

NANNA HÄNNINEN

Persons
Projects

Nanna Hänninen, who played a pivotal role within the Helsinki School since the late 1990s, was one of the first Finnish female artists to work conceptually, utilizing the photographic process to realize large abstract images. Her earlier works from 2000-04 facilitated the development of photography as a conceptual language, these works followed an ecological approach while exploring how we use memory as a source through association to understand the future.

Nanna Hänninen (*1973 in Rovaniemi, Finland) lives and works in Kuopio, Finland. She graduated from Aalto University School of Art and Design in 2002. In 2023, she received a 5-year artist grant from the National Council for Photographic Art in Finland for the second time. Her work has been exhibited inter-

nationally and extensively in the Nordic region, such as at Serlachiusmuseum in Mänttä, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Stenersen Museum in Oslo, Emma- Espoo Museum of Modern Art in Finland, Künstlerhaus Bethanien Berlin, Kulturhuset in Stockholm, Nordic Biennial in Gothenburg, Kunstverein Schwerte, and Kiasma in Helsinki, alongside the Discovery Awards exhibitions in Arles.



PAINTED SAHARA, 2026

Nanna Hänninen uses photography to explore the environmental changes increasingly reshaping the landscapes around us. Her *Painted Sahara* series focuses on the desert as a place where the fragile balance between nature, human presence and a changing climate becomes particularly visible. Hänninen begins with photographs taken during her journeys through the Moroccan desert, which she later prints in black and white. She uses the photographic surface as a background for her paintings, reintroducing colours geographically or historically connected to the places she has photographed. Through this process, photography and painting merge, creating a new interpretation of the landscape between observation, memory and imagination.



Slowly Fading Landscape in M'Hamid #2 , 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 41 cm



Lone Tamarix #7 (Draa Valley), 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 41 cm



Lone Tamarix in Sandstrom #1 (The Iriqui National Park), 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 41 cm



Acacia Tree in Bloom #2 (The Iriqui National Park), 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 41 x 55 cm



Single Red Sandstorm in M'Hamid , 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 41 x 55 cm



Sandstorm in M'Hamid #3 (Draa Valley), 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 41 cm



Acacia Tree on a Blue Surface (The Iriqui National Park) , 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 82 cm, diptych



Reminder of the Savannah #2 (Acacia Tree Forest in Sahara), 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 82 cm, diptych



After the Storm (M'Hamid), 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 82 cm, diptych



Red Sandstorm in M'Hamid, 2026, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 82 cm, diptych

PAINTED OASIS, 2025

In her newest series, *Painted Oasis*, Nanna Hänninen traveled to the Siwa oasis in the Egyptian Desert to document the changes taking place in these delicate natural habitats. Her process begins with her black-and-white photographs that vividly capture the stark impacts of climate change on these desert landscapes. By staining and painting the prints with traditional local colors, she transforms the original images by creating a deeply personal interpretation to this collective reality. Her painterly interventions breathe life and color back into these drought-stricken deserts reminding us of how fragile these endangered environments are due to human encroachment.





Magic Forest of Dahshur #2, 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 42 x 56 cm
Unique, Price: 4200 EUR



Painted Palm by Siwa, 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 42 x 56 cm
Unique, Price: 4200 EUR



Secrets of the Ancients #1 (Bent Pyramid of King Sneferu), 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 42 cm
Unique, Price: 4200 EUR



Siwa Oasis #2, 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 84 cm, diptych
Unique, Price: 5400 EUR



Siwa Bird Flying , 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 84 cm, diptych
Unique, Price: 5400 EUR



Secrets of the Ancients #4 (Bent Pyramid of King Sneferu), 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 108 x 81 cm
Unique, Price: 7400 EUR



The Hurting Beauty of the Nature (Siwa Oasis), 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 145 x 108 cm
Unique, Price: 10000 EUR



Salt Water Sunset (Siwa Oasis), 2025
Archival pigment print, paint, 145 x 108 cm
Unique, Price: 10000 EUR

PAINTED DESERT, 2024 - 2025

Nanna Hänninen focuses on environmental issues affecting global communities, warning of a rapidly approaching future. In her series *Painted Desert*, she travels through Joshua Tree National Park, Monument Valley, and Saguaro National Park in Arizona, deliberately choosing locations most affected by drought. Through her documentation of these natural surroundings, she reflects on our relationship with landscape and nature. Her process begins with black-and-white photographs that vividly capture the stark impacts of change on desert landscapes. As one of the environments most sensitive to the ever-changing climate, volatile fluctuations place desert life in danger of extinction, with rising temperatures and droughts posing increasing threats.

By staining the prints and intervening with paint, Hänninen transforms the original images, creating a deeply personal response to these vanishing landscapes. Her painterly interventions breathe life and color back into the drought-stricken deserts, restoring what has been lost and symbolizing the fragility of these endangered environments as human presence encroaches upon them.

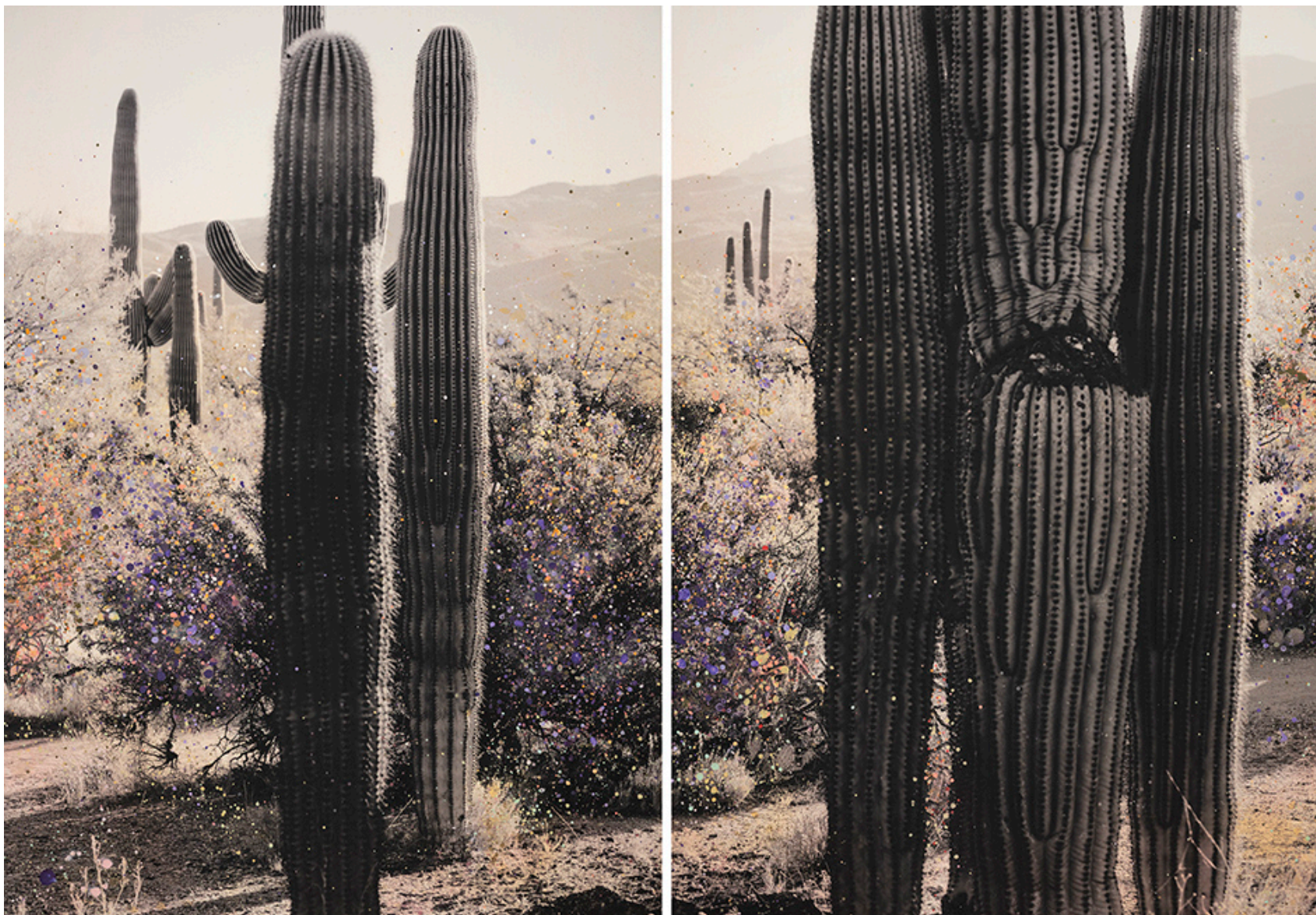




Yellow Spring Flower Explosion Diptych (Saguaro National Park), 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 84 cm



Flower Seeds Blown by the Wind in Joshua Tree National Park, 2024, Archival pigment print, paint, 108 x 162 cm, diptych



Standing Tall in Sunrise #1, 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 56 x 84 cm, diptych



Pink Overload in Saguaro National Park, 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 42 x 55 cm





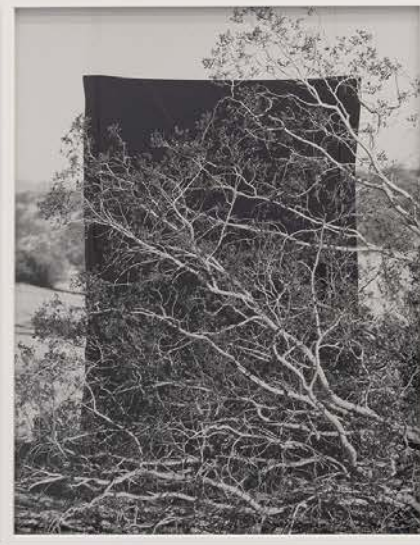
Pink Biodiversity in Saguaro National Park #1, 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 42 cm



In the Shade of a Saguaro Cactus Diptych #1, 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 108 x 156 cm, diptych



Moody Sunrise Diptych #2 at Saguaro National Park, 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 108 x 162 cm, diptych





Sacred Mountain in Blueish Grey #2 (Monument Valley), 2024, Archival pigment print, acrylic paint, 55 x 42 cm



Midday in Color at Joshua Tree National Park #1, 2024 Archival pigment print, paint, 108 x 145 cm



Painted Desert, 2025, Art Düsseldorf



Moody Morning with Flowers Like Diamonds Triptych (Joshua Tree National Park), 2024, Archival pigment print, acrylic paint, 55 x 126 cm, triptych



Sunrise Triptych, 2025, Archival pigment print, paint, 55 x 126 cm, triptych



// PAINT, 2012

Alienation, the changes in the society brought by new technology and the global trauma of 9/11 in New York have affected my previous work in the beginning of the new decade. It was shown in various pictures on paperstacks, boxes and other everyday life things connecting with organizing and filing- keeping the control. As it was also shown as estranged landscapes taken with a long exposure time or with multiple exposures.

Nanna Hänninen's series // PAINT deals with more environmental issues like the growing concern of climate change and our denial, both politically and ethically. On the other hand, the series reflects on an alienation of ourselves, the nature itself and its circulation. //PAINT search-

es for the connection of the common surrounding world and its beauty. The motifs are iconic pictures from everyday Finnish nature and life, like trees by the water, flower buckets and people. The series // PAINT connote to antonyms like natural/artificial, true/false and concrete/abstracts. The series is reflecting on the history of black and white versus colour photography and the relationship between painting and photography. Abstract areas of paint as synonyms for reality and ideas of it are appearing to be more real than the actual scenes underneath. The process reveals and emphasize the abstraction and artificial elements in the images. Through the abstraction and essence of acrylic colours the works states that life itself has become more and more artificial.



How About the Future?, 2021, Serlachius Museum, Mänttä



Painted branch of Alder, 2012, Digital C-print on Diassec mounted on Mdf, oak frame, 160 x 107.8 cm



Pine Tree, 2012, Digital C-print on Diasac Mounted on Mdf with Oak frame, 128 x 170 cm



Plant VII, 2011, Digital C-print on Diasec, Mounted on Mdf with Oak frame, 127 x 160 cm



Plant III, 2011, Digital C-print on Diassec, Mounted on Mdf with Oak frame, 160 x 127 cm

NOW IS THE NOW, 2017

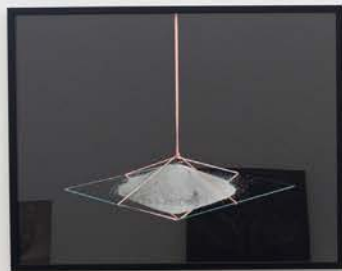
The series *Now is the Now* is of particular, personal significance to the artist. Certain psychological patterns – what we do or how we respond – connect people and generate an emotional community. In this way, a personal experience or private perception can acquire a more universal meaning. The photographs show distinctly reduced still-lives, some of which show crumpled paper which – partly showing texts – from Hänninen’s work books of recent years, during which the artist was confronted with many personal challenges.

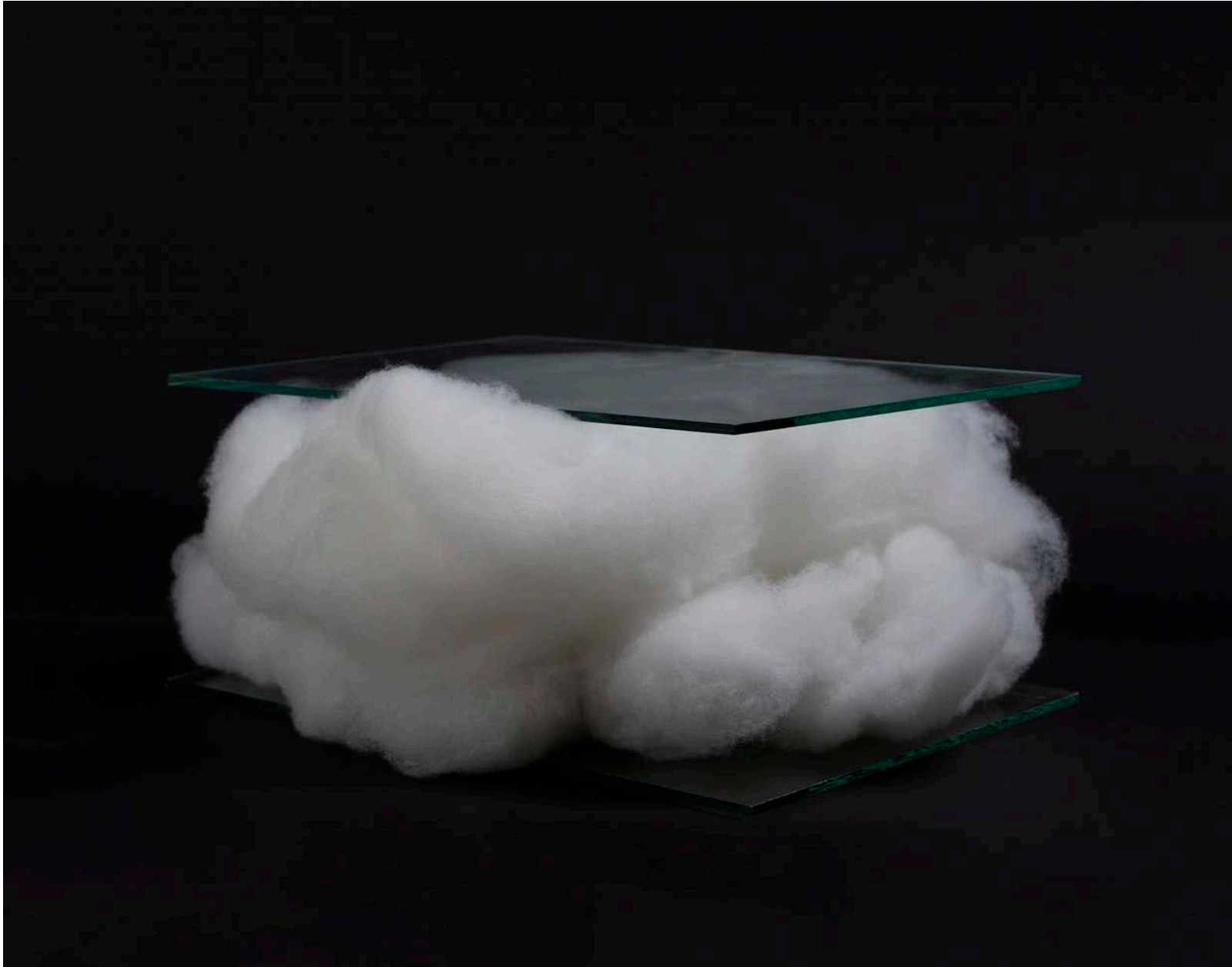
The group of works deals with anxieties, existential threats and survival in the jungle of emotions. This applies not only to the artist and her experiences but also to us, the viewers of her works.

The series explores the importance of the present as well as time itself and its relativity. The past is just a memory and the future is a construction of the mind, and between these two is here and now, the only moment on which we have direct influence. *Now is the Now* is also exploring about reasoning and balancing. It also ponders on the necessity of growing up and the relationship between childhood and adulthood. The series also explores the life and nature on earth threatened by the major challenges of climate change.

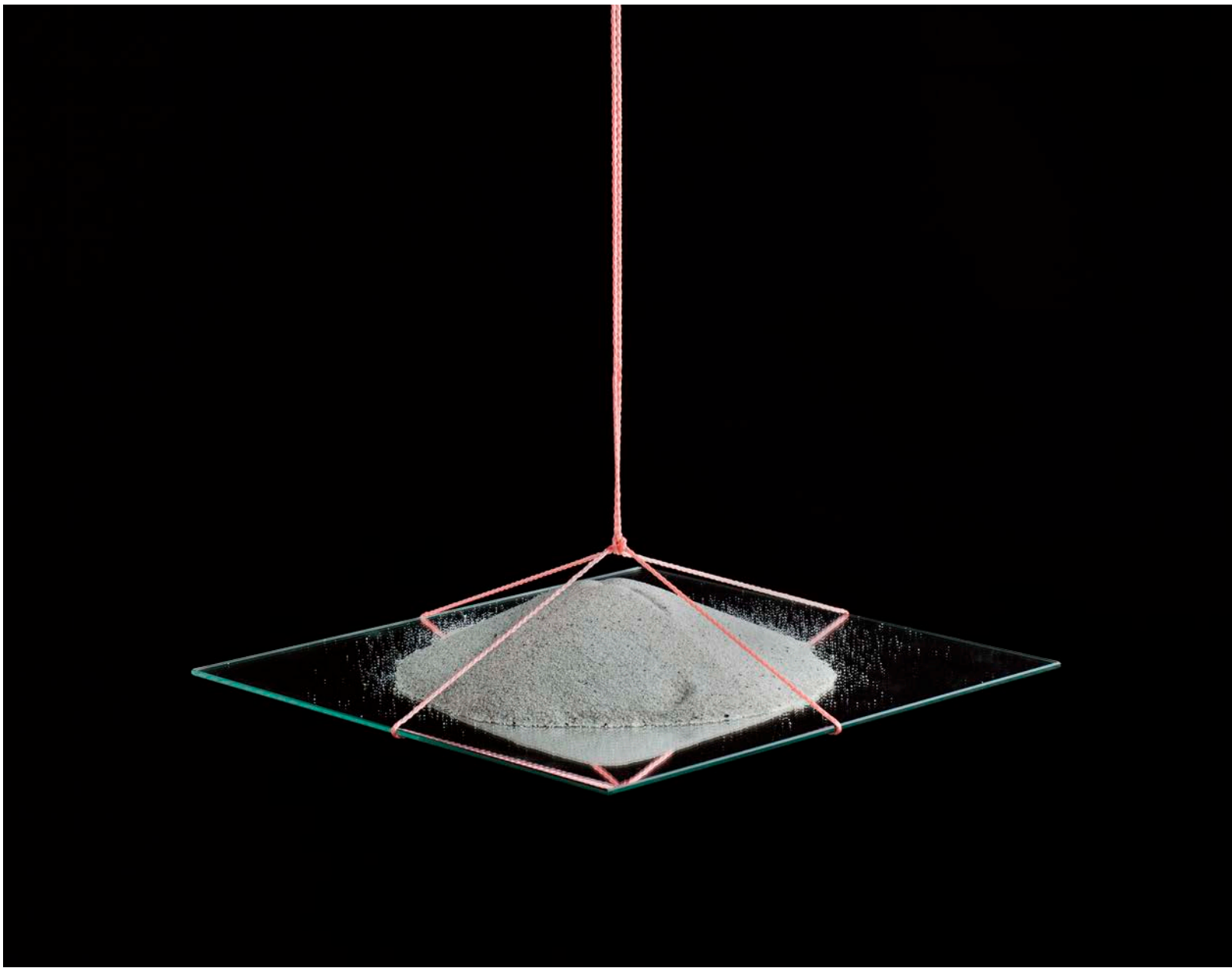
Her new photographs, shot against a black backdrop, are conceptual still-lives. Nanna Hänninen sees herself first and foremost as a conceptual artist, which is manifest in the importance she

gives to the materials and specifications of her works. In “*The Balance of Knowledge and Self understanding III*”, desert sand, a cord and a mirror encourage the viewer to moral deliberation, and in “*Melting Ice*”, the screw clamps are trying to hold together a lump of ice from the Arctic Ocean. These works are reminiscent of traditional still-life compositions; instead of action or everyday scenes they depict mere stillness. Hänninen lays out the situation of our planet on a researcher’s desk with discipline, concision and very few elements.





The Greenhouse Effect (Earth on Operation Table), 2017, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm



The Balance of Knowledge and Self-understanding III, 2017, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm



Now is the Now, 2015, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm



Now is the Now, 2015, Taubert Contemporary, Berlin



Being beneath, 2015, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm



Rearranging history for the Future, 2015, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm



Melting Ice (Arctic sea ice), 2017, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm

Understanding
the Big
Picture

Understanding the Big Picture is a series of six photographs by the artist, showing the same scene from different perspectives. The images are arranged in a row, with the first image on the left and the last image on the right. The images show a white, crumpled object, possibly a piece of paper or a small sculpture, on a white surface. The object is shown from different angles, including from above, from the side, and from the front. The images are framed in white, and the frames are arranged in a row. The first frame is small, and the last frame is large. The frames are arranged in a row, with the first frame on the left and the last frame on the right. The images show a white, crumpled object, possibly a piece of paper or a small sculpture, on a white surface. The object is shown from different angles, including from above, from the side, and from the front. The images are framed in white, and the frames are arranged in a row. The first frame is small, and the last frame is large. The frames are arranged in a row, with the first frame on the left and the last frame on the right.

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Understanding the Big Picture



Understanding the Big Picture



The Balance of Knowledge and Self-understanding, 2017, Archival pigment ink, framed, 73 x 93 cm



Future at Stake (one of the oldest living organisms on earth), 2017, Archival pigment ink, framed, 93 x 73 cm



Reframing Air #1, 2017, Archival pigment ink, Diasac, 73 x 93 cm

NEW LANDSCAPES, 2005

In the series New Landscapes, the mixture of lighting and long exposure transforms the works into short movies that display in each shot a range of organic body movements (breathing, heartbeat, laughter, talking, walking during the exposure time). The subject is public spaces from metropolises, buildings, factories, to cemeteries, airports, towers. These urban landscapes become drawings of actions, documented through photographic material as rhythmical light lines where subject and scenery melt into a single image. Nanna Hänninen documents with seismographic precision, the interplay between the movements of the real world before her eyes and her own world, her movements, her breathing and laughter, her hesitation.

The reduction of information is more a visual method, which references symbolic meanings of emptiness and infinity, it further references art history, evoking thoughts of the modernist movement and painting style. As a result, these pictures become concentrated narrations of recognition as well as large colour abstractions that have profound significance of the surrounding reality. What we find are highly abstract photographs with semi-translucent, intangible backgrounds and sketchy undulating movements, with lines contracting, expanding and entangling, with fields and clusters of color.



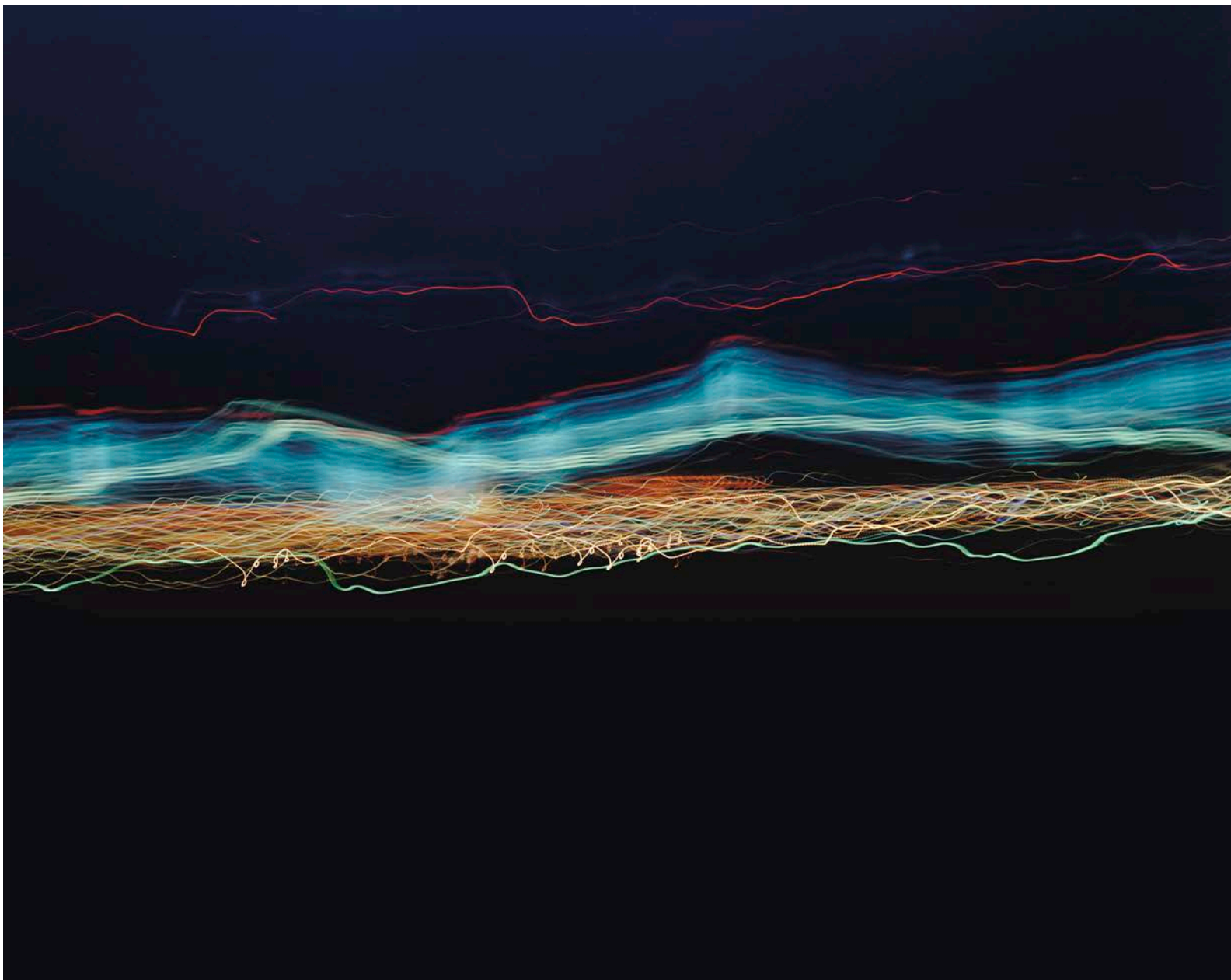
Recordings, 2007, Tønder Art Museum, Denmark



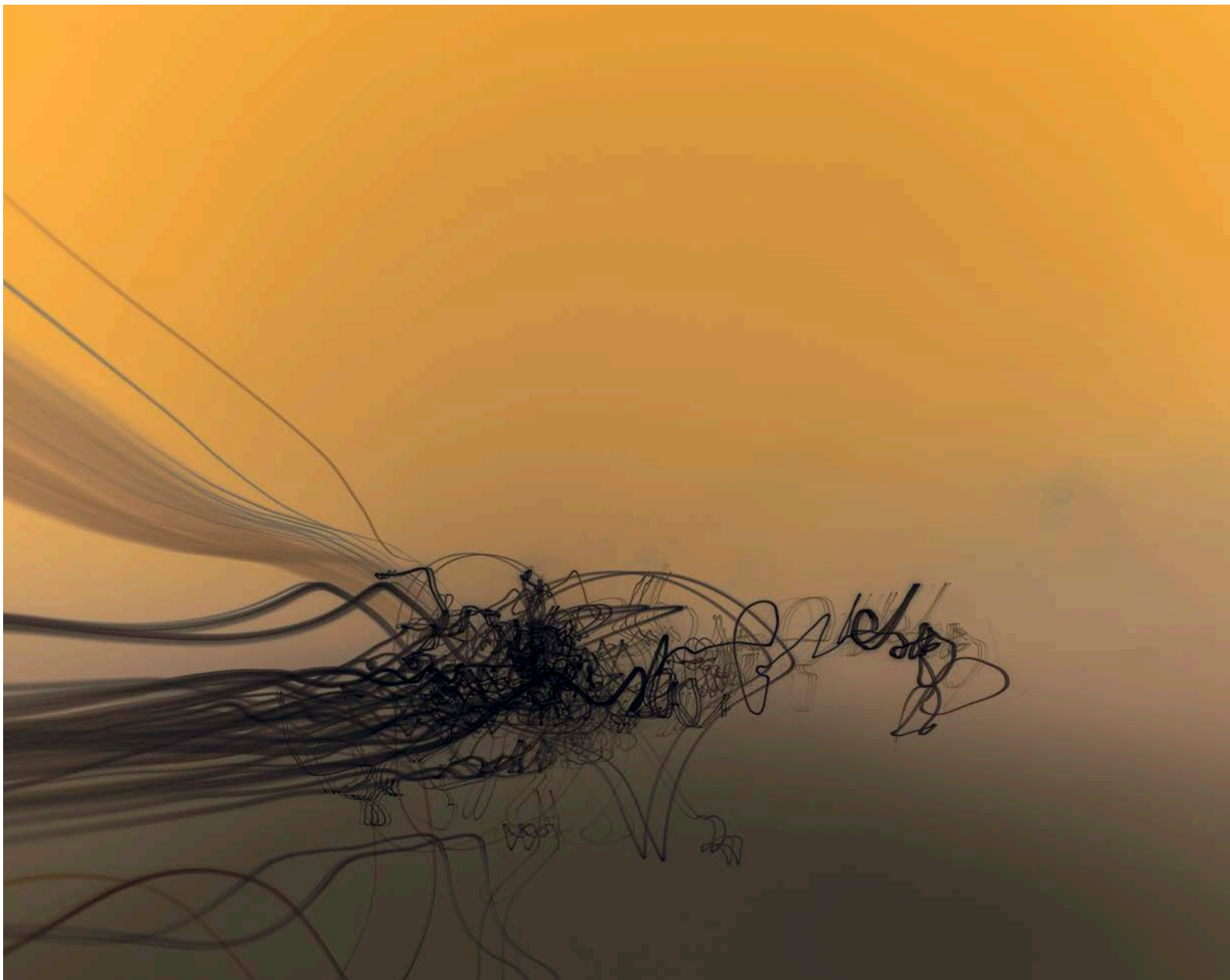
30 km on the Road towards Rovaniemi City, 2006, C-Print, Diasec, 150 x 190 cm



Townhall of Kuopio (Breathing), 2005, C-Print, Diasac, 110 x 140 cm



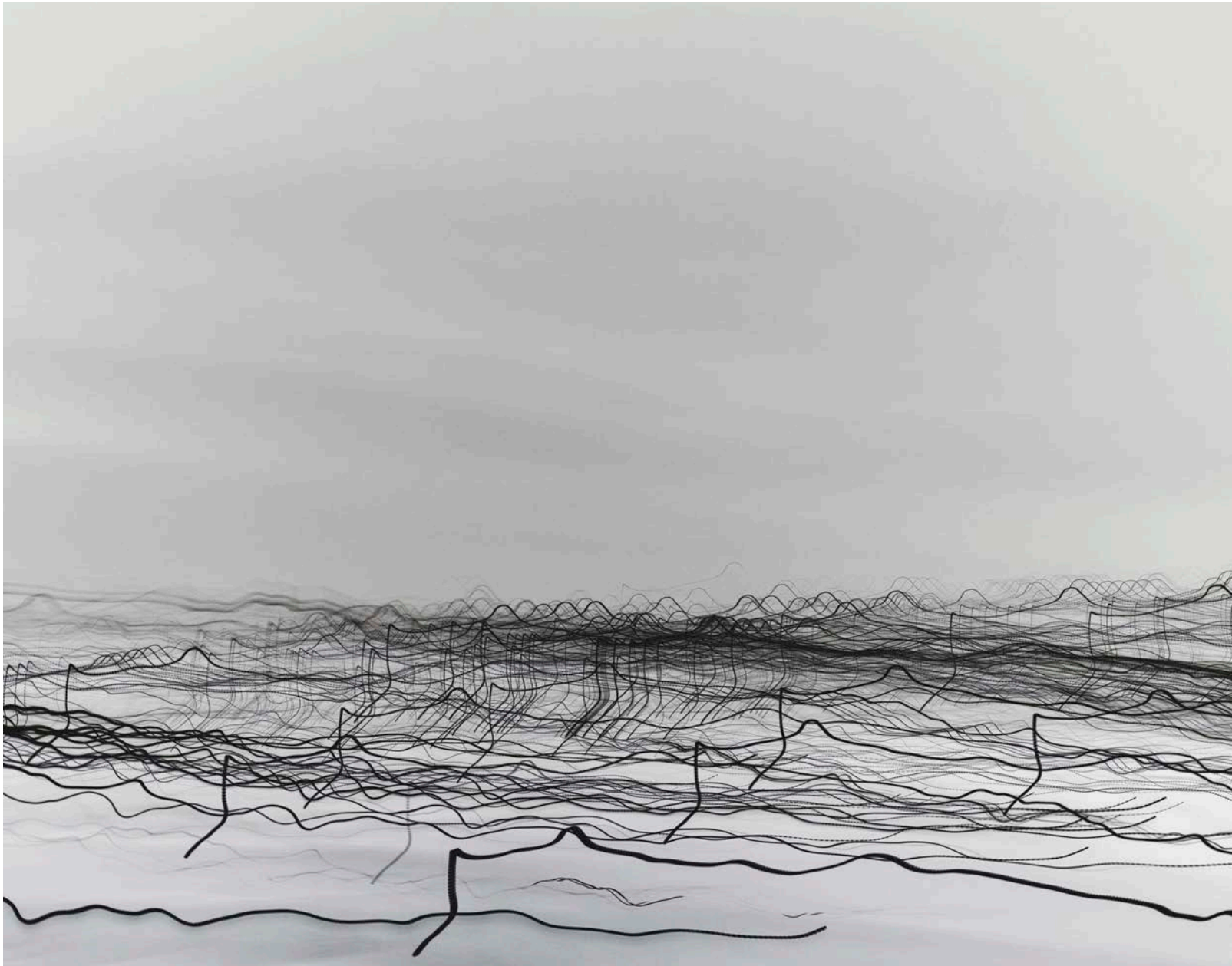
Düsseldorf and River Rhein, 2006, C-Print, Diasec, 110 x 140 cm



Main Road E 75 in Lapland, 2006, C-Print, Diasac, 158 x 200 cm



The Helsinki School – A New Approach, 2005, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin



Manhattan #D, 2004, C-Print, Diasec, 110 x 140cm



Airport of Ponta Delgada, 2006, C-Print, Diasec, 110 x 140 cm

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