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Zack Seckler | West

March 7–May 3, 2025



CLAMP is pleased to present “West,” an exhibition of recent photographs and videos by Zack Seckler, continuing his signature aerial perspective, transforming vast landscapes into painterly compositions where land, water, and sky dissolve into near-abstractions.

Seckler’s ability to distill the essence of immense terrains into fluid, almost dreamlike visuals, challenges traditional representations of the American landscape. His lens captures the interplay of organic forms and natural forces, revealing a world where the familiar dissolves into the unexpected, and scale becomes elusive.

Like Alfred Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Carleton Watkins, and other painters and photographers of the later part of the 19th century who ventured west to depict and explore America’s vast and uncharted landscapes,

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Seckler documents the Rocky Mountains, the arid Southwest, and more lush scenes in California. But unlike his predecessors, Seckler is equipped with imaging technologies and means of travel allowing him to record the same landscapes from vantage points and in details incomprehensible in centuries past.

The artist's approach bridges past and present, acknowledging the historical impulse to chronicle and celebrate the wilderness while employing a contemporary, almost abstract sensibility that shifts the focus from romantic documentation to commentary and interpretation. Seckler's images and videos reveal rhythmic patterns and unexpected color harmonies across various sprawling western terrains now touched by man's footprint.

The artworks embrace a surrealism of scale—where minute details, like the bend of a river or a lone animal's tracks, become the focal points of vast, minimalist canvases. The textures of the land, shaped by erosion, water flow, and human intervention, take on a lyrical quality, transforming rugged topographies into soft, painterly gestures. Challenging the viewer's sense of perspective, Seckler encourages an experience of the landscape as both intimate and infinite, structured yet ephemeral.

The aerial vantage offers a view transcending the limitations of the human eye, inviting a reconsideration of the land's scale and vulnerability. His compositions, at once serene and dynamic, speak to the power of nature and the imprint of time, making visible the otherwise imperceptible rhythms that define these remote and majestic expanses.

Zack Seckler was born in Boston and studied psychology at Syracuse University. Then, traveling solo with a point-and-shoot camera in northern India, his mind opened to the visual world. Upon returning to Syracuse, he took coursework in photography at the renowned Newhouse School. With an internship in a Hong Kong photo studio and editorial work in New York City, he developed his vision for image-making. "West" is the artist's third solo show at CLAMP.

Image: © Zack Seckler; "Dawn Over Windswept Snow," 2024; Archival pigment print.