

octavia | art gallery

Joel Pickford: Photographs of Southern Louisiana

May 4 - 25, 2013

Opening reception: May 11, 6 - 8 pm



Octavia Art Gallery is pleased to present a series of black and white photographs by Joel Pickford. *Joel Pickford: Photographs of Southern Louisiana* is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery. For more than a decade, Pickford has photographed Southern Louisiana in an effort to distill the culture, history and landscape of the region into visual poetry.

Using a large format 5x7 view camera, along with a hand held 35mm camera, Pickford is able to maintain a contemplative approach to his photography while also exploring more contemporary subject matter. The elegant proportions of the 5x7 film format, combined with specific wide angle lenses, provides the artist an ideal visual vocabulary with which to describe the often dreamlike, beautiful, and haunting spaces he has encountered.

Pickford's photographs are documentary in nature, but also explore themes of decay, loss, and the passage of time. Rain, mold, humidity and the prolific growth of flora can literally consume structures - morphing and erasing places over time. The portrayal of this decay allows the artist to record the transition of a subject from one state of being to another, capturing the flow of time in a still image. Additionally, Pickford's photographs each have a strong suggestion of narrative. While capable of standing alone visually, many of these photographs are accompanied by elaborate stories - tales of love, murder, arranged marriages, suicides, and dark family secrets. While these stories are fascinating, they are not essential to understanding Pickford's work. Rather, the photographs' enticing visual compositions allow the viewer to engage with the work independently - focusing on the places, people, and histories that Pickford has beautifully captured.

For more information, please contact Laura Sandoval at 504-309-4249 or laura@octaviaartgallery.com