

Fahey/Klein
G A L L E R Y

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Press Release – For Immediate Release

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IAN RUHTER
Silver & Light

October 16th through November 29th
Reception for the Artist: Thursday, October 16th, 7 – 9 pm

*In the process of losing my way I have taken a tremendous journey back to the 1800's.
I have time-traveled the way you would in a dream. Taking me backwards into the future, a future where you paint
with silver and light. —Ian Ruhter*

The Fahey/Klein Gallery is pleased to present, *Silver & Light*, the premiere exhibition of work by photographer Ian Ruhter. Ruhter's project, *Silver & Light*, is comprised of unique large-scale collodion wet plates. Ruhter has translated his wet plates to limited edition archival pigment prints, which will be displayed mirroring the one-of-a-kind collodion wet plates highlighted in the exhibition.

Ian Ruhter had been working as a successful commercial and sports photographer when he first discovered the wet plate collodion process. The nineteenth century photographic process involves pouring a liquid mixture of iodides, bromides, and a solution called collodion over a glass or aluminum plate. The plate is then bathed in silver nitrate, making it light-sensitive. The plate must then be quickly exposed and developed in just a few minutes, before the collodion dries and loses sensitivity. The process is expensive, laborious, and extremely unpredictable as temperature and moisture affect the chemicals greatly and can entirely alter the developing process, ruining a wet plate. But the results of this labor intensive process are undeniable-- a completely unique and incredibly detailed image, with rich layers of silver suspended in emulsion producing a three dimensional effect. Because the process is produced and controlled entirely by hand, each plate is inherently unique, with the chemicals' process leaving irregular and impossible to reproduce beautiful ghostly shadows, halos, and ripples in each plate.

The traditional process filled a need in Ian who was growing disillusioned with the immediacy and unoriginality of photographing in an increasingly digital world. Ruhter soon became obsessed with the perfecting the wet plate collodion process. He yearned to move from the traditionally small, hand held plates he was creating to something larger. Ruhter had an epiphany moment when he realized he needed to shoot from within the camera to create the size of wet plates he had envisioned. Over the course of three years, Ruhter worked to convert a large delivery truck into a giant mobile camera and traveling darkroom, which Ruhter and his team of assistants refer to as "The Time Machine".

Ian Ruhter's collodion wet plate landscapes honor the tradition of the pioneering California photographers who documented the incredible landscape of the Western United States. Ruhter has surpassed his predecessors in scope by creating a body of work documenting modern American cityscapes and contemporary portraits. Ruhter's images combine the unrefined, antique wet plate aesthetic with contemporary subject matter. Ruhter respects the tradition pioneered before him by early photographers, while challenging himself to work on an even larger scale. Ruhter and his team have mastered making wet plates measuring up to 48 X 60 inches, the largest wet plates ever created to date, where in one will be the centerpiece of the exhibition.

For press inquiries, please [contact](mailto:contact@faheykleingallery.com) the Fahey/Klein Gallery.

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Ian Ruhter, Tunnel View, Yosemite, 2012



Photographer Ian Ruhter holding a collodion wet plate of the mountains behind him, Southern Sierras, Bishop, California, 2013 (Photo Credit: Keito Swan)

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Ian Ruhter and assistant Will Eichelberger developing a wet plate outside of Ruhter's truck shortly after exposing the plate.



Ian Ruhter standing outside of "The Time Machine" a truck he has converted into his large format camera and mobile darkroom, Lake Tahoe, California, 2013 (Photo Credit: Megan Haywood)

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A wet plate as it is finishing processing.



*A wet plate of Ian Ruhter and assistant Will Eichelberger outside "The Time Machine"
(Photo Credit: Charlie Oldman)*