, 17 x 26 in, 43 x 66 cm

Page 34

Site | Sight Unseen 18

2015, 20 x 20 in, 50.75 x 50.75 cm

Page 35

Intimate Conversation 13

(untitled)

2017, 22 x 22 in, 56 x 56 cm

JANE OLIN

Biography



Jane Olin has lived and worked as a photographer in California's Monterey Bay area for over twenty-five years. Living at the epicenter for the West Coast photography movement, she learned the skills of straight photography and the tenets of the historic *Group f/64* from the assistants and students of Ansel Adams. She participated in workshops with many prestigious photographers including Ruth Bernhard, John Sexton, Joyce Tenneson, Brian Taylor, Martha Casanave, Holly Roberts, and Christopher James.

Olin has traveled widely and, of the many countries she visited, Japan made the most profound impact. Its aesthetics and its Zen Buddhism reflected her own ideas, particularly its emphasis on beauty found in nature, in simplicity, the imperfect and the transient, and in the values of grace and subtlety. She maintains a mindfulness practice today, and present moment awareness is imbedded in her photographic process.

Although subtle influences from straight photography remain, Olin has evolved a distinctly personal vision. She works in series of related images, a practice that allows for extended explorations of a single idea or subject. For the past several years she has developed a breakthrough series of one-of-a-kind, gelatin silver process prints, which she enlarges and prints on

archival paper using the digital process. In addition, she founded *Salon Jane*, a group of six established photographers who exhibit as a group, and come together to discuss their work and support each other's artistic development. Olin's work is in the collections of the Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, and Museum of Photographic Art in San Diego, as well as the Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT.



JANE OLIN (b. Washington State)

EDUCATION

B.A., Philosophy & History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Workshops include Ruth Bernhard, Joyce Tenneson, Martha Casanave, John Sexton, Brian Taylor, Holly Roberts, Elizabeth Opalenik, and Christopher James.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA, *Beyond My Reasonable Self*, solo exhibition, November 2017-February 2018

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, 2017 *International Juried Exhibition*, November-December 2017, Philip Brookman, juror

Pen + Brush, New York, NY, *King Woman*, October-December, 2017, Mashonda Tifre, curator

Center of Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, 2017 *Members Juried Exhibition*, July-September, 2017, Elizabeth Corden and Jan Potts, jurors

Viewpoint Gallery, Sacramento, CA, *On the Edge of Chance*, June-July, 2017

Invitational Pop-Up Exhibition, Carmel, CA, *Awakening*, February 2017

Art Intersection, Gilbert, AZ, Salon Jane: *Independent Presence*, January-February 2017

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, 2016 *International Juried Exhibition*, Linde B. Lentinen, juror

Sand City Art Committee Juried Competition, Sand City, CA, August-September 2016, Gail Enns juror

A Smith Gallery, Johnson City, TX, *Pinhole*, July-August 2016, Amanda Smith juror

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, *Jane Olin + Elizabeth Opalenik: On the Edge of Chance*, January-February 2016, two-person show.

Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA, *Through the Lens of Four*, July-September 2015

Green Chalk Contemporary Gallery, Monterey, CA, Salon Jane: *Independent Presence*, June-August, 2015

Art Intersection, Gilbert, AZ, *Light Sensitive*, March-April 2015, Robert Hirsch juror

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, 2015 *International Juried Exhibition, A Portfolio Competition*, January-February 2015, Douglas Marshall juror

New York Center for Photographic Art, Online exhibition, *Wandering Curves 2015*, Debra Klomp Ching juror

Agora Gallery, New York, NY, *Illumination: An Exhibition of Fine Art Photography*, April-May, 2014

Morris Museum, Morristown, NJ, National Association of Women Artists invitational, *125 Years: A Celebration of the National Association of Women Artists*, April 2014, Jeffrey Weschler juror

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, Juried Exhibition, January-March 2014, Diana Daniels juror

Studio 17, Gallery Photographica, San Francisco, CA, San Francisco International Photography Exhibition, July 2013, Jim Casper juror

Photo Center NW, Seattle, WA, *Equivalents: 17th Annual Photo Competition*, August-September 2012, W. M. Hunt juror

Tag Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, 2012 *California Open Exhibition*, August 2012, Meg Linton juror

A Smith Gallery, Johnson City, TX, Texas Photographic Society, *The International Competition*, August 2012, Aline Smithson juror

Point Park University, Pittsburgh, PA, National Association of Women Artists, *From a Different Point of View*, March-May 2012, Eric Shiner juror

Wellington B. Gray Gallery, School of Art and Design, Greenville, NC, *7th Annual Photographic Image Biennial Exhibition*, January-February 2011, Keith Carter juror

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA, *Luminosity: the Art of Image Making*, December 2009-February 2010

Pen & Brush Gallery, New York, NY, *2008 Juried Photography Exhibition*, May 2008, Roy DeCarava juror

Mills Pond House Gallery, Smithtown Township Art Council, St. James, NY, *Annual Winners Showcase Exhibition*, September-November 2007

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

"Women Artists group brings 'In-Visible' into spotlight at Point Park University, Pittsburgh," *Tribune-Review*, April 2016

Jane Olin + Elizabeth Opalenik: On the Edge of Chance, exhibition catalog, Carmel, CA 2016

"Art by the Slice," *Carmel Magazine*, Summer/Fall, Carmel, CA, 2015

Independent Presence, Green Chalk Contemporary Gallery catalog, Monterey, CA, 2015

Wandering Curves, New York Center for Photographic Art catalog, 2015

VIDEOS

Pushing the Wet Darkroom: with Steve Zmak, featuring photographers Martha Casanave, Jane Olin and Robin V. Robinson

Independent Presence, West End Kick off Exhibition: narrated by Charlotte Chapman, with photographers Jane Olin, Robin V. Robinson and Robin Ward

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, CA. *Artist talk: My Evolution as an Artist*, March 2017

Art Intersection Gallery, Gilbert, AZ. *Artist talk: Independent Presence*, January 2017

Center for Photographic Art, Carmel, CA. *Artist talk: On the Edge of Chance*, January 2016

Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, CA. *Directors Dialogue: In Conversation with Jane Olin, Martha Casanave, Susan Hyde Greene and Robin Ward*, December 2015.

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, CA

Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA

Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA

Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, CA

Women in Photography International Archive, Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT



JANE OLIN

Beyond My Reasonable Self

All artwork by Jane Olin © Jane Olin 2017

Essay © Helaine Glick 2017

Published 2017 in conjunction with the exhibition *Jane Olin: Beyond My Reasonable Self*,
November 4, 2017 - February 11, 2018, Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, California.



1505 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara, California 95050, www.tritonmuseum.org

Helaine Glick is an independent curator and writer. She worked in the Curatorial Department of the Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, California for fifteen years, and was its Assistant Curator for eight years. At the museum she curated multiple solo, photography, and collection-based exhibitions. She continues to focus on independent curatorial projects, and is an advisor and writer for the Winfield Gallery in Carmel, California, and a member of the Board at the Center for Photographic Arts, also in Carmel.

Graphic Design: Keli Pharaoh

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without written permission of Jane Olin.

janeolin.com

Front cover: *Intimate Conversation 1 (Tree with Moon)*, 2017



FLORILEGIUM PRESS