

David Burdeny

Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada, David Burdeny has degrees in both Interior Design and a Masters in Architecture. At the age of 12, David started to photograph the prairie landscape and make his own black and white prints in a makeshift darkroom that also served as his bedroom closet. Primarily self taught, his architecture and design background greatly influences his penchant for simple exacting photographs of sky, horizon and the marks humankind leaves behind. Influenced by notable photographers such Michael Kenna, Hiroshi Sugimoto and Fay Goodwin, David purposefully photographs in poor light and near darkness. He uses unusually long exposures to see that which our eyes can not. Moving beyond the literal, his images have been described as ominous, haunting, beautiful and meditative.

David Burdeny – Five Bodies of Photography



Shorelines

Bowling Ball Beach, California – 2003

Made along the shorelines of Japan, Northern France, and the Pacific Northwest this body of work thematically continues my interest in the thresholds that divide and connect the sea to land. Through these journeys I attempt to communicate a universality or homogeneity in these disparate locations. I'm fascinated with the quality of light and the spatial immensity the ocean possesses. I have an enormous reverence for feeling so small in the presence of something so vast, where perspective, scale, time and distance momentarily become intangible. My photographs contemplate that condition, and through their reductive nature, suggest a formalized landscape we rarely see. The glory lies not in the act of this removal or reduction, but in the experience of what is left - sublime experience located in ordinary space: a slowly moving sky, the sun moving across a boulders surface or sea foam swirling around a pylon.

Exposed onto large format black and white film under the soft light of dusk and dawn, the shutter is held open for several minutes at a time, recording the ocean and sky as it continuously repositions itself on the negative, a process both dependent and vulnerable to chance. The resultant image is an accretion of past and present. Each moment is layered over the moment immediately preceding it; a single image that embodies the weight of cumulative time and unending metamorphosis.



Drift

Drift #4

“Drift” is a series of moving and still images. Collected during travels through Canada, France, Japan, England, Belgium and the USA, these photographs catalogue the shifting light and color of the world’s oceans and shorelines. Using a variety of analogue and digital mediums that closely parallel racetrack photo finish technology, the images invert conventional photographic motion/time relationships. Motion is rendered still and still is rendered in motion, graphically revealing the underlying rhythms and patterns of the physical world while tracing our navigation through it.



Antarctica and Greenland

Five Ice bergs, Weddell Sea, Antarctica – 2007

Since 2001, I have focused on water as a singular theme in my work. Having worked on five continents, I have attempted to catalogue through a variety of photographic mediums, the atmosphere, colors, lights, shapes and forms that comprise the world’s oceans, seas and shores. During 2007 and into the spring of 2008, I made several long journeys to the upper and lower extremes of our planet to photograph the shorelines, monolithic ice forms and landscapes of Greenland, Icelandic and Antarctica. Most of these places are arduous to reach, beyond the borders of domestic transportation routes, accessible only by small aircraft or boat. All are endangered to some extent – threatened by tourism, climate change, industry and the hunt for oil. This new series, North/South begins to explore what are currently the most geopolitical and geographically sensitive shorelines on earth.

Formally different than my previous work, but motivated by similar principals, these images attempt to encapsulate both the otherworldliness and the vital reality of the northern seas and oceans. I was drawn to the fragility and grace of the frozen landscape. For me, the work is both a celebration of nature’s survival and an elegy.

The Iris Gallery



Fine Art Photography



Antarctica and Greenland

Iceberg #1, Greenland

The majority of the images were made using a gyro stabilized medium format and a panoramic 6x17 handheld camera from the side of small open boats and large ice strengthened ship. Several were made from shore with a tripod-mounted camera. Originally conceived of as a black and white monochrome project with the images shot in Greenland 2007, the unique and surreal color palate of these extreme latitudes compelled the addition of colour. It is a hint of what Norwegian Arctic explorer Fridtjof Nansen was alluding to when he wrote:

“Nothing is more wonderfully beautiful than the arctic night. It is a dreamland, painted in the imagination’s most delicate tints: its colour etherealized. One shade melts into the other, so that you cannot tell where one ends and the other meets, and yet they are all there.”



Sacred and Secular

New York City – 2009

Sacred and Secular is an ongoing series of photographs that depict urban edge conditions and built environments throughout the world. In the course of Western architecture and urbanism there is a long history attached to the Ideal, Visionary and the Fantastic as notions to create built space. This lineage is studied from a distant vantage point at the cities edge – looking out and looking in. Commencing with the category defying works of 21st century “Starchitects” and including recent or ancient manifestations in Dubai, Egypt, China, Japan Greenland, Antarctica, Europe and Canada. Inspired by my personal experiences as a traveler the images serve to illustrate the often unpredictable link between intention and perception - implying that memory and experience play significant roles in our ability to perceive and thus give meaning to the world around us.

Each edge condition photographed can be, metaphorically speaking, read as the DNA for whatever city/settlement is contained within the image. Earth, air and water are rendered large and neutral – an infinite field on which we build and transform the landscape. Conversely, that which we build is depicted as thin, delicate, sometimes cumbersome and without beginning or end.

The photographs are captured with an 8”x10” view camera onto color transparency film and printed as chromogenic color prints. Transmounted to Plexiglas the photographs are printed large, thereby welcoming the viewer to experience them from both afar and at nose length.

The Iris Gallery



Fine Art Photography



Ancora

Swanboats

Ancora, the Italian word for “still”, is a collection of 30 new photographs made during the Fall of 2010 and Winter of 2011. Inspired partly by the words of various travel writers and Joseph Brodsky’s book “Watermark”, David Burdeny revisited many former locations and themes from previous images of Japan and courted new areas in Thailand, Vietnam and Hawaii.

Alone and moving about by foot, car, boat, motorcycle and happenstance, the artist sought moments he saw and felt as beautiful, delicate and mysterious and recorded them with lengthy exposures shortly before dusk or dawn. As in much of his previous work, Burdeny once again found himself working in rain, fog and mist - marginal conditions that effectively eliminate extraneous background clutter and deep shadow, to provide minimal and slightly surreal presentations - signature to a Burdeny photograph.

Pushing the themes of 2009 *Sacred & Secular*, the artist experiments with a more social landscape, incorporating the human form into what would have previously been an unpopulated environment. Photographed from distant vantage points, these figures reference the romantic tradition where small human figures stand in contrast to an immense landscape, thereby reinforcing the notion we are close, but still so far from nature.