

2009 Berenice Abbott Prize
Honorable Mention

Naomi Troeger
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Artist's Statement: "Santa Monica Pier Revisited"

The Santa Monica Pier remains one of LA's most compelling (and photographed) landmarks. Celebrating it's centennial in September, 2009; the pier merits a "revisit" to this enduring and ever-changing site.

This three year project unconventionally journeys through the timeless spaces of the Santa Monica Pier and adjacent seascapes. Revealed are the changing seasons, light, temperament, and the "unseen" magnificence of this arena.

These images transcend everyday reality – to disclose a new sensibility; a synthesis of stunning and surreal moments. Underlying archetypal and geometric elements lend an appearance of the sublime and ethereal to familiar objects and vistas. Color remains an integral part; rendering composition, tone and a certain consciousness.

I hope to lead the viewer to another realm; a more plastic and spectral realm. I also hope for my work to evoke the universal human experience, even when devoid of people. As with my other works these images remain restrained, yet emotionally nuanced.

For this project I used a (singular \$20) Holga – definitely challenging but also magical. By surrendering to the specifics of this primitive camera; I somehow became freer to allow the mystery around us to prevail. I manipulated the film, cross-processing and variously pushing. Finally, I used standard darkroom techniques in the (painstaking) printing.

A major challenge occurred when the film I had been using was abruptly discontinued (and unavailable). I was then forced to integrate other films, while trying to maintain my unique palate and tone. Further, I needed to incorporate the evolutionary changes manifesting over a three year period into a cohesive and organic body of work. This was perhaps even more fundamental, given the site specific and alternative nature of the work.

Lastly, it is my hope that this body of work gives testament to the enduring importance of "analogue/analogue" photography in this ever increasing technical era.