

STEVE MACLEOD BIOGRAPHY

Professor Steve Macleod is inspired by the Pictorial movement popularised in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For a pictorialist, a photograph, like a painting, drawing or engraving, is a way of projecting an emotional intent into the viewer's realm of imagination. His works often utilise chiaroscuro elements of light and shade creating a melancholic, expressive mood.

His practice operates in a zone that discards the modernist approach to 'scientific' realist interpretation for one that references Tonalism (a progressive school of American landscape art from 1880-1920) - often on the periphery of vision, one experiences environmental aura rather than a topographical recording of nature - visual metaphors describe historical and humanist subjects that connect us with the environment we inhabit.

His work suggests, rather than explains, inviting the viewer to question rather than understand, and in doing so breaking the rules for what is readily accepted as 'metric' landscape photography. He aims to recreate the impression of what we experience with the eye and less so by the camera lens. The lens records, the eye creates.

Macleod uses nature to share the conceptual impact and influence it can have on our emotions; our health and our imagination. He belongs to the landscape he photographs, immersed in the environment, there has to be definite motive in making exposures. One that is drawn from and driven by something deeper than technical counsel. Motivated by light and season, the images he captures reside as metaphors for deep-seated meaning and reflection, often in conflict with the atmospherically beautiful images he creates.

Macleod shoots on large format with a consistently systematic and meticulous approach so that he can absorb and slow the pace of the images. He creates a stillness, a sense of extended present time through narrow depth of field and camera movements, there is an obtuse visibility of detail - the aim is to question what lies between the elements beyond and within photographs, by decelerating the process of photography, with a distilled focus on the basic principles of making.

Creating work that is sparing on substantiation and often fuelled with ambiguity, heightened by the lack of humans but with evidence of human kind; undertaken with consistent viewpoints, illuminated only by available light, Macleod attempts to depict a state of mind; a potential fiction, a sense of place rather than a derivative recording of space. Each location is real too, but the reality is, it could be anywhere that the viewer wants it to be.

Steve Macleod was diagnosed with Bipolar II in 2000 and continues to experience severe episodes which are characteristic of the condition. Macleod is open about his own condition and doesn't shy away from advocating frank discussion about the impact of mental health on individuals, those around them and society as a whole. Macleod's conditions do not define him, but he uses it to inform and support his own arts practice. Macleod also dedicates time to working with mental health charities especially those that use the arts and creativity to dispel stigma and support others who also suffer from mental health conditions.

Macleod is also an educator - a regular lecturer and speaker on photography subjects he is a respected industry professional with decades of experience. He is a Visiting Professor at University of Suffolk; a Trustee of the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST); on the Patrons Board at the National Portrait Gallery, London; a Trustee on the Board for National Open Arts and Lifetime member of Frontline Club in London. He also runs a successful mentorship programme for emerging artists.

Represented by Black Box Projects, Macleod regularly exhibits and works are held in both private and public collections.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *Hala*, Hardwick Gallery, University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham, United Kingdom
Indigo, Unseen Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2018 *NIL*, Black Box Projects in Fitzrovia Chapel, London
Hala, Abu Dhabi Art Fair, UAE
Hospital Rooms Project, Meadow, Bluebell Lodge, London
Hala, Black Box Projects, Photo London
1 Godley VC House Exhibition, Griffin Gallery, London
Black Box Projects, Launch exhibition, Soho, London
EAOA, Norwich Castle, Norfolk
- 2016 Hospital Rooms Project, The Phoenix Unit, London
Sutterhub Open, Cambridge
RCA Secret Auction, London and Dubai UAE
- 2015 *NIL*, Develop North, Aberdeen
AELD, Atlas Gallery, London
NIL, Photo London, Somerset House, London
- 2014 *NIL*, Galerie Divane, Hamburg
Art 14, London Olympia, London
- 2013 *True Colours*, Atlas Gallery, London
- 2010 *Blackwater*, Atlas Gallery, London