



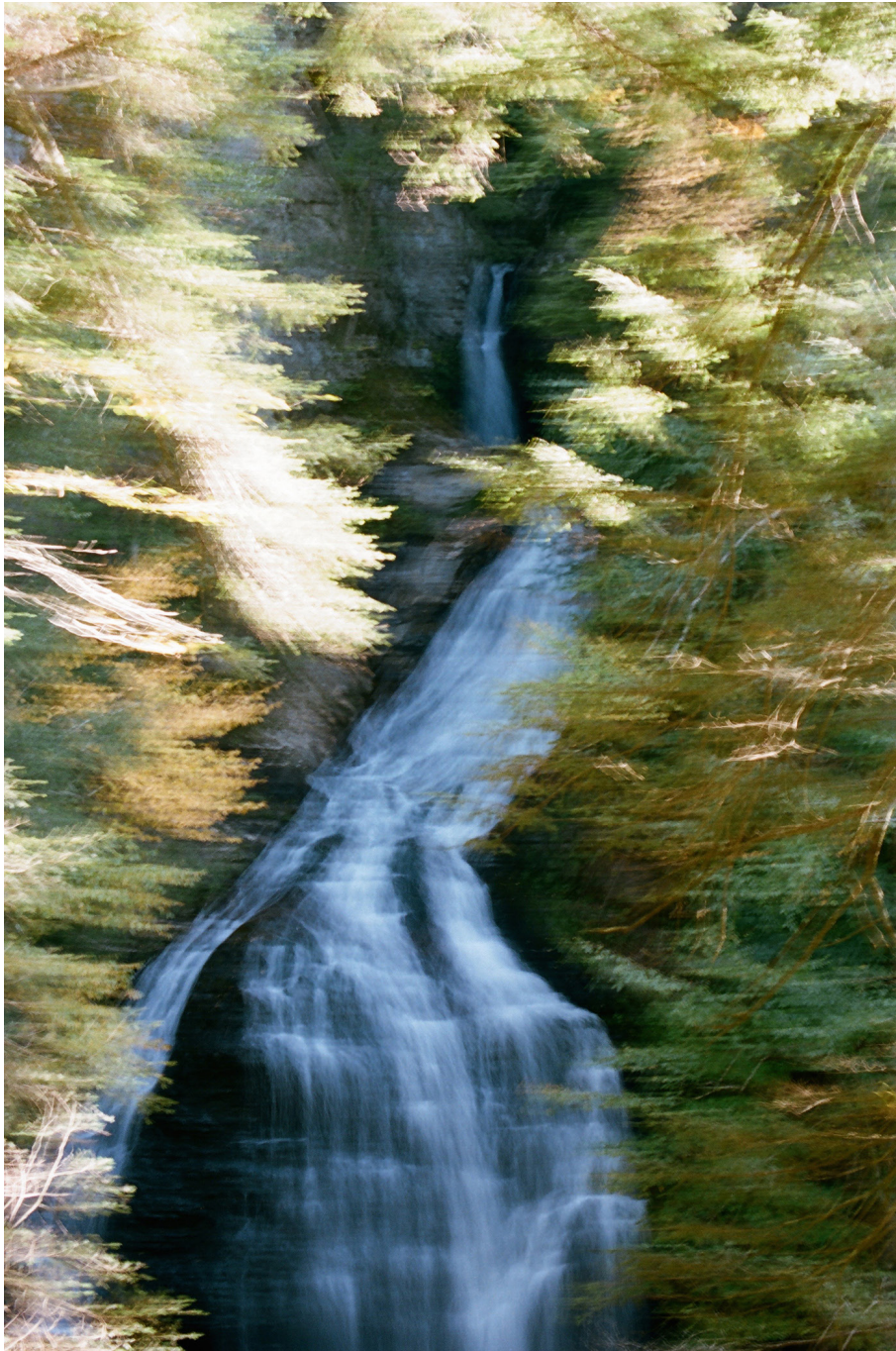
Maxine Henryson

True Though Invented

January 10–February 9, 2020

A.I.R. Gallery
155 Plymouth Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
www.airgallery.org

Gallery Hours
Wed–Sun, 12–6pm



Maxine Henryson. *Moss Glen Falls*, Johnson, Vermont, 2016
Archival pigment print from film, 34 x 51 inches, Edition 1 of 6

The exhibition title *True Though Invented* reflects one of the central theses of Henryson's practice, which works to disrupt a direct reading, opening instead to multiple possible interpretations. Through the narrative installation of her photographs, Henryson creates nonlinear visual poems about place, geographic space, and the search for cultural interconnectivity. As Italian photographer Luigi Ghirri states, "It seems almost as though the gaze were divided into two incompatible and irreconcilable categories: perception on the one hand, and poetry on the other." Henryson seeks to find a balance between these two extremes through images that describe life's oscillation between known and unknown.



Maxine Henryson. *Case Street Community Club*, Vermont, 2015
Archival pigment print from film, 14 1/4 x 20 3/4 inches framed, Edition 1 of 5

During the exhibition, Maxine Henryson and Lauren Simkin Burke will host the first **A.I.R. Feminist and Queer Art Book Fair** at A.I.R. Gallery on **Saturday, January 18, from 12–7pm**. Participants include Belladonna, Dancing Foxes Press, GenderFail, Litmus Press, MOMMY, Pinsapo Press, Precog Magazine, Siglio Press, Visual Aids and A.I.R. artists.

Maxine Henryson will lead the **Unforgettables Reading/Working Group** on **Tuesday, February 4, 2020**, at A.I.R. The session will focus on feminist narratives about place created through photography, film, and literature.



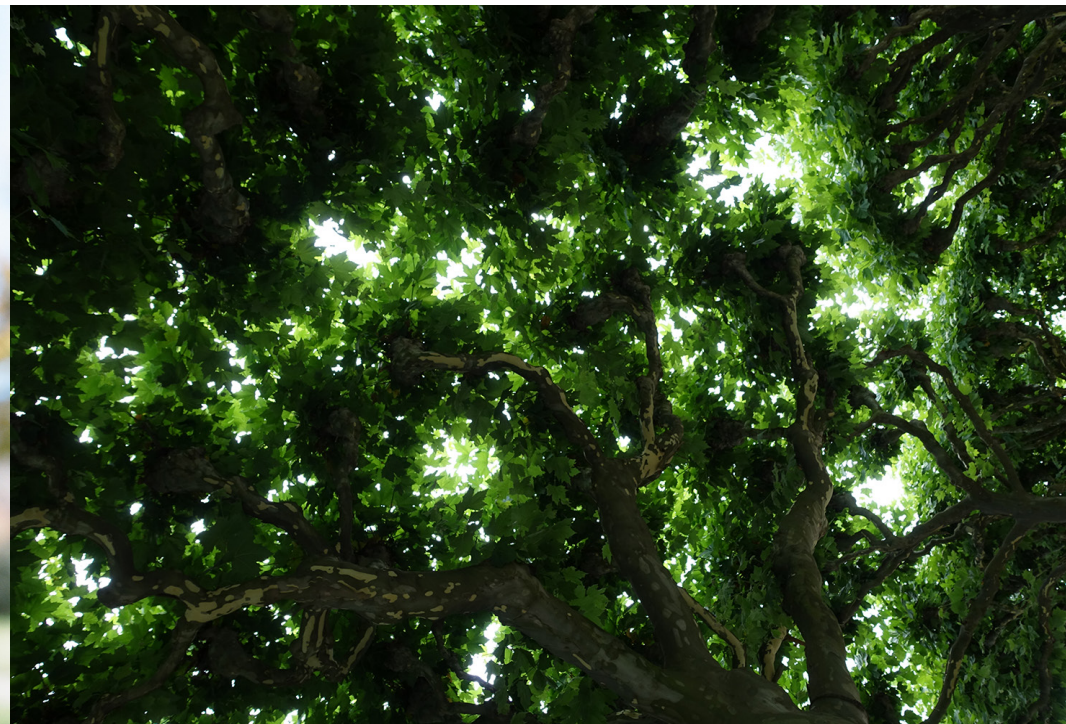
Maxine Henryson. *Liminal*, Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica, 2018



Maxine Henryson. *Summer Balcony*, Frankfurt, Germany, 2017



Maxine Henryson. *Sunray Peace Village*, Lincoln, Vermont, 2015



Maxine Henryson. *Plantanes*, Frankfurt, Germany, 2017

The Visible Time

Since the early 1990s, Maxine Henryson has created pictures of her internal landscape using color photography. The result is a painterly style which transcends the literal and realistic. The New York based artist has traveled extensively for her work to Europe, Russia, and repeatedly to Asia. Shimmering red autumn leaves in Vermont, a stairway in the Palazzo Rezzonico in Venice, or the entrance area of the Ekambareswara Temple in Kanchipuram—the images are transformed by Henryson into a flow of light and color. What emerges is simultaneously lyrical and dynamic.

Landscapes, interiors, street scenery, still life, even static architecture is lent a sense of motion. Space and time are extended, compositional elements and figures blur until they appear to form a new reality. Despite the ever-changing themes of mood, light, and culture, Maxine Henryson's work is highly coherent and conceptual. The vocabulary of these very precisely composed images is reduced and focused on the essential—nothing is added. These color photographs impress us with their enormous variety of nuance as well as a calm contemplative expressiveness.

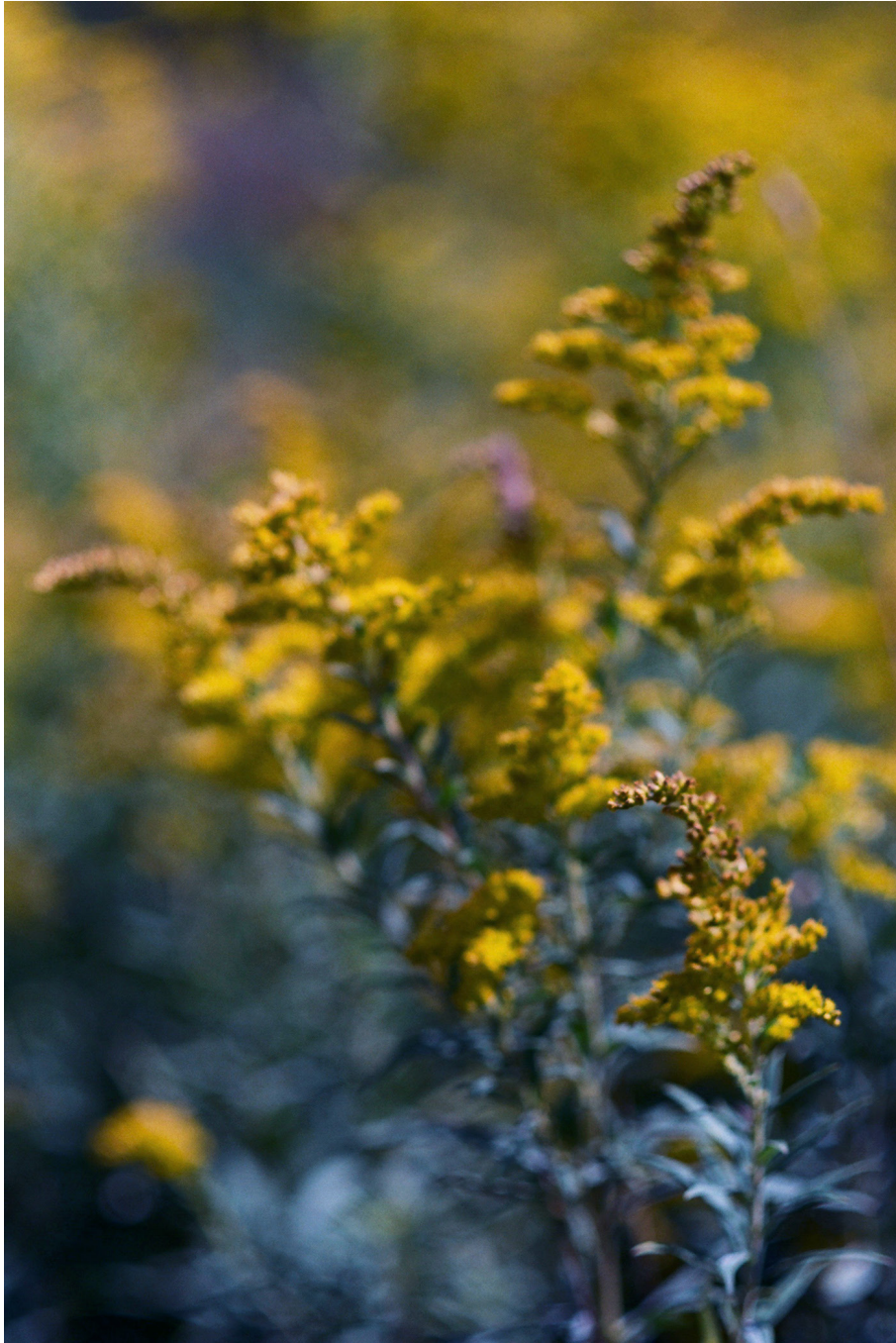
Movement is at the core of many of Maxine Henryson's images and often alters our perception of the subject. She achieves this by handholding long exposures with a Leica rangefinder and intentionally playing with the focus of a single lens reflex camera. She likes to describe this approach as a "calculated coincidence." The floating world of Henryson's photographic images is a quiet one, the images seeming secretive as they narrate a story about both presence and absence. The suites of photographs present their individual moods of composition and color. Thus, the sequences from St. Petersburg, Germany, or Poland have a rather intense, almost melancholic tone, in comparison to the luminous color found in the photographs from South India or Cambodia. The photographs are connected to one another as though they are ghostly travel memories evoking the sense of having a vague and condensed reminiscence of past journeys and distant places, all centered on the idea of light. Maxine Henryson feels bound to street photography in the tradition of Helen Levitt. Photographing spontaneously, she has an instinctive perception of the fleeting moment.

Another important constant in Henryson's work is her study of time and timelessness. There are very few visual icons in her work, like cars or advertising, to indicate when the photographs were taken. Her images seem to reflect fragments from our collective unconscious. In the works of Maxine Henryson we visit sacred places such as the Paradesi Synagogue, Kochi, the Mother of God in San Giovanni Grisostomo, Venice, or an altar in the Sera Jey Buddhist Monastery, Bylakuppe. These images are a celebration of the complexity of human existence. With her photographs, Maxine Henryson succeeds in relating to us the coexistence of seemingly disparate ideas like materialism and spirituality or nature and culture. Through a refined and studied use of blurriness, her objective is not to make the subject disappear but to evoke it by means of light. Thereby the unfocused subject forms a resonant space with a high degree of abstraction, which reflects distance and proximity at the same time. The work lets us pause for a moment and demands a detailed survey. The photographs pull the viewer into the depth of the picture ground. Especially in her more recent large-scale photographs, Henryson succeeds in focusing the viewer on her images and her seductive use of light. The feelings below the surface, the layers beneath the visible, allow us to experience our own emotions as though reflected in a mirror. Not surprisingly, mirrors and windows are recurring themes in Henryson's work. The often observed motifs of curtains or draperies reveal more than they hide. Henryson's journey also winds through the four seasons, paying witness to snowfall, blooming fruit trees, cool marble church walls, the burning heat of ritual temple fires, summer fruits, and the autumn foliage of a Vermont Indian summer.

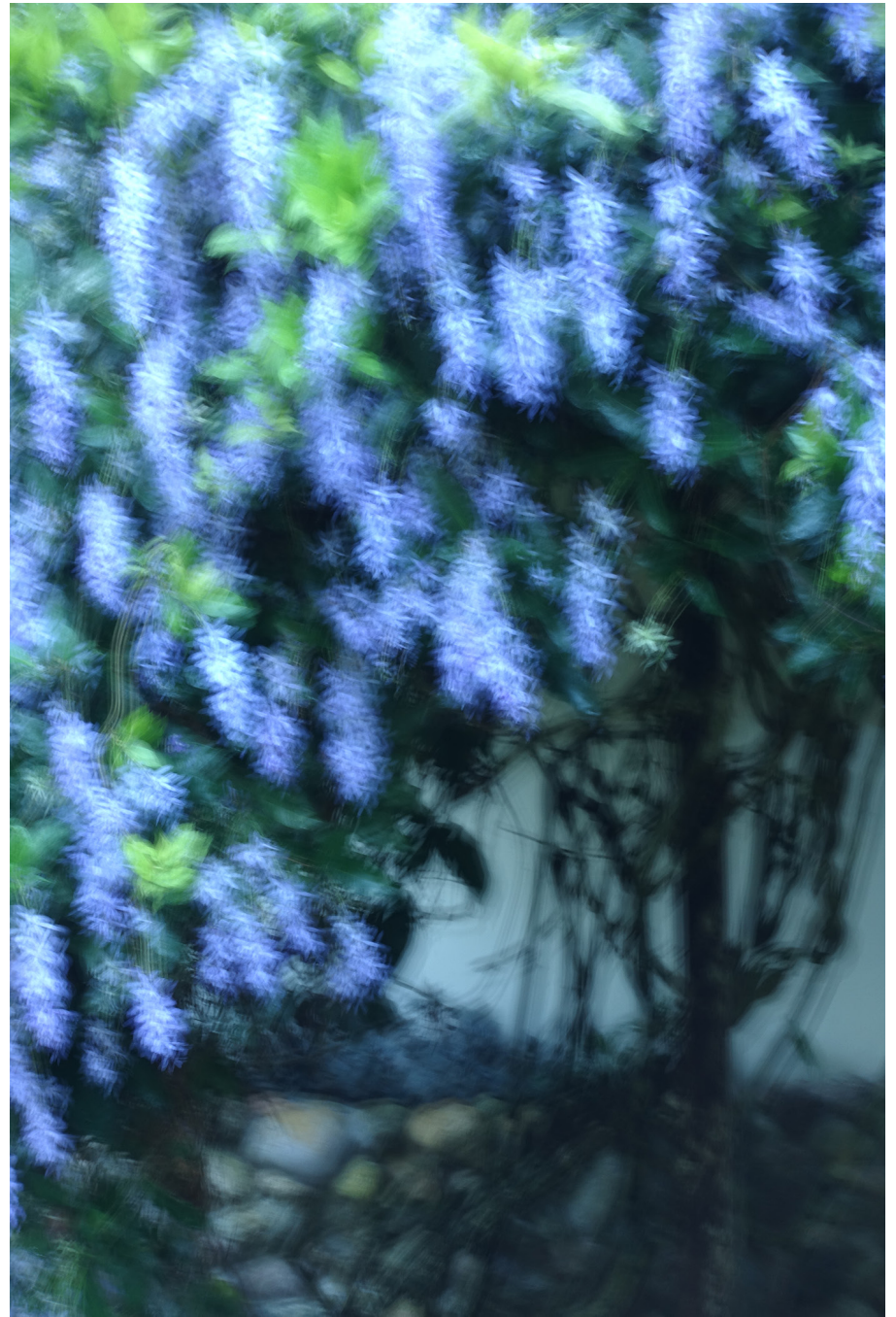
The pictures seem to glow before us as we see the changes in light during the passage of the day. Their intimacy moves us while it elicits a sense of the sublime. In this sense the photographs of Maxine Henryson are pictures of both memories and wishes. These photographs are the new painting.

—Mario Kramer

Curator, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany



Maxine Henryson. *Goldenrod "inspiration/good luck"*, Queechy Lake
(native American Mahican name Quis-sich-kook), New York, 2016
Archival pigment print from film, 34 x 51 inches, Edition 1 of 3



Maxine Henryson. *Wisteria "immortality/expanding consciousness"*,
Boca Sombrero, Costa Rica, 2015
Archival pigment print from film, 34 x 51 inches, Edition 1 of 3



Maxine Henryson (b. Jackson, Mississippi), lives and works in New York. A photographer and bookmaker, her work is about place, geographic space and the search for cultural interconnectivity. Her photographs have been widely exhibited in the United States and Europe and are in numerous private and public international collections including: the Middlebury College Museum of Art, VT; the former Celanese Photography Collection, Frankfurt; the Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg; Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida; and the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois. Her work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions at: P.P.O.W., New York, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Los Angeles, the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, and at Usdan Gallery, Bennington College; A.I.R. Gallery, New York; Kleinschmidt Fine Photographs, Wiesbaden; ARC Gallery, Chicago; Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs; The Kochi-Muziri Biennale, Kochi; and Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg among others.

Henryson has taught photography professionally since 1975, most recently at the International Center of Photography, New York (1989-1997) and Bennington College (1996-2006). As an editorial photographer, Henryson was published in the *New Yorker*, *New York Times*, *New York Magazine* and *Namarupa, Categories of Indian Thought* among others. Henryson's monographs are *Ujjayi's Journey* (Kehrer, 2012), *Red Leaves and Golden Curtains* (Kehrer, 2007), and *Presence* (Artist Publications, 2003). She studied sociology at Simmons College (B.S.) and University of London (Masters of Philosophy) and has a M.A.T. from the University of Chicago in Studio Art and a M.F.A. from the University of Illinois at Chicago in Photography. Henryson has received the Sam and Dusty Boynton Artist Fellowship, Vermont Studio Center in 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020. She is represented by A.I.R. Gallery, New York.

For more on the artist, please visit www.maxinehenryson.net

About Maxine Henryson

For over three decades Henryson's photographic practice has drawn from multiple traditions including painting, film, performance, installation and sculpture. In her early view camera photographs, Henryson altered the perception of reality by using slow shutter speeds, shallow depth of field and mirrors. Once she moved to New York and no longer had the studio space to create constructed images, she began using a Leica and doing handheld street photography. Now shooting in color, she continued to incorporate her strategies for altering the perception of reality. Early on Richard Avedon assigned Henryson to photograph the *Cirque Du Soleil* for the *New Yorker*. Avedon gave her total freedom and instructed her to "just do your thing." Using a slow shutter speed, she created very expressive images of the circus and its performers. The images were the first color photographs to be published in the *New Yorker*. Henryson's practice has always been deeply interrelated to the exploration of movement through collaborations with performance artists, theater directors and dancers. Throughout, Henryson creates a way of photographing that blurs the limits between the real and the imaginary.



Maxine Henryson. *View from the Piazza, "Leaving without leaving",
Salento Peninsula Boardering the Adriatic Sea, Lecce, Italy, 2018*

Archival pigment print from film, 14 ¼ x 20 ¼ inches framed, Edition 1 of 6