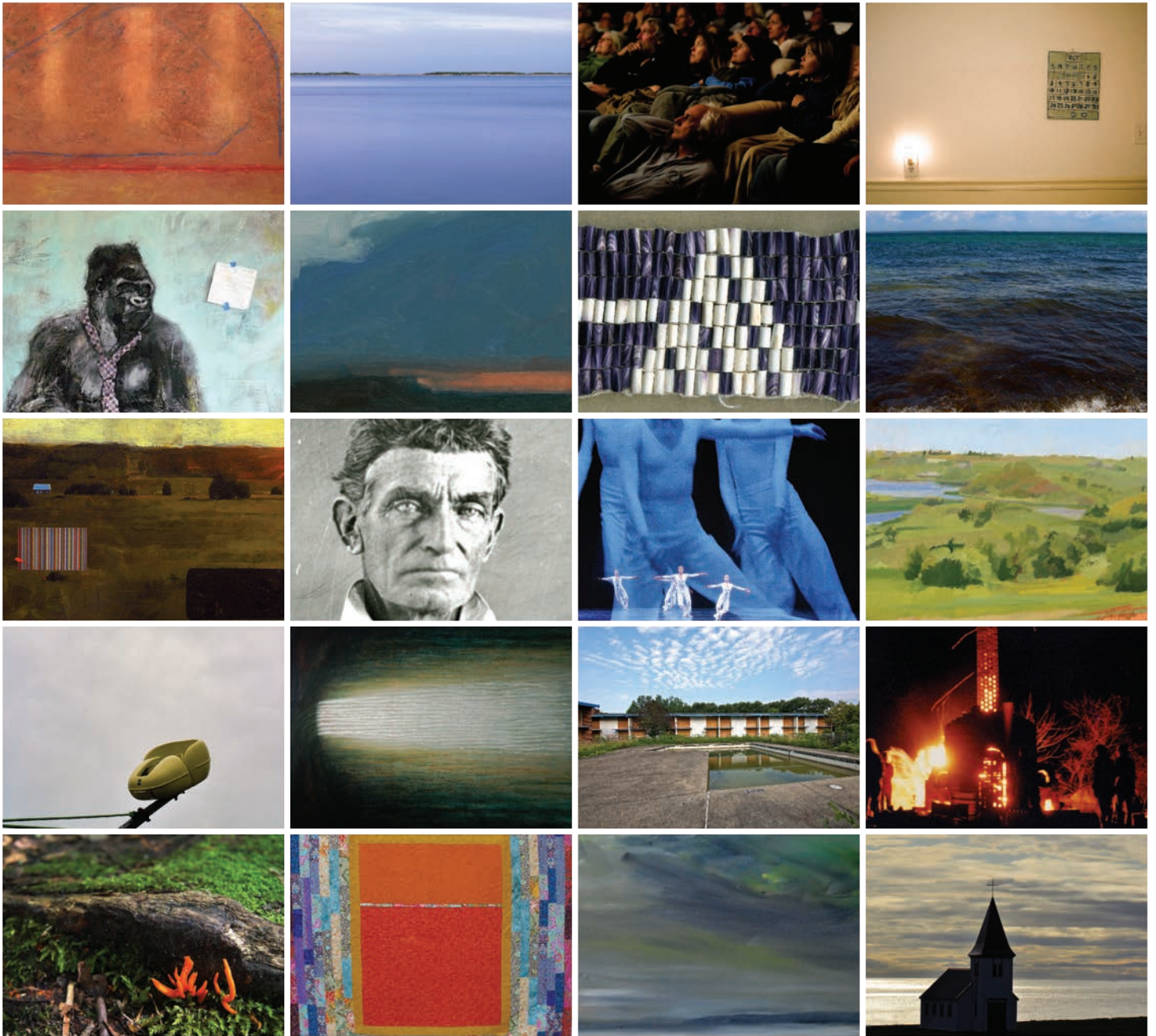


Martha's Vineyard

Arts & Ideas

Sharing Our Creative Community



Caleb's Crossing
Geraldine Brooks
fiction

Hospice
Lynne Whiting
essay

Visiting Artist
Neal Rantoul
photography





Neal Rantoul visiting artist

“Neal Rantoul’s photographs
assess the enterprise of
viewing as much as they offer
an opportunity to view.”

— David Raymond

My parents first starting coming to the island when I was one after WW II ended and I’ve been coming every year since. They bought land and built in Chilmark in 1964. It is the same island now, of course, but different too. I have traveled a great deal and photographed wherever I’ve been, but my base, my core, is the Vineyard. Many things form one’s aesthetic but the island is in the top five on my list. I believe it is why I make mostly horizontal pictures, why the horizon is important in most of my work and why I think big open spaces can be important in landscape photography. Aaron Siskind was one of my teachers and he influenced me to think in abstraction and to be aware of design. I have been influenced as well by the island’s light, it’s pervasive envelope of ocean and being able to see the distant horizon almost always. My father, his friend Ben Mayhew, Aaron, my first summertime girlfriend Cheryl and many others inform every place I go on the Vineyard. These are some of the reasons I call Martha’s Vineyard my home.

“HOWARD JOHNSON’S MOTOR LODGE
NEAR ST. JOHNSVILLE, NY”

Neal Rantoul — visiting artist



OLD TRAIL TOWN, CODY, WYOMING, 2005



PEDDOCK'S ISLAND, BOSTON HARBOR, 2005

They are scrutinies of textures . . . both the finest and fiercest texture of all, time. . . Looking at these images, one thinks of Atget: the solidity, the seriousness, the unwavering gaze.

— Mark Feeney

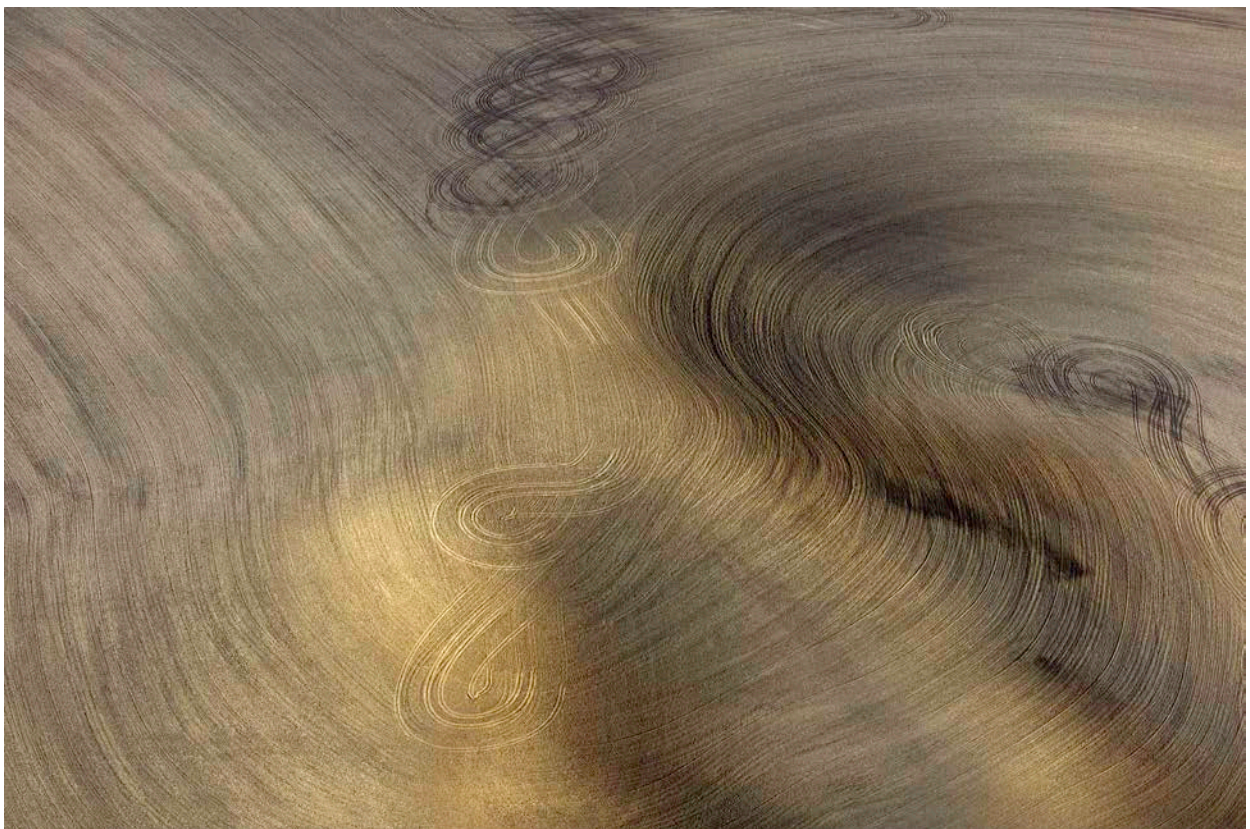
“It’s all about the picture” is a refrain from [Siskind and Callahan] that continually returns to him while he works. A mantra, perhaps, that guides him in a meditative Pas de deux with the landscape; hours can pass while he works, moving carefully and watchfully from one spot to another, watching the sun slide shadowed clouds to and fro, finding ideal moments when perspective, scope, and depth combine into pleasing forms in his viewfinder. His approach is intuitive, even trance-like.

In Rantoul’s hands, in the fields of the Palouse and elsewhere he travels with camera, photography takes the form of honest regard. He does not seek to interpret, to analyze, to judge, or to explain. But he does want to convey his admiration, and his powerful sense of wonder at the confluence of man’s intentions and nature’s myriad responses. Photography offers an ideal space for these reflections; within the frame’s four sides he can compress an enormous amount of space and material into a picture— a new thing, a graphic device that both encapsulates reality and enhances it. The rolling fields Rantoul has reaped a bountiful harvest of images—a crop I wager no farmer would admit planting. But many of them would recognize the familiarity and fascination Rantoul has found in their fields.”

—George Slade



NEAR TRIESTE, ITALY, SEPTEMBER, 2009



NEAR PULLMAN, WASHINGTON, MAY 2011

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