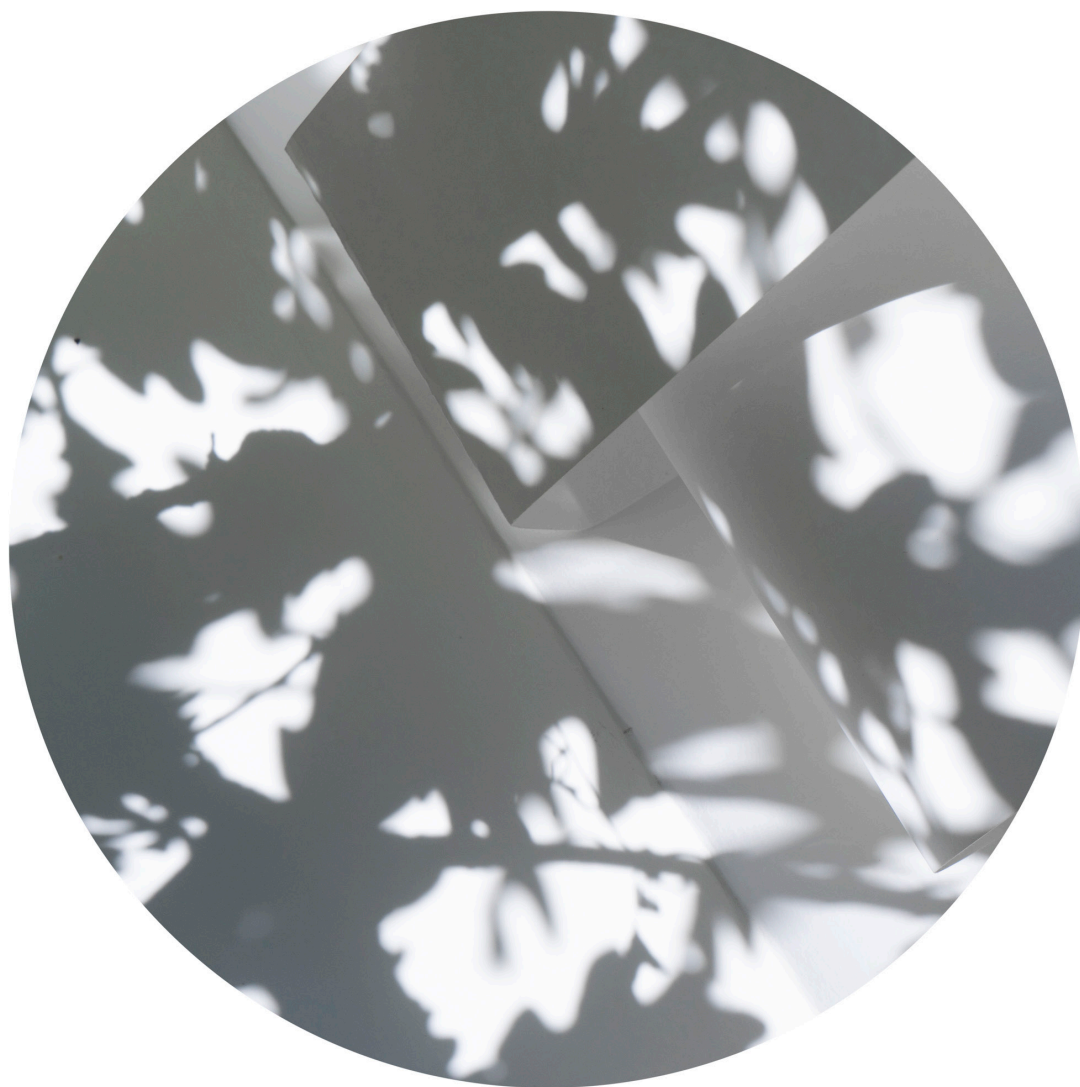


B R E N D A  
B I O N D O



S K Y L I G H T

FOTO RELEVANCE HOUSTON TEXAS

NOV 23, 2020 - JAN 23, 2021

**Shadow Legacy no. 18**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29x29" • Edition of 10  
40x40" • Edition of 9

# BRENDA BIONDO SKY LIGHT

The images in "Sky Light" rely on the natural blueness of high-altitude shadows, the reflective properties of white paper and the subtle texture of fallen snow to create images that deconstruct the landscape, giving us glimpses of distorted beauty. The images reference our efforts to control and constrain nature, while revealing parts of the natural world we often overlook.

By focusing on the shadows rather than on the plants themselves, the work alludes to the greatly diminished state of the natural world – a world that is essentially a shadow of its former self.

– Brenda Biondo

# THE ART OF BRENDA BIONDO

**GEOFFREY KOSLOV**

Sky Light is an exhibition of two new related bodies of work, Rayleigh Shadows and A Legacy of Shadows, by photographic artist Brenda Biondo. Her interest in light and the environment sparked a decision to move to Colorado many years ago for clearer skies and open landscapes, and her attraction to atmospheric phenomena continues to be a driving factor in her work. With the Sky Light project, Biondo is altering our gaze from looking up at the sky to looking down at shadows.

Her new work moves us to see the world indirectly. The images use the shadows of plants and other objects in an unconventional context that focuses the viewer's attention on specific aspects of the landscape that are often overlooked. She refers to this as "deconstructing the landscape." She states: "What I mean by 'deconstructing the landscape' is that I want to get away from looking at a specific tree, a specific plant, a specific cloud, in the context of foreground, background, etc. — and, instead, look at various components of the landscape outside of their normal contexts. The meaning of 'deconstruct' is to reduce something to its constituent parts in order to reinterpret it. Shadows give us the shape of a branch, but it is not the branch that we see. I think this is also important as a way to avoid the cliché of many types of landscape photography."

Biondo's previous work, the three related series Paper Skies, Moving Pictures, and Modalities, can be considered "skylscapes" — by photographing, printing, manipulating, rephotographing, and reassembling images of the sky at different times of the day, Biondo challenges viewers' perception of color and space. For her new work, from her high-elevation location in the Rocky Mountains, she wondered not only "why is the sky blue?" but also "why are shadows sometimes blue?" Ask yourself, are shadows always black? All is not black, and her images are proof for our disbelieving eyes. The series Rayleigh Shadows examines the physical properties of sunlight and our perception of light, revealing the blueness of shadows in the Colorado mountains. According to Biondo, "'Rayleigh scattering' is a scientific term that refers to the blueness of the sky. In sunlight's visible spectrum, blue wavelengths get scattered by atmospheric molecules more easily than the wavelengths of other colors — which is why the sky

appears blue. At high altitudes, this light scattering can be more pronounced. When a shadow is cast outdoors, direct light is blocked, but not ambient light, which is also blue. So casting a shadow onto a white surface under the right conditions results in shadows ranging from blue-grey to purple."

To create images in the Rayleigh Shadows series, she places rolled, cut and/or folded pieces of white paper on the ground and takes photographs of shadows cast by the paper. The angles of the paper dictate the color and luminosity of the shadows. In a pure sense, the work is only about shadow. It is in *A Legacy of Shadows* that Biondo takes the next step to integrate the landscape into her images.

With *A Legacy of Shadows*, Biondo captures shadows of plants falling on snow and white paper, imposing shaped fragments of what is seen to reveal parts of nature that are overlooked by our too rapid glance. Within these fragmented shadows, it is not the literal image of the object that is important, but the shadow that forces our imagination to consider what we are seeing. Biondo plays with these shadows rolling across different surfaces. As light is obstructed, the darkness of shadow is created. She tricks our vision and redirects our perception. The artist is teaching us how to gain pleasure in the simple manipulation of a surface. With a surface that is rounded, the shadows spreads. With a surface is flatter and firmer, the shadow sharpens.

Biondo is an environmentalist, and her crisp high-elevation shadows remind us how the quality of light and shadow in cities is diffused and faded. Her work with shadows also reflects her view that the natural world is "essentially as shadow of its former self." She suggests that we can "pick any barometer of the natural world, and you'll see the huge destruction man has caused during the past few hundred years – forests eliminated entirely in many parts of the world, entire species driven to extinction, wild places transformed into cities, towns, subdivisions, parking lots, etc. Half of the earth's original forests are gone. The world's wildlife populations have plummeted by 68% since 1970." By controlling and directing our perception of nature in her *A Legacy of Shadows* work, Biondo references how we've long controlled and constrained the world around us.

Brenda Biondo's images mix abstraction, beauty and reality. Our enjoyment of this work is tempered by reflection, both literally and thoughtfully, with an appreciation for how our world is illuminated by light, and the shadows it creates. This is what artists do, and how they help make our world a better place. They help us see.



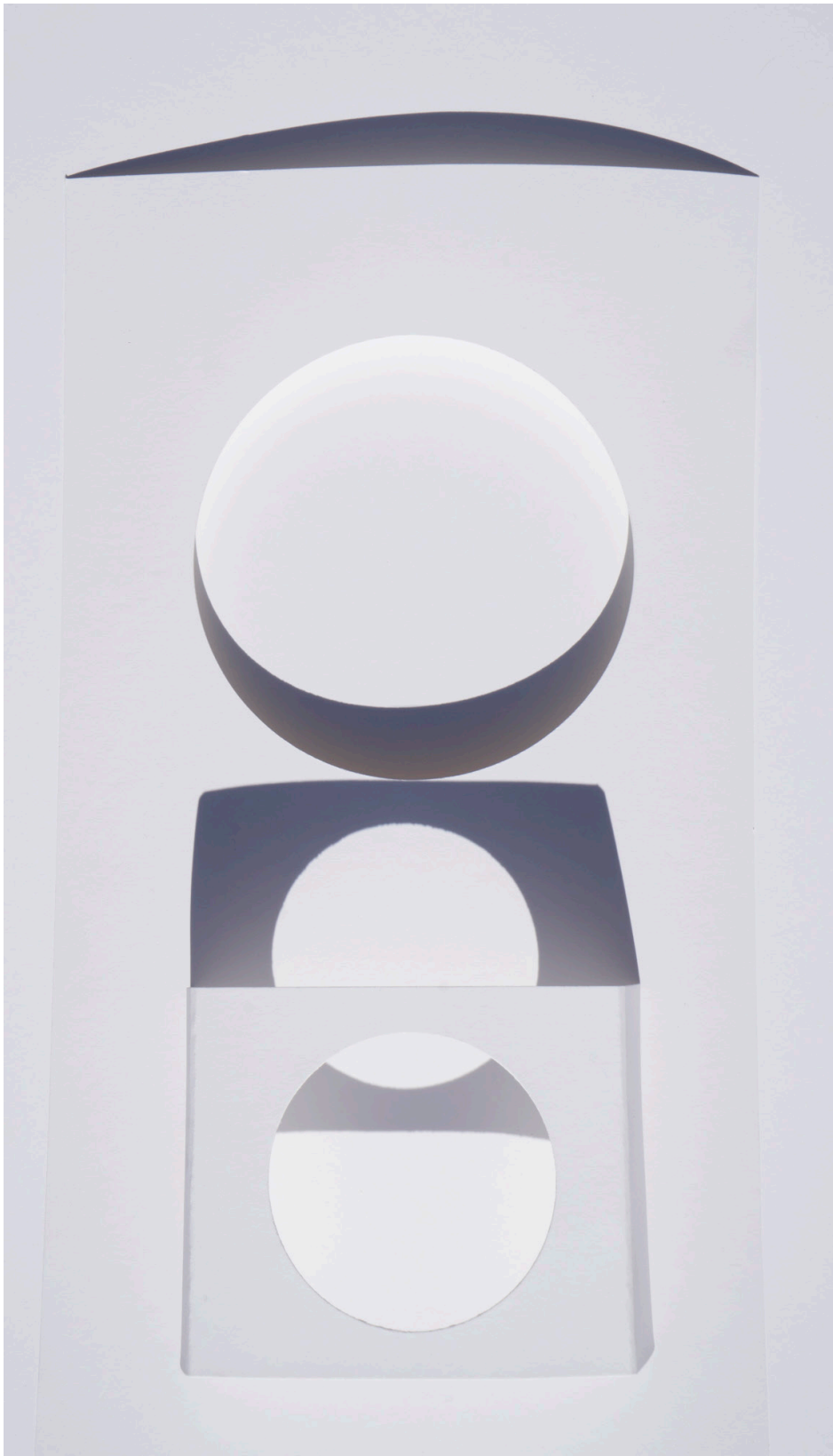
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Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 29 • Edition of 10  
40 x 40" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 15**

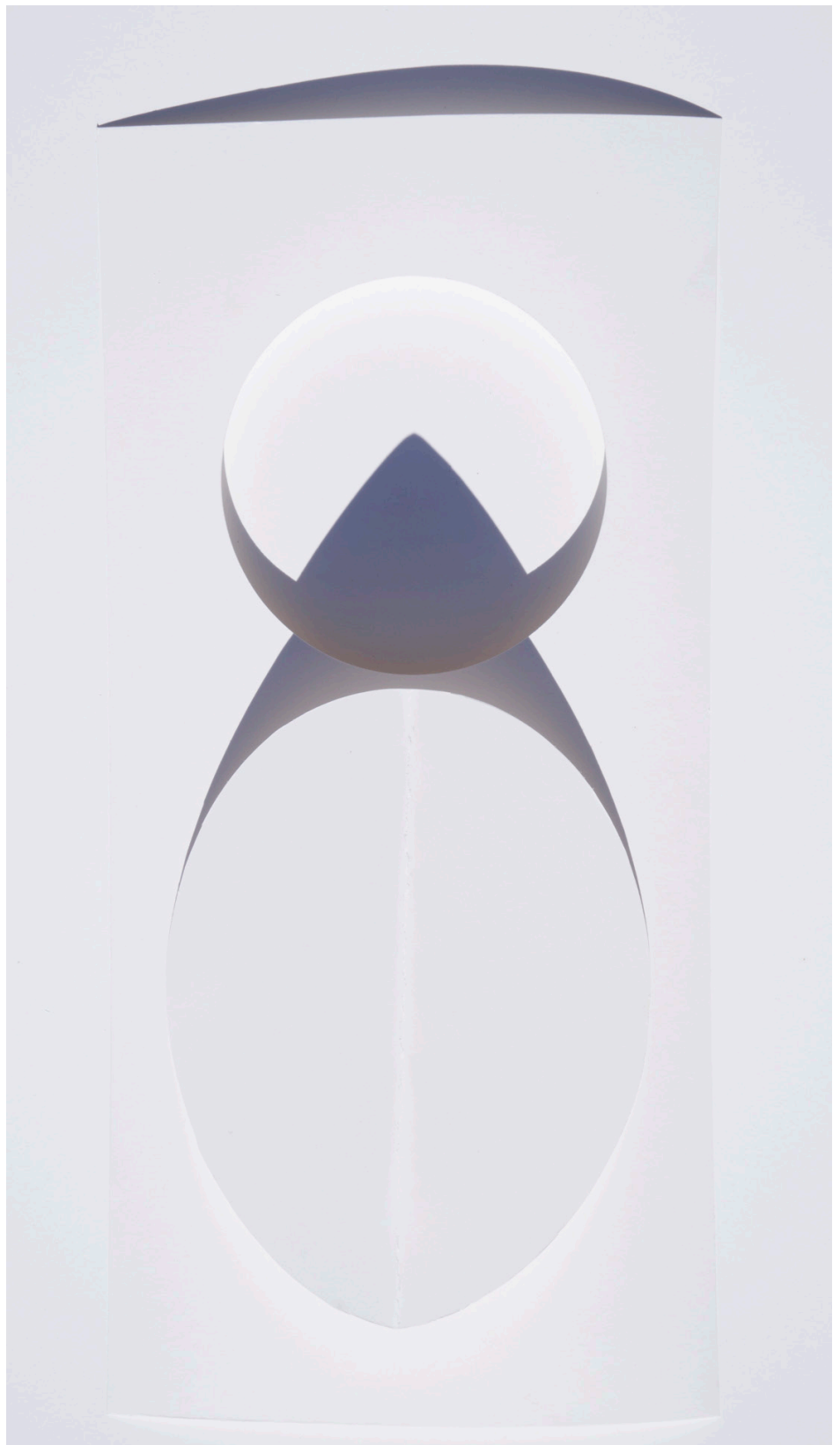
Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 11.5" • Edition of 10  
40 x 16" • Edition of 9



**Rayleigh Shadows no. 6**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 16.25" • Edition of 10  
40 x 22.5" • Edition of 9





**Rayleigh Shadow no. 5**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 16" • Edition of 10  
40 x 22" • Edition of 9



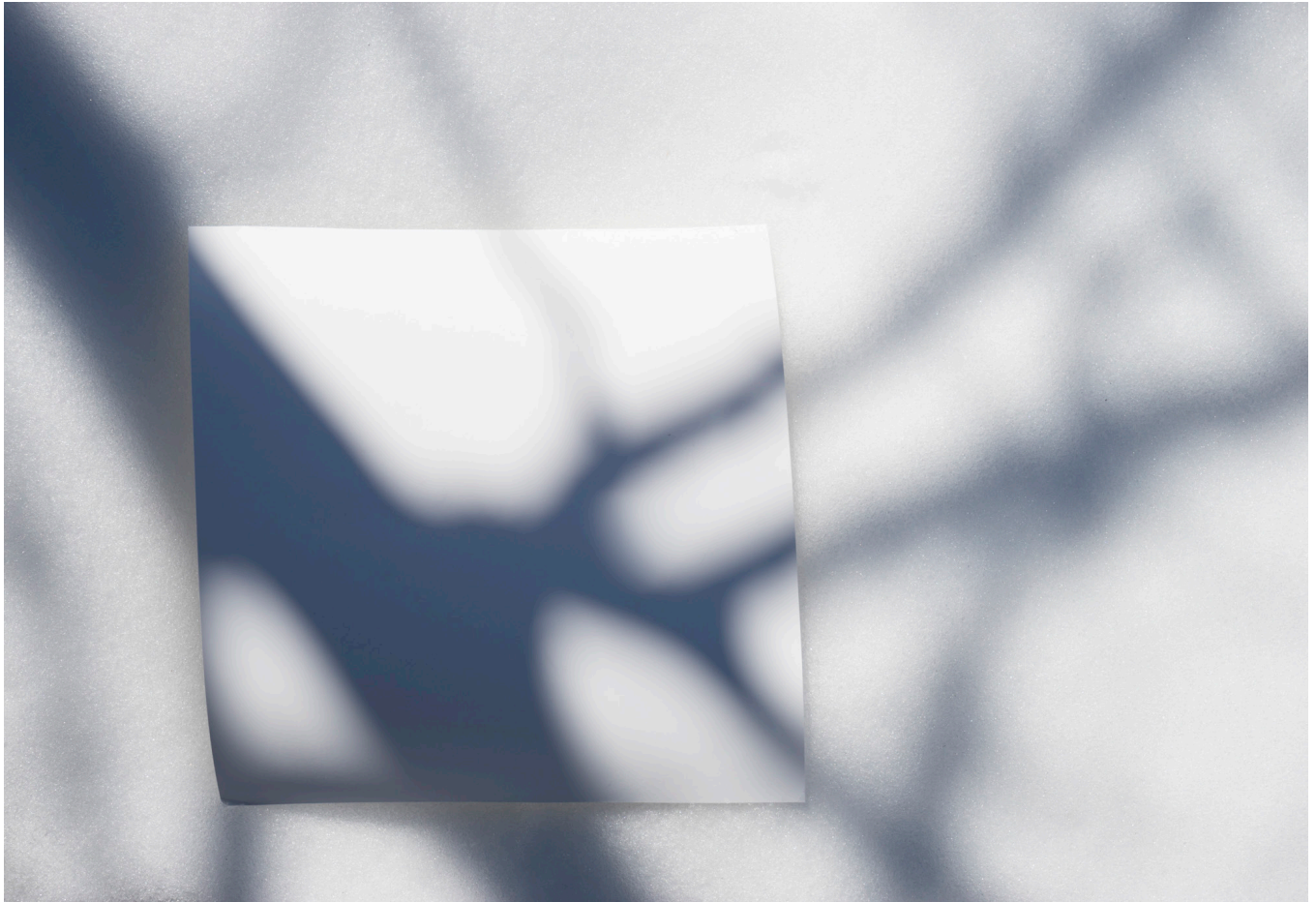
**Shadow Legacy no. 12**

Archival Inkjet Print  
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39 x 40" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 6**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 19.5" • Edition of 10  
40 x 27" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 4**

Archival Inkjet Print  
20 x 29" • Edition of 10  
27.5 x 40" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 20**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 29" • Edition of 10  
40 x 40" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 1**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 20.5" • Edition of 10  
40 x 28" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 17**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 22.5" • Edition of 10  
40 x 31.5" • Edition of 9



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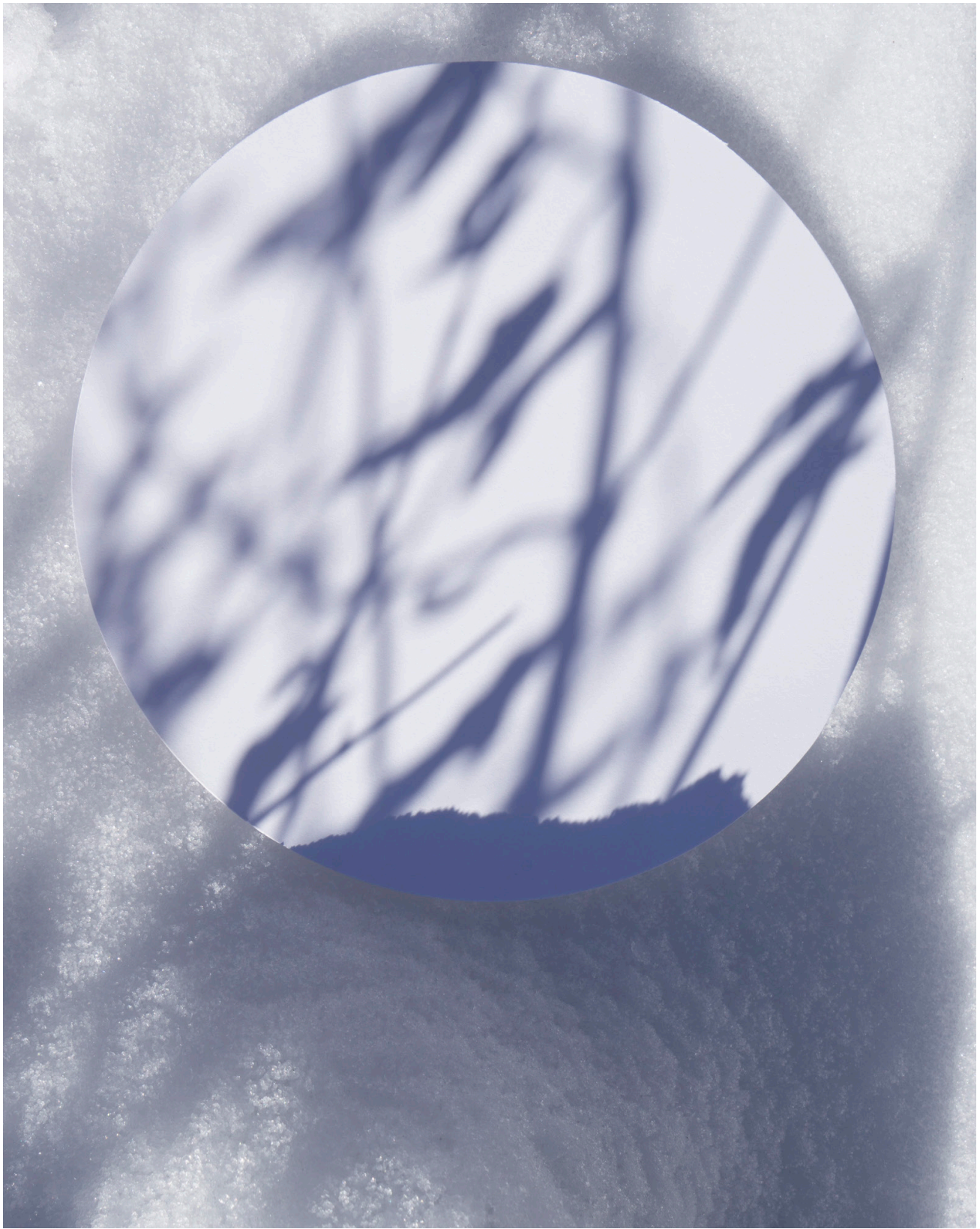
Archival Inkjet Print  
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40 x 28.5" • Edition of 9





**Shadow Legacy no. 22**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 29" • Edition of 10  
40 x 40" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 13**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 23" • Edition of 10  
40 x 31.5" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 16**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 14.5" • Edition of 10  
40 x 20" • Edition of 9



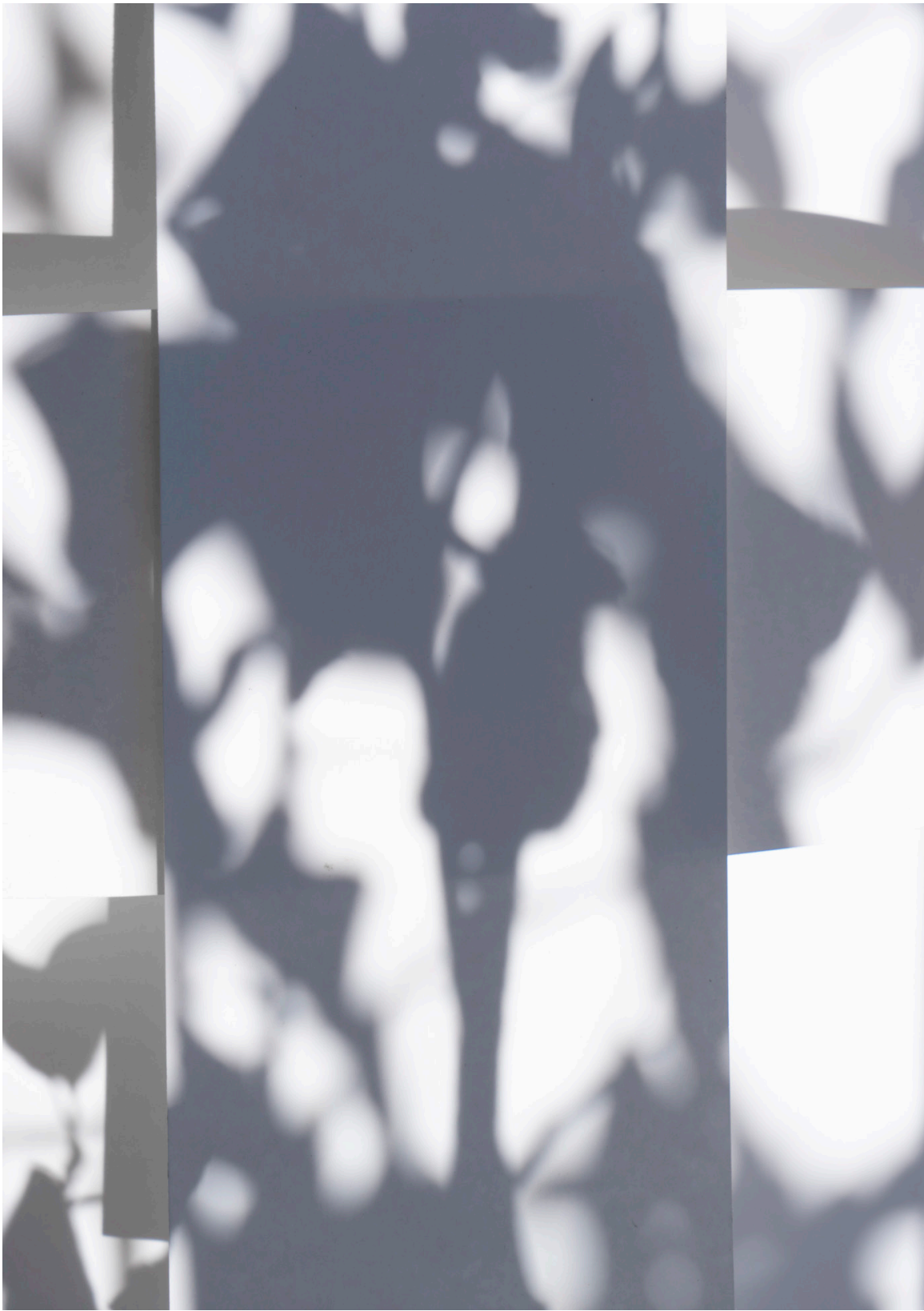
**Shadow Legacy no. 5**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 18" • Edition of 10  
40 x 25" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 8**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 17.5" • Edition of 10  
40 x 24" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 7**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 20" • Edition of 10  
40 x 27.5" • Edition of 9



**Shadow Legacy no. 14**

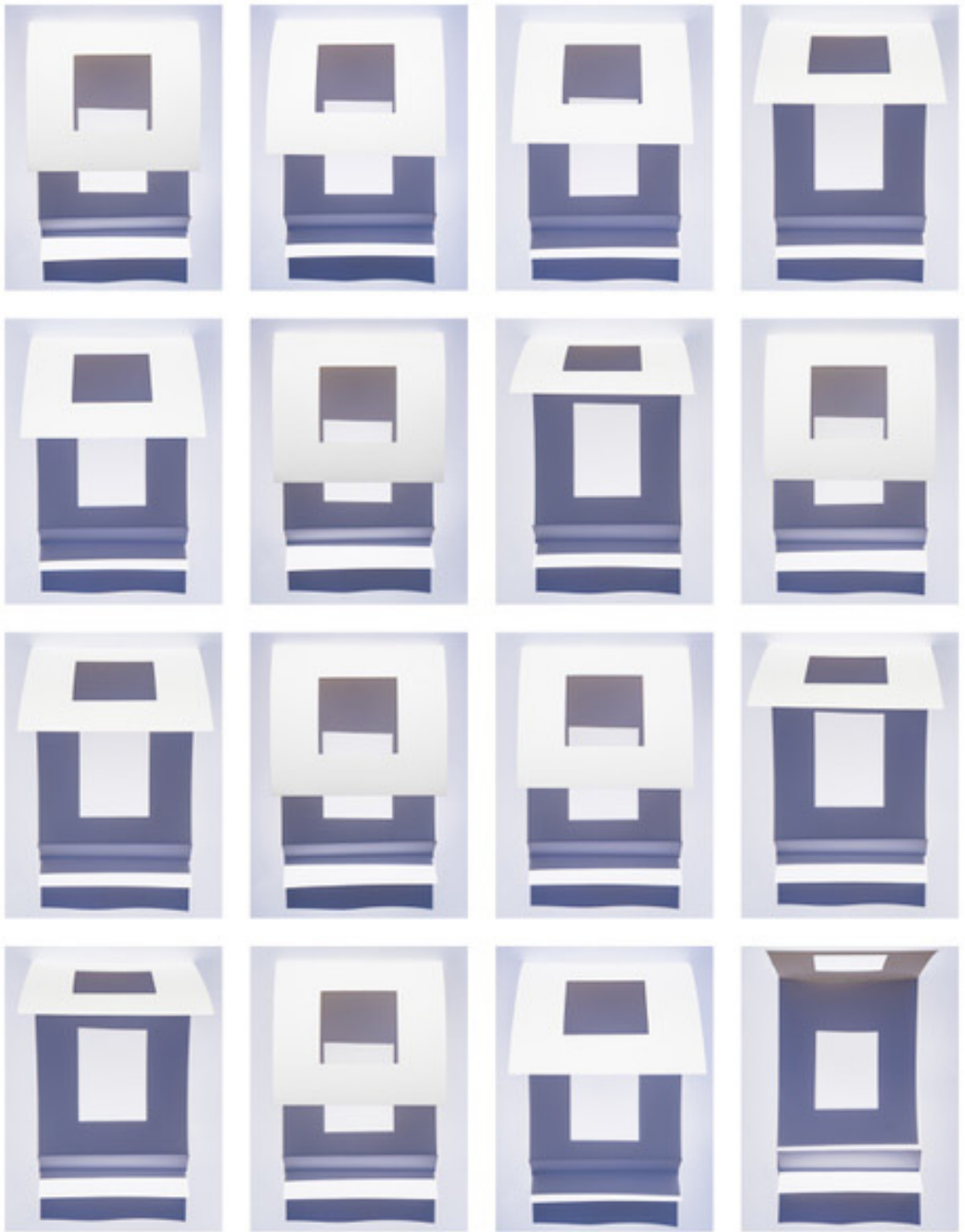
Archival Inkjet Print  
18.5 x 29" • Edition of 10  
25.5 x 40" • Edition of 9



**Rayleigh Circle no. 1**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 29" • Edition of 10  
40 x 40" • Edition of 9





**Rayleigh Wind Variation Grid**  
16 mounted dye-sublimation panels  
60 x 54" • Edition of 5  
Each panel measures 15 x 13.5"



**Rayleigh Shadow no. 1**

Archival Inkjet Print  
29 x 18" • Edition of 10  
40 x 25" • Edition of 9

B R E N D A  
B I O N D O

## THE ARTIST

Brenda Biondo (American, b. 1963) is a photographer whose work focuses on constructed abstractions, conservation and land-based issues, and the way cultural artifacts move from the past into the present. The focus of her most recent work is atmospheric light and color. Produced using simple processes relying on traditional camera techniques, the work explores the role traditional photography can still play in creating new visions of common subjects, while challenging viewers' perception of color and three-dimensional space.

Brenda's work has been exhibited in shows throughout the country and published in numerous print and online publications, including The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Denver Post and Lenscratch. Her photographs are in the collections of the Library of Congress, the San Diego Museum of Art, the Museum of Photographic Arts and numerous corporations and private collectors. A solo exhibit of her work opened at the San Diego Museum of Art in 2017. Her book of photographs, *Once Upon a Playground*, was published by the University Press of New England in 2014 and is now the subject of a five-year traveling exhibit organized by ExhibitsUSA.

The daughter of a commercial photographer/art director, Brenda grew up surrounded by photography and has been making photographs for more than 30 years. Before beginning her third career as a fine art photographer, Brenda worked for a decade in corporate and non-profit communications in NYC and Washington DC, and then spent nine years as a freelance writer specializing in environmental issues. A native New Yorker, she's been a resident of Colorado since 1999, and currently lives in the small town of Manitou Springs, where the light and landscape continue to inspire her work.

# FOTO RELEVANCE

Since 2016, Foto Relevance cofounders Geoffrey C. Koslov and Bryn Larsen have focused on the exhibition and acquisition of museum quality contemporary fine art photography and photography-based work. Foto Relevance is dedicated to providing a platform for an innovative selection of American and international photographic artists pushing the boundaries of photography. The gallery has mounted monographic exhibitions as well as group shows to investigate current trends and themes in contemporary art, showcasing a broad range of both darkroom and digital photographic techniques. In addition to promoting the work of artists, Foto Relevance provides guidance, educating individual collectors and corporations in the acquisition and sale of art. Foto Relevance is a member of the Houston Art Gallery Association (HAGA). The gallery is located in the historic Museum District of Houston, Texas.



**FOTO RELEVANCE**

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