

## Doug Fogelson's changing photographs comment on our changing climate

Douglas Fogelson challenges our sensibilities. His gorgeous photographic images draw us in and delight us, while at the same time they awaken a visceral understanding that profound change is underway on our planet that is causing nature's decline and extinction.

Fogelson's solo exhibition at Brushwood, running through September 4, features selections from two of the artist's recent major projects, plus a new outdoor installation created specifically for Brushwood.

The main exhibit spaces at Brushwood will hold a selection of pieces from the evocatively titled *Creative Destruction*, Fogelson's large ongoing photographic series which was recently exhibited at Manhattan's Sasha Wolf Gallery. They are stunningly beautiful, but somehow disquieting. He explains "The tension in the chemically altered photographs is caused by 'erosion' (or melting, bleaching, dissolving) of the representational image into abstraction via the agency of the chemicals." The resulting manipulated natural landscapes, lovely though they are, conjure loss and degradation reflecting the impacts of climate change on our environment.

*Broken Cabinet*, an installation in Brushwood's library, builds on the long quirky tradition of "Cabinets of Curiosities" originating in the 16th century. This version of *Broken Cabinet* displays a variety of natural objects such as feathers, skulls, claws, moths, and coral, representing species imperiled by human activities. These are juxtaposed with splendid candy-colored, multiple exposure images of the objects, some with the glass jarringly broken. There is also a selection of books on natural history and art. Fogelson adroitly shows our human passion to collect, document, and study nature while also calling attention to the roles humans play in the current extinction crisis.

A completely new outdoor installation, continuing the theme of *Creative Destruction*, is the third component of the exhibition. The sculpture takes the form of a pyramid approx. 7' at the peak with the four sides made from aluminum panels that are affixed to a wood base, displaying printed enlargements of altered and decomposing nature images.

Fogelson notes that the ancient pyramid form is a pure expression of cosmic harmony in geometry and math. He attaches his photographic images to the faces of the pyramid with wheat-paste, which has the benefit of protecting the surface while also allowing it to change over time. The pyramid faces will receive different amounts of UV sunlight and weather conditions will also vary. Together with changing conditions in the landscape around the sculpture, these forces will reshape the images as the piece evolves in concert with its surroundings over time.

These three projects reinforce each other in theme, without being repetitious or preachy. Visitors to the Doug Fogelson exhibit can delight in nature's beauty, while being invited to seriously contemplate the effect of human activity on the rest of the natural world.



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*Doug Fogelson studied photography at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Columbia College Chicago. His photographic manipulations are included in notable public and private collections such as The J. Paul Getty Center, The Museum of Contemporary Photography, and The Cleveland Clinic. He is represented in galleries in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago.*

*Doug Fogelson: On Climate* has been curated by Franck Mercurio and Doug Fogelson.

**THROUGH SEPTEMBER 4**

**“A camera is a tool to help people to see, without a camera.”**

**DOROTHEA LANGE**