MIKKO RIKALA

Persons
Projects

Mikko Rikala's works represent research into spatiality and temporality, emerging from both philosophical as well as scientific, nature-related thoughts. If one is to condense the themes that the artist is submerged in, it would come down to something as complex as the cyclical and interstitial passage of time and the traces it leaves on our surroundings. Many times we will find works where Rikala observes a certain temporal phenomena, taking it as a starting point for his further research. He reflects on and compares philosophical thoughts of the East and concepts related to minimal art, to the experiences of the relativity of time, speed, distance, presence, and absence. Repetition as a working method, with its voiding effect, challenges the fundamental notion of time and space. It offers new perspectives on how to perceive the nature of distance. What we see, in the end, are not only the traces that time leaves behind but—with an equal importance—the voids, the unsaid, the silence in-between. Drawing inspiration from German Romanticism, Rikala's body of work alludes to the sublime and to being fully immersed in nature as a way of slowly observing natural phenomena and cultivating an awareness of the present moment. His images balance the fleeting yet pivotal moments of daily life with the essential role of memory in shaping identity, offering a nuanced exploration of humanity's relationship to the natural world.

THE OVERVIEW EFFECT (IN REVERSE), 2026

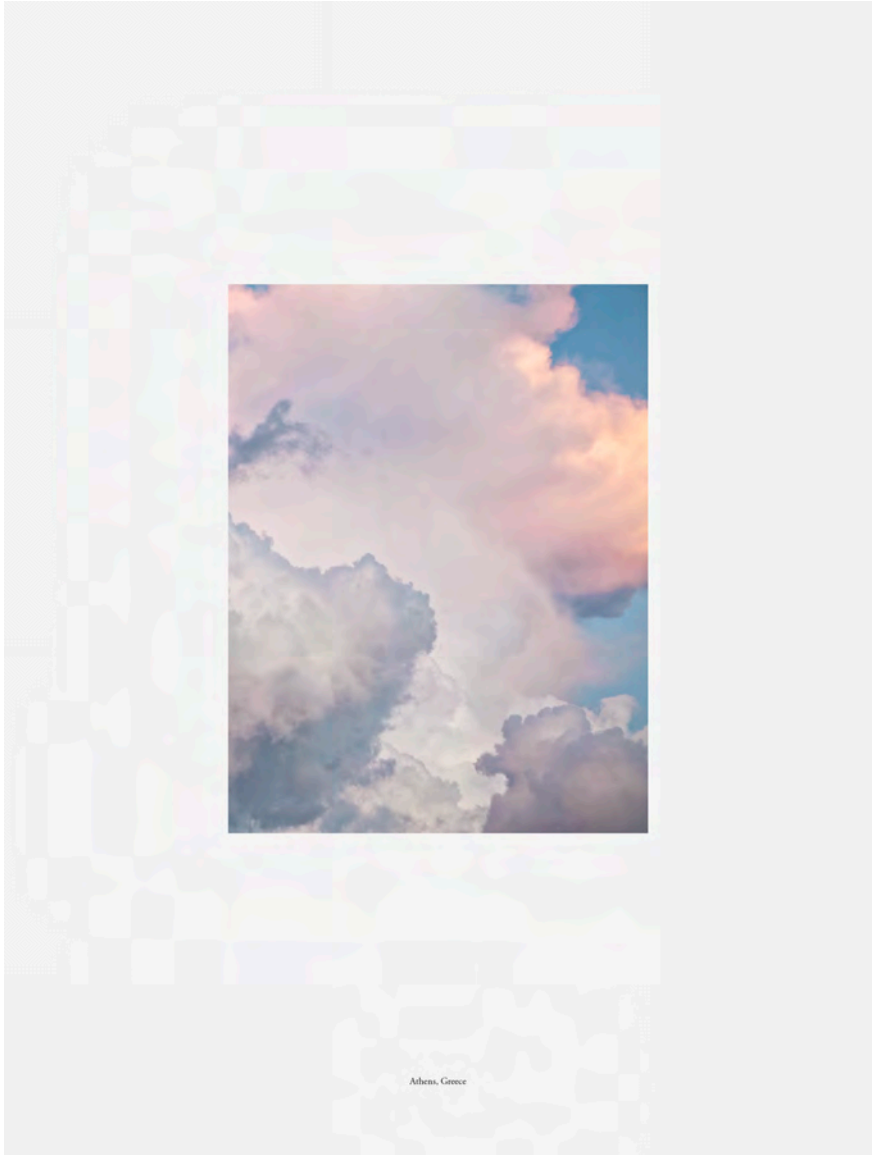
The Overview Effect is a psychological experience reported by many astronauts after seeing Earth from space. It describes a sudden shift in perception. When astronauts observe the planet from orbit, or from the distance of the Moon, Earth appears small and self-contained within the vastness of space. From this perspective, the divisions that organize life on the ground disappear. National borders, political systems, and territorial conflicts are no longer visible. Instead, the planet is perceived as a single, interconnected whole.

While astronauts encounter this shift by looking down at Earth from space, similar reflections can also emerge from the opposite direction.

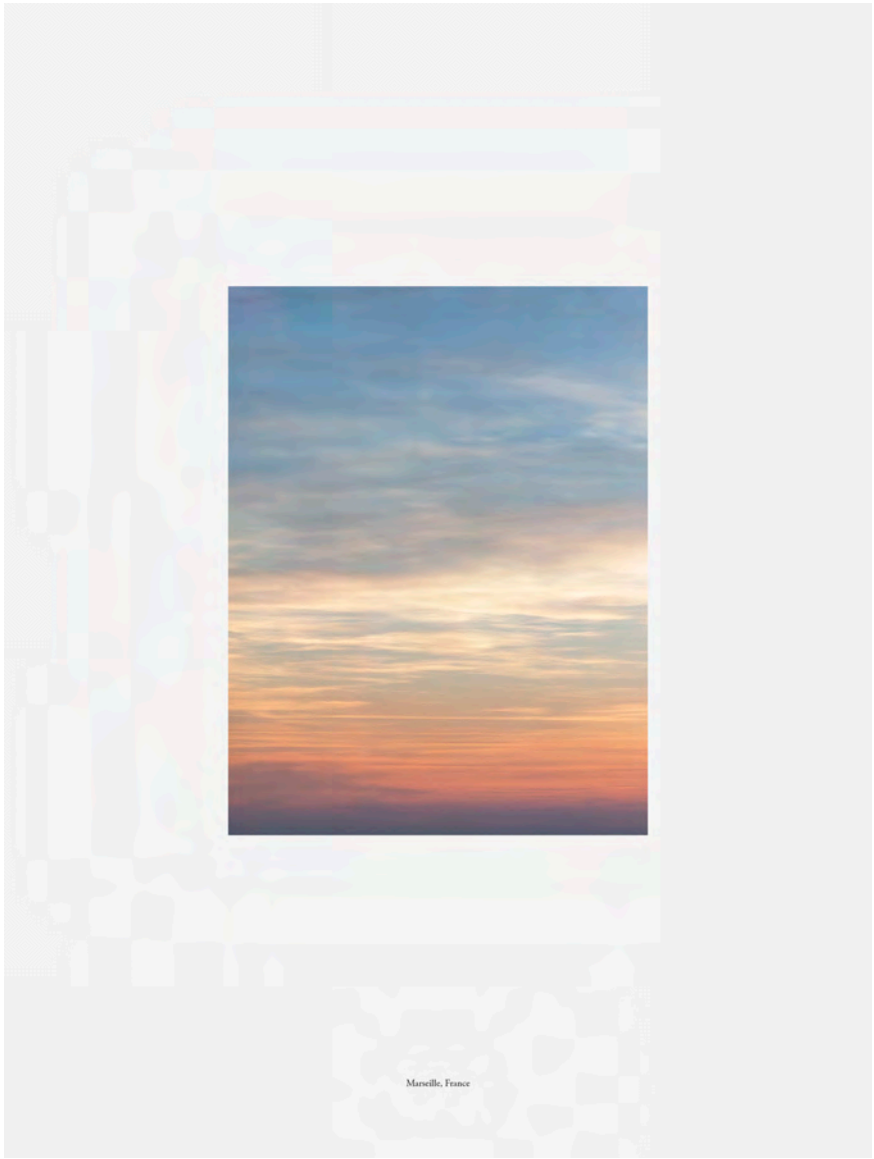
In his work, Mikko Rikala travels to different cities, sometimes on opposite sides of the globe, and photographs the sky above them.

At first glance, these skies appear strikingly similar: clouds, light, atmosphere, and open space recurring across distant geographies. Yet each also contains subtle differences shaped by climate, season, pollution, time, and local conditions. The work moves between their shared similarities and differences. Rikala proposes the sky as both a shared space and a record of the place.

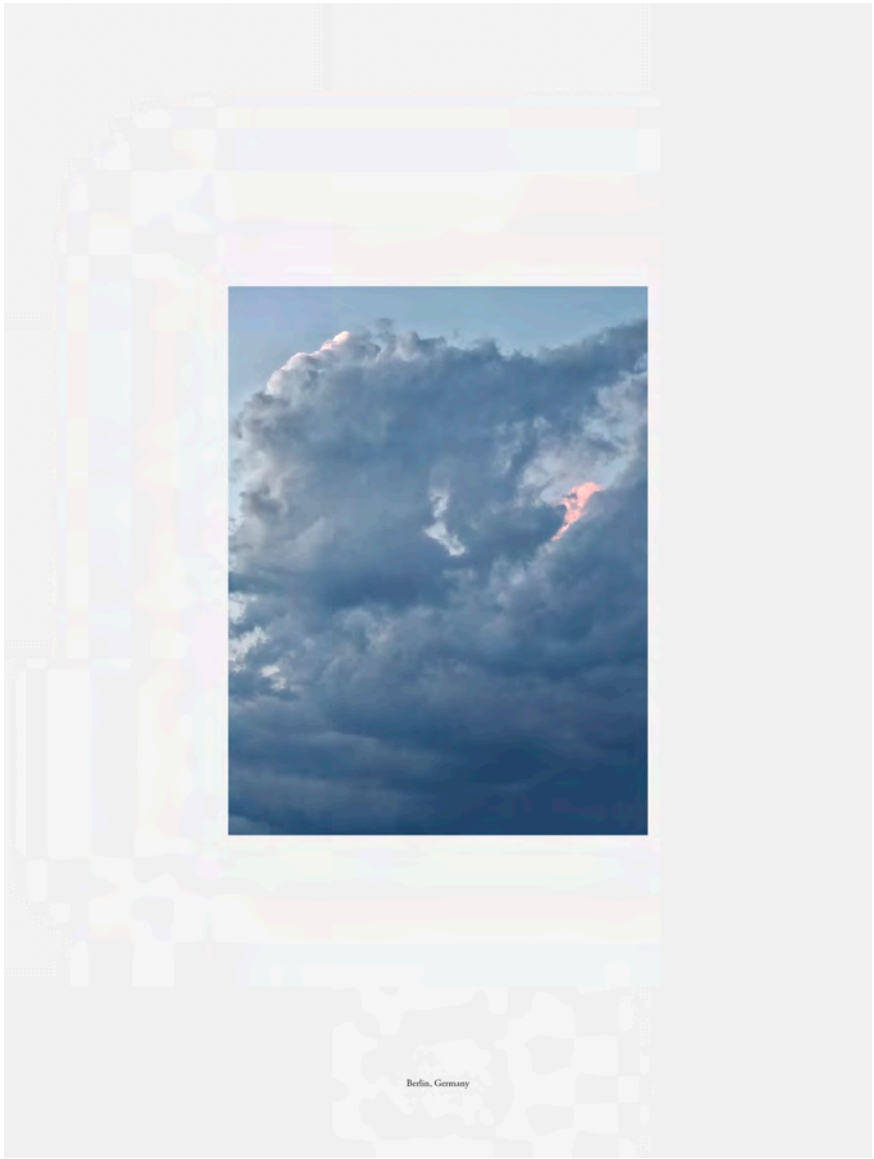
The Overview Effect, 2026, Persons Projects, Berlin



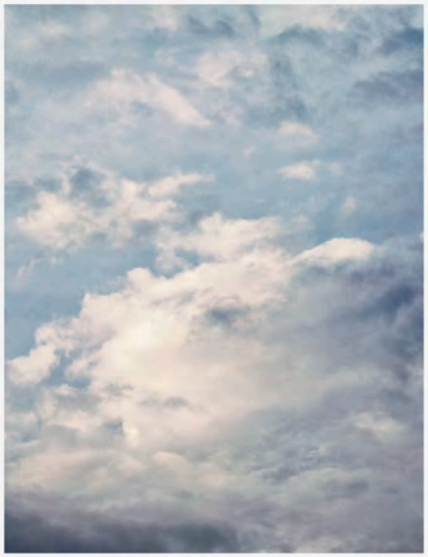
The Overview Effect (Athens, Greece), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm



The Overview Effect (Marseile, France), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm

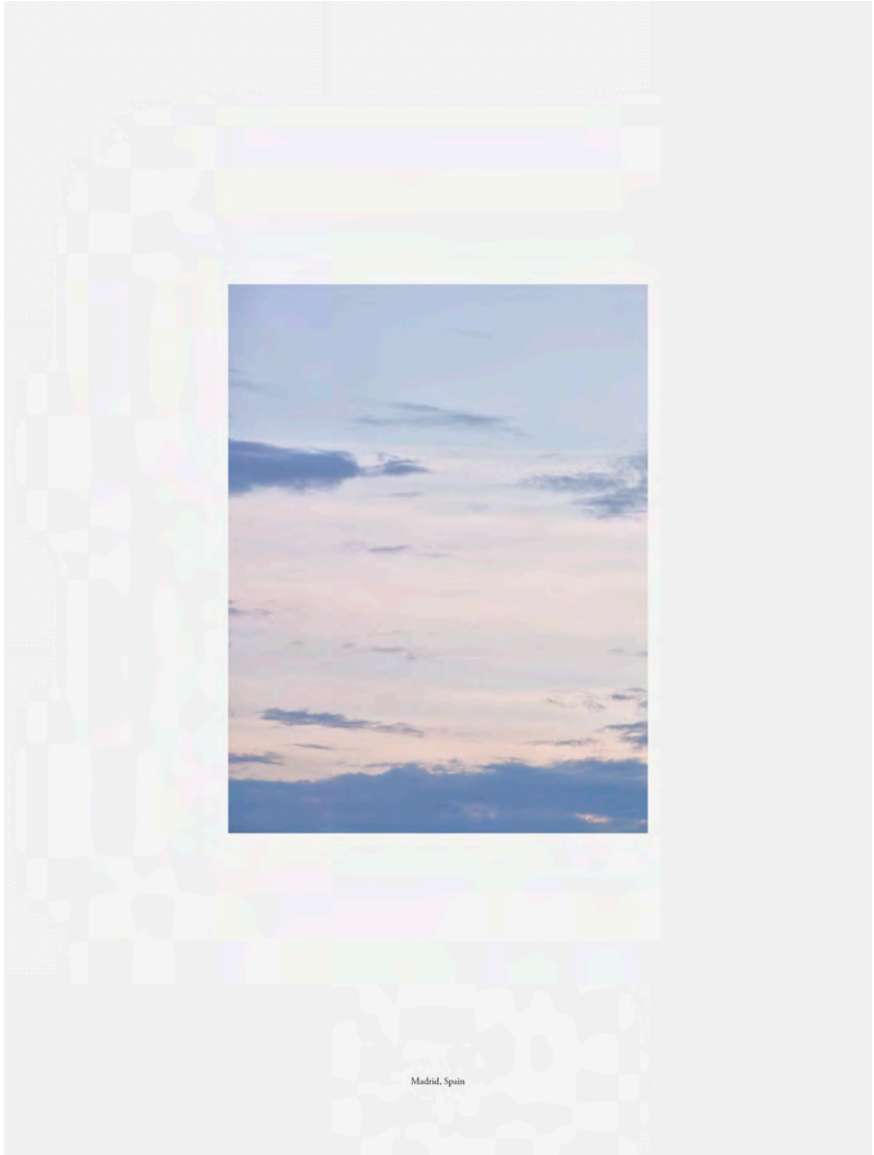


The Overview Effect (Berlin, Germany), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm

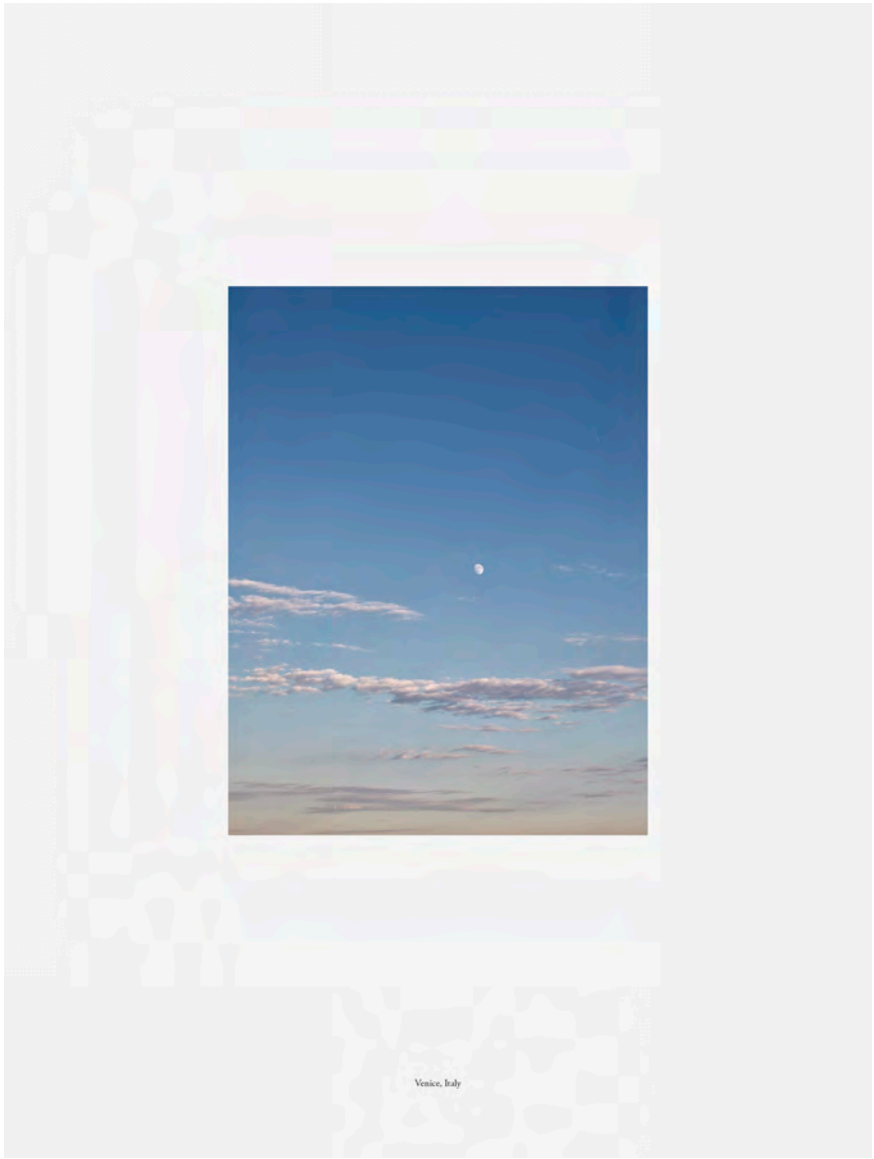


London, England

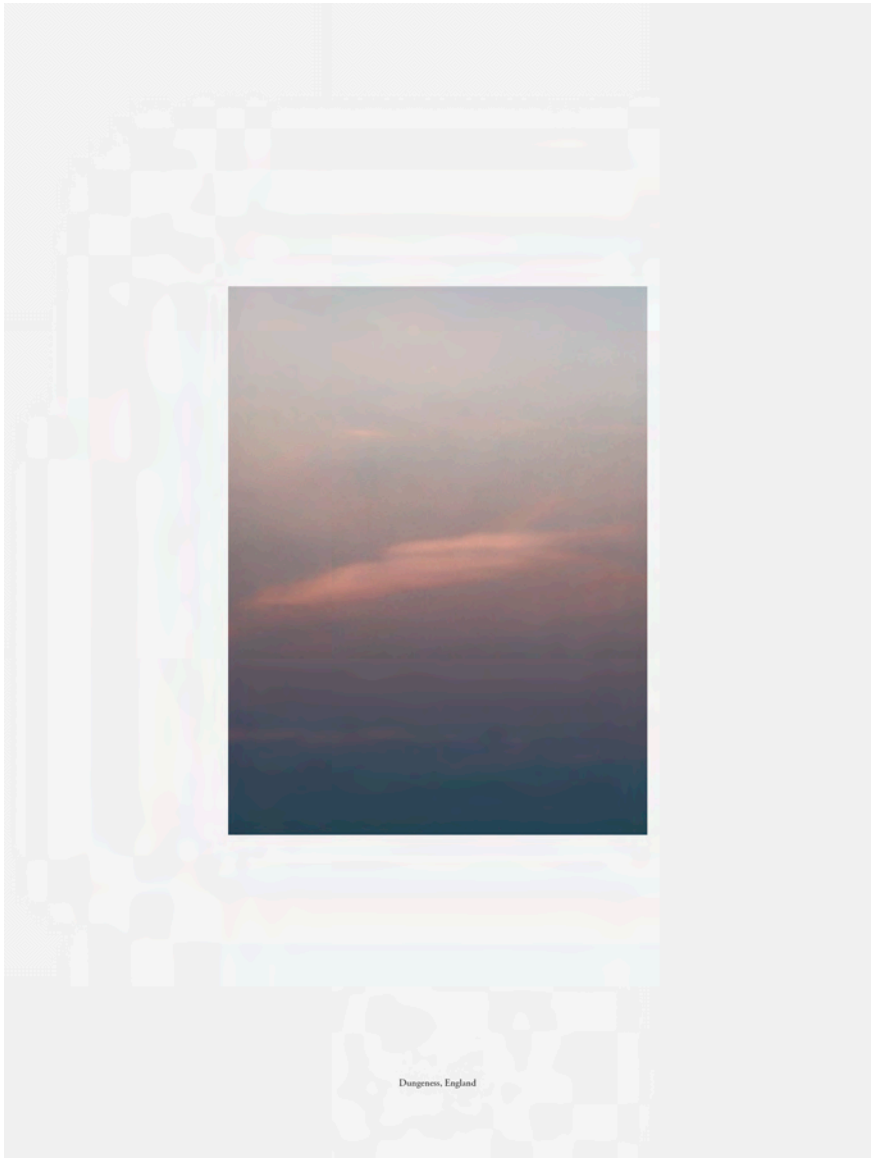
The Overview Effect (London, England), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm



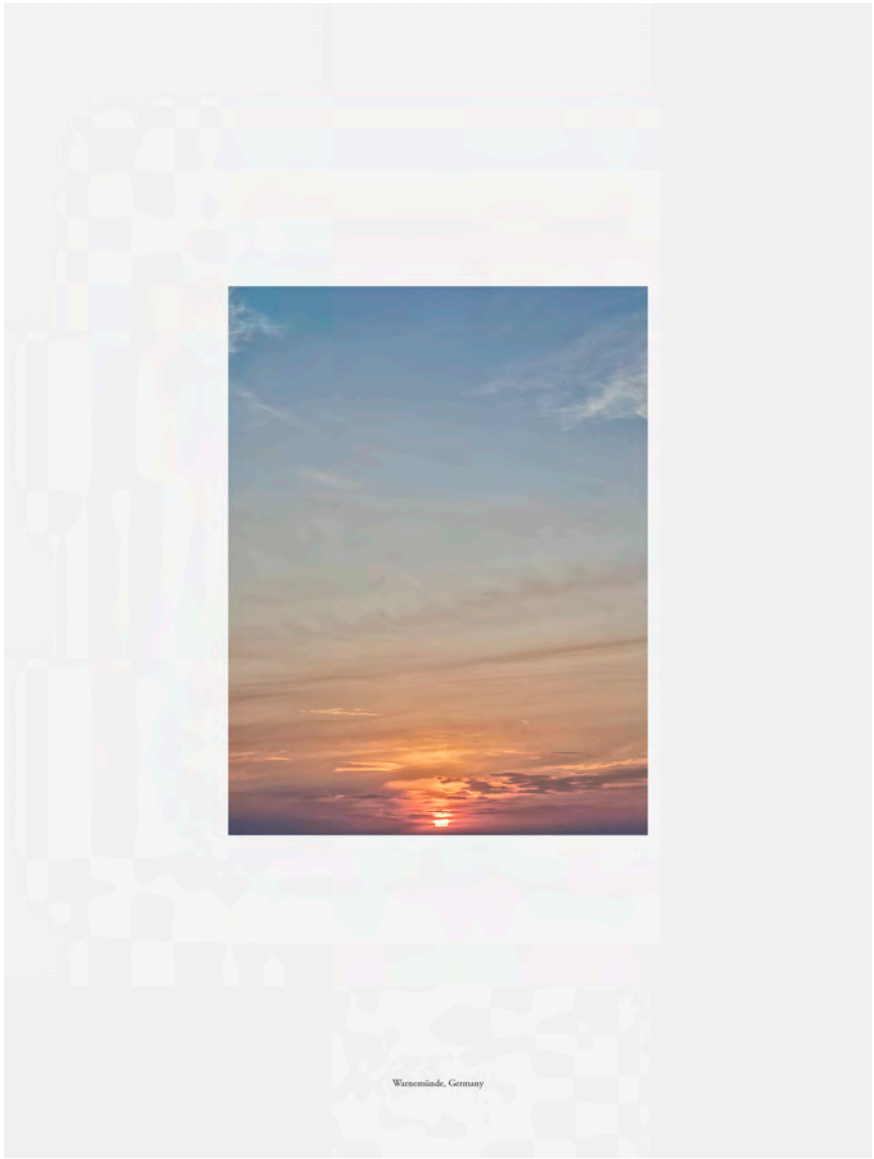
The Overview Effect (Madrid, Spain), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm



The Overview Effect (Venice, Italy), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm



The Overview Effect (Dungeness, england, Austria), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm



The Overview Effect (Warnemünde, Germany), 2026, Pigment print, 40 x 30 cm

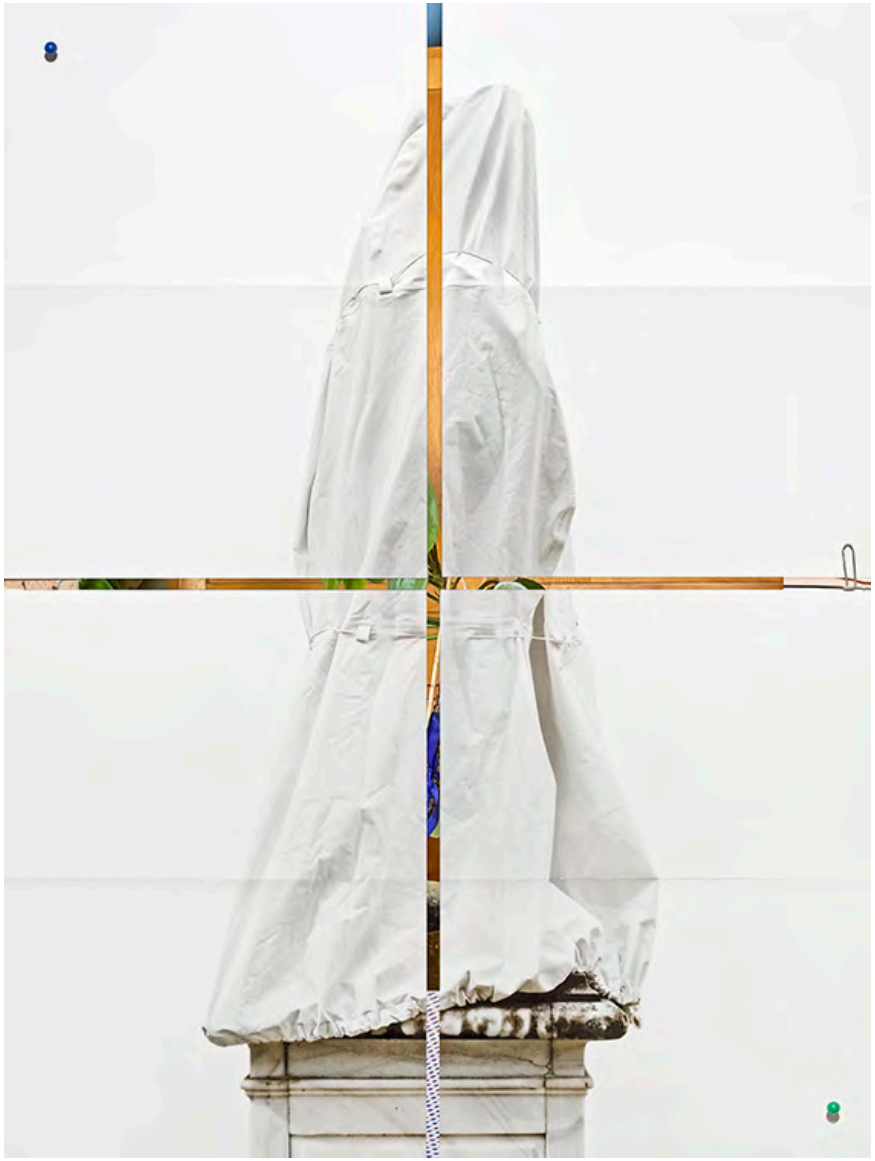
The Overview Effect (in reverse), 2026, Photo London, with Persons Projects

THE JOY PREVAILS | FAREWELL TRANSMISSION

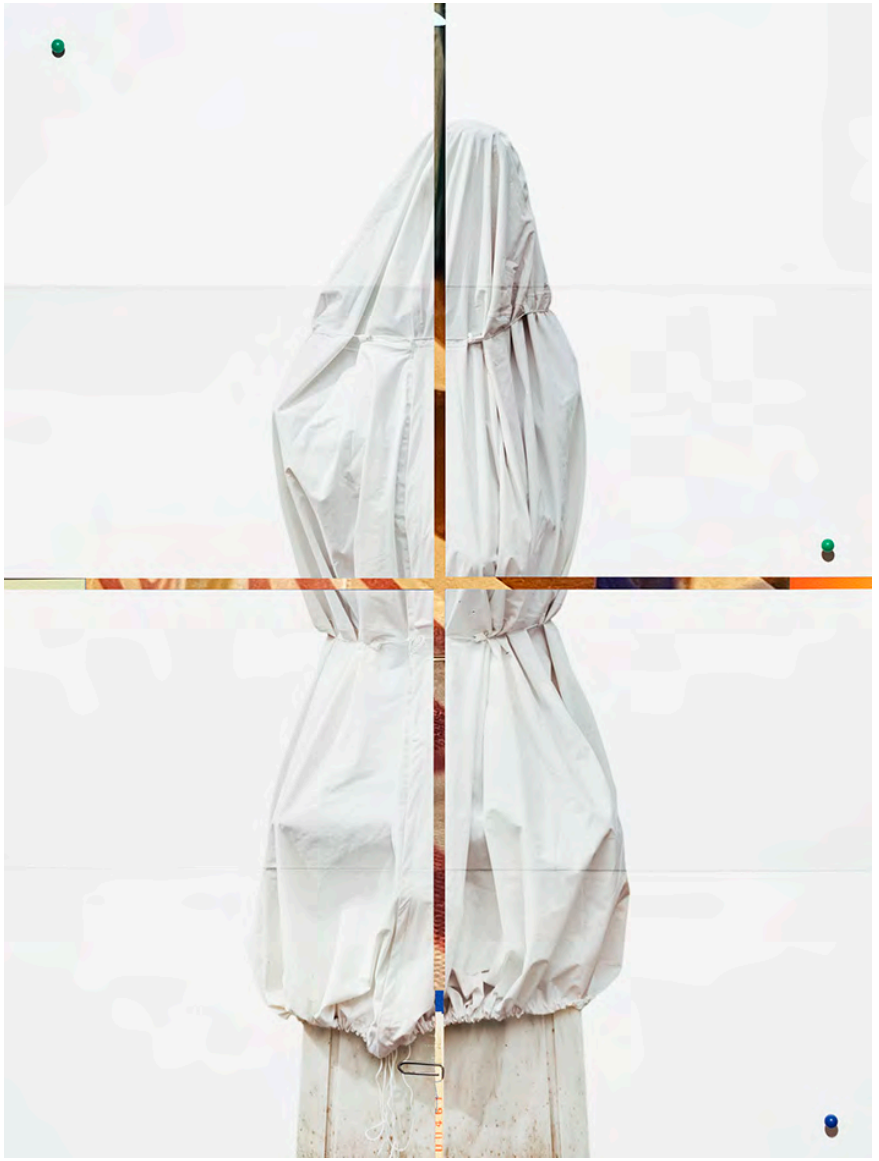
In Rikala's *The Joy Prevails* series and *Farewell Transmission* works, he draws parallels between natural phenomena and changes occurring within cultural structures. In *The Joy Prevails*, the morning and evening skies are placed side by side in the images. A polished brass strip running vertically through the image surface reflects fleeting glimpses of the constantly changing present moment between morning and evening.

In *Farewell Transmission*, he photographs covered Baroque statues in the gardens of the La Granja de San Ildefonso palace in Spain, a site dating back to the Baroque period. Through the aesthetics of the Baroque, the works explore the transformation and disappearance of stylistic movements, presenting the present moment through the lens of a historical era.

Farewell Transmission, 2025, Paris Photo, with Persons Projects

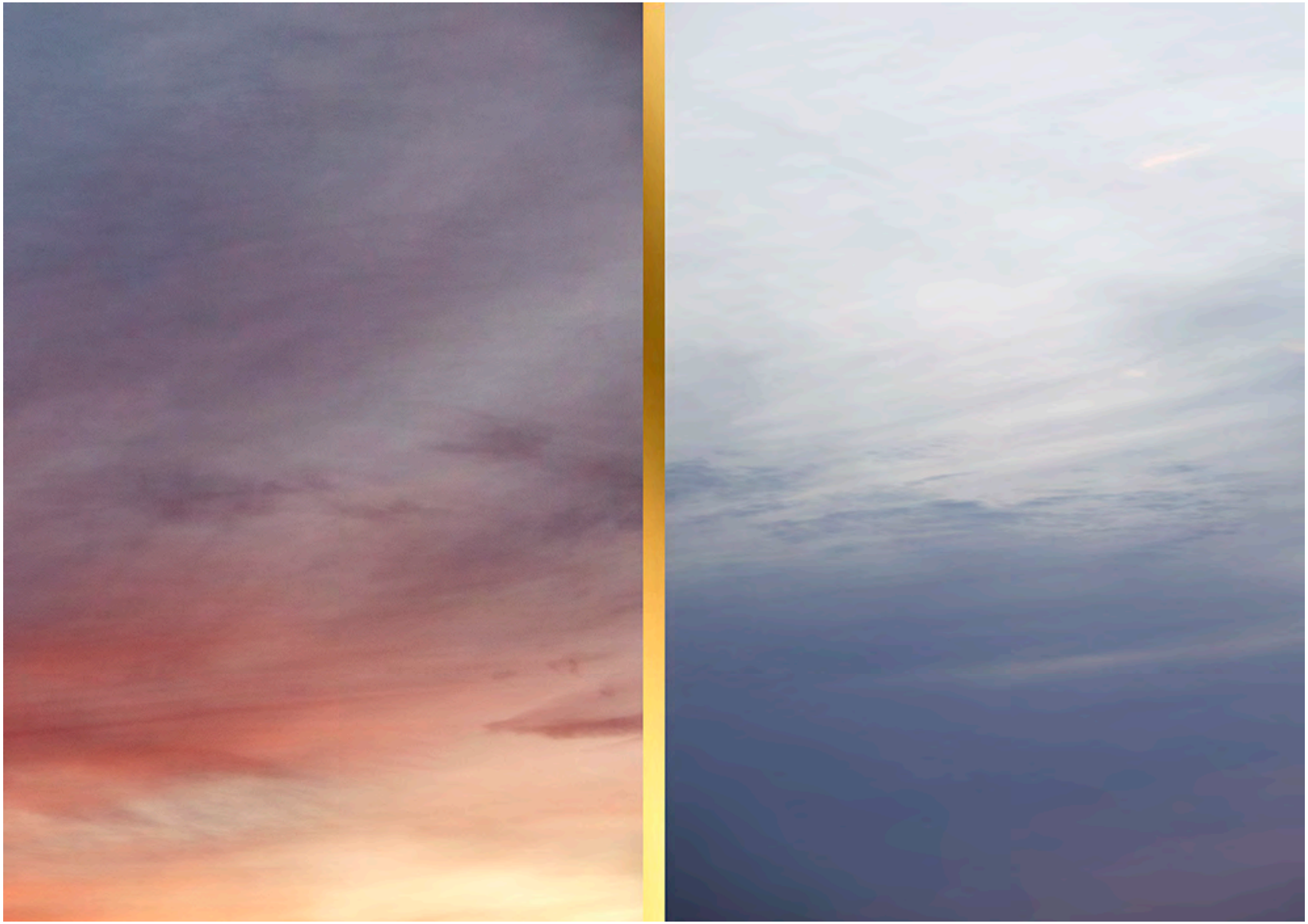


Farewell Transmission (3), 2025, Pigment print, mirror, 75 x 58 cm



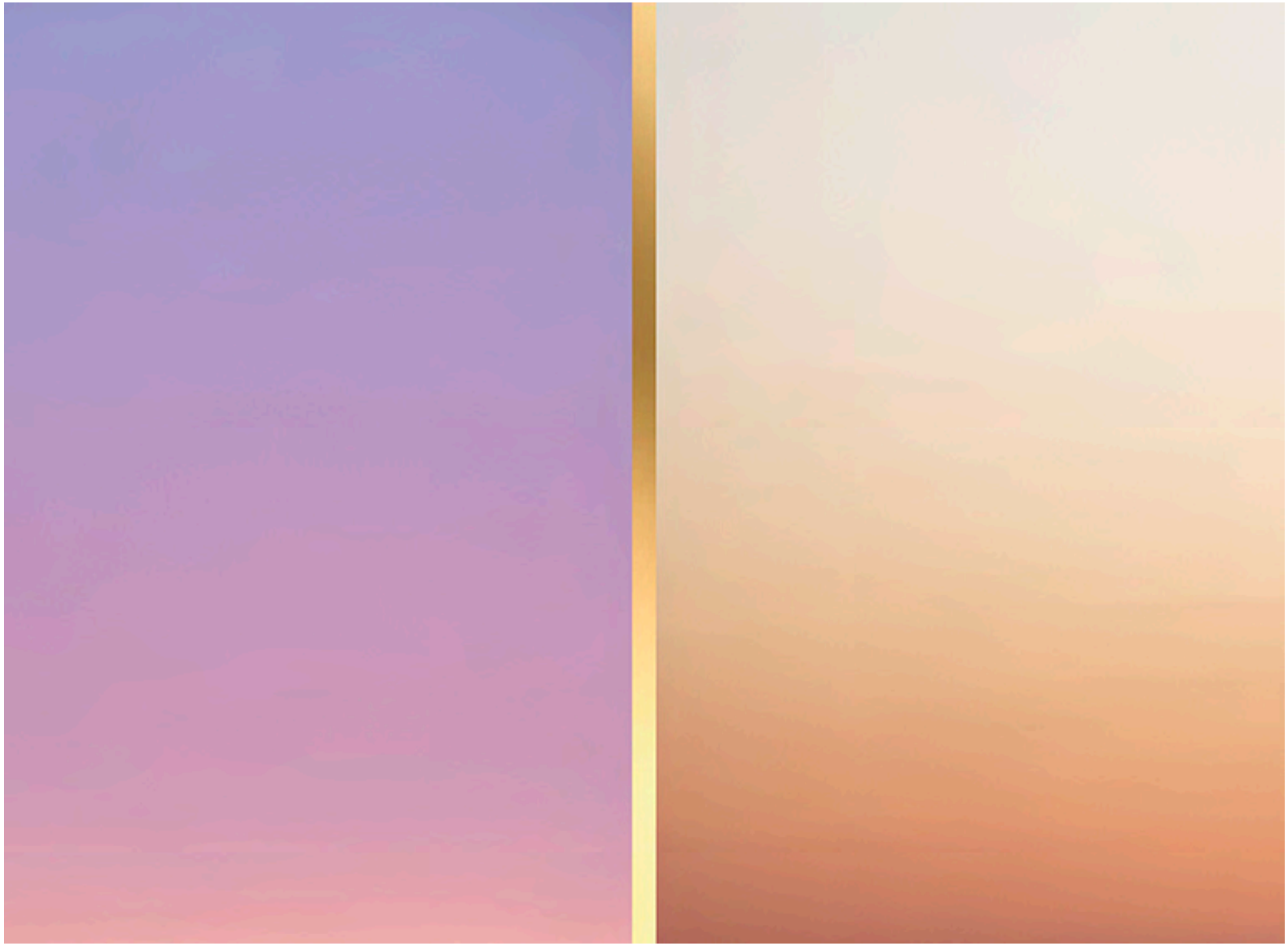
Farewell Transmission (4), 2025, Pigment print, mirror, 75 x 58 cm

Farewell Transmission; The Joy Prevails; 2025, The Phair, with Persons Projects, Torino

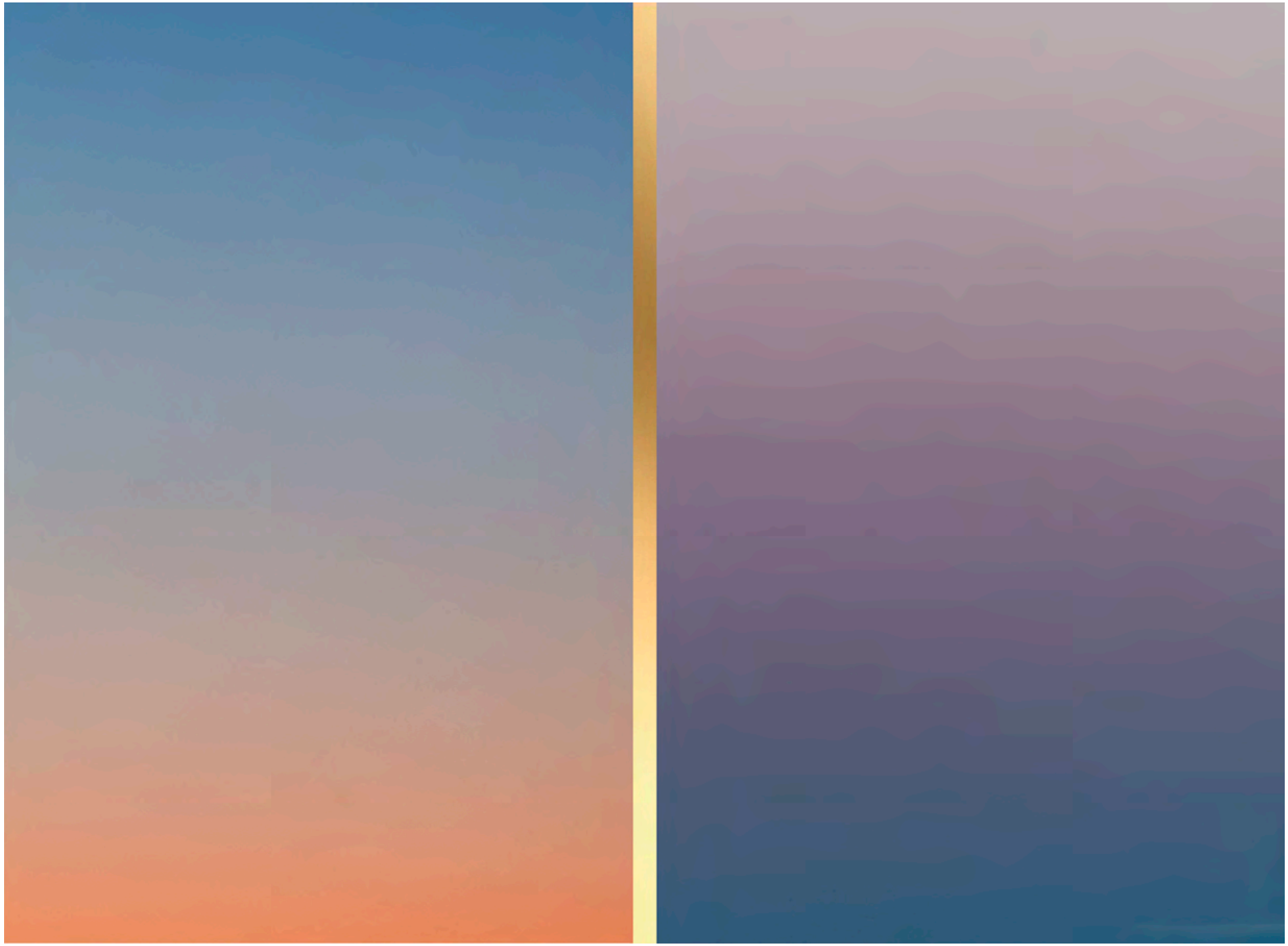


The Joy Prevails (4), 2025, Pigment print, brass, 75 x 103,5 cm

So Little Changed, So Little Remained, 2024, Persons Projects, Berlin



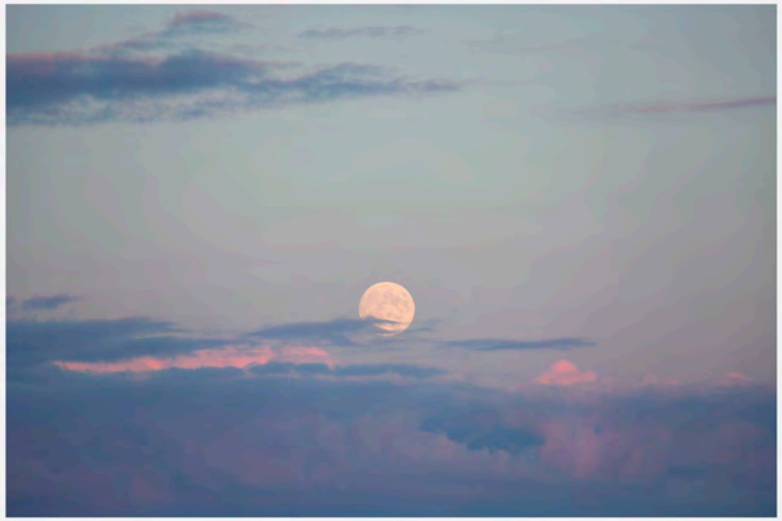
The Joy Prevails (1), 2024, Pigment print, brass, 75 x 103,5 cm



The Joy Prevails (2), 2024, Pigment print, brass, 75 x 103,5 cm

WORKS

Rikala draws upon his Nordic sensibility, employing minimal aesthetics to explore the essence of German Romanticism. His works *Quotidian sublime (heartbeat/ waves)* and *Quotidian sublime (thunder/ wind)* embody the paradox of finding the sublime in the mundane, inviting the viewer to reflect on how deeper meanings can emerge from the ordinary through focused observation. In an ongoing project with works titled *Silence*, he records his presence in various natural locations, concentrating for one hour at a time on the silence and subtle environmental sounds around him. This deep listening and attentive presence, a concept also central to the works *The Joy Prevails*, create a heightened sense of visual consciousness, allowing the passage of time and the simple act of being alive to take on new significance. By incorporating both natural and human-made elements into his work, Rikala encourages contemplation of the intricate interconnectedness of existence. His multisensory works invite viewers to engage with their own memories and personal histories, blurring the boundaries between past and present, self and surroundings, and revealing the complex tapestry of human experience.



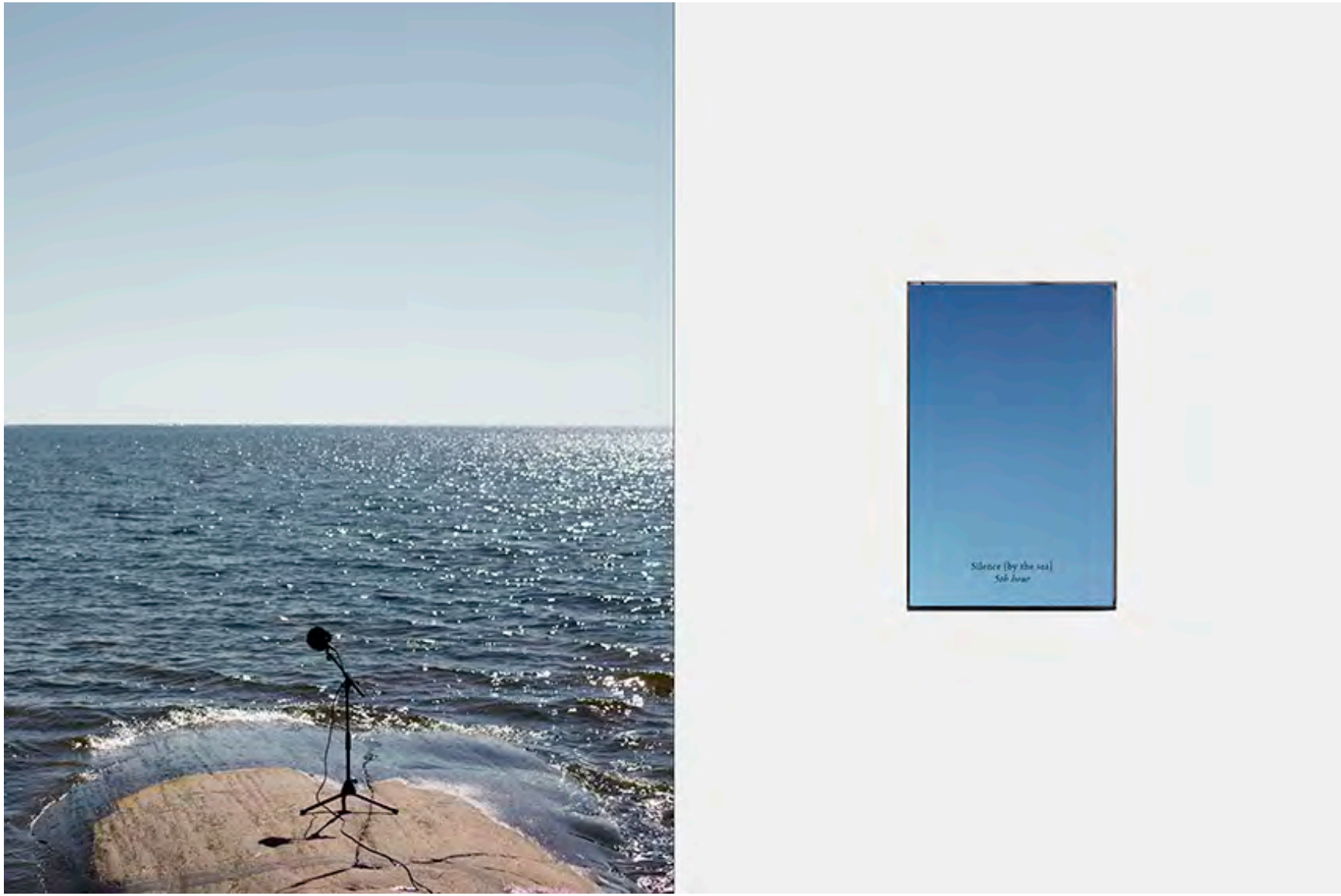
Watching all Night to the Full Moon (over Lake Päijänne), 2024, Pigment print, 27 x 20 cm

Quotidian sublime (heartbeat / waves), 2024, Pigment print, 24 x 30 cm, each, diptych

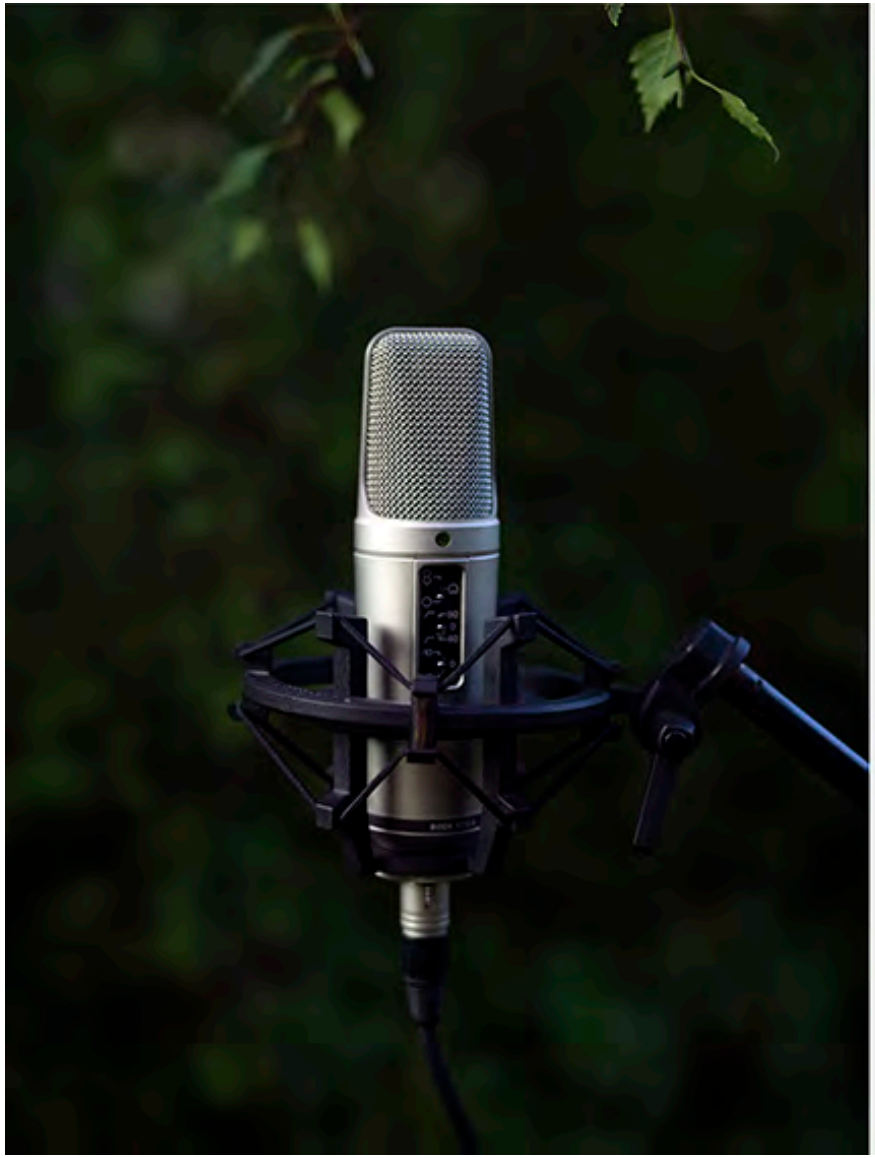
SILENCE

Mikko Rikkala's *Silence* series explores the concept of presence, time, and perception through his own meditative acts. In this ongoing project, the artist spends one hour in various natural locations, focusing intently on the silence he experiences while recording the subtle sounds that's being emitted in the surrounding environment. Each piece becomes a trace of that lived moment. The photograph captures a visual fragment of the place, while the cassette holds an auditory record, sealed together in a plexiglass box, functioning as a "closed memory" of the experience.

So Little Changed, So Little Remained, 2024, Persons Projects, Berlin



Silence (5th hour), 2024, Pigment print, C60 ferric oxide type one cassette, 29 x 43,5 x 1 cm



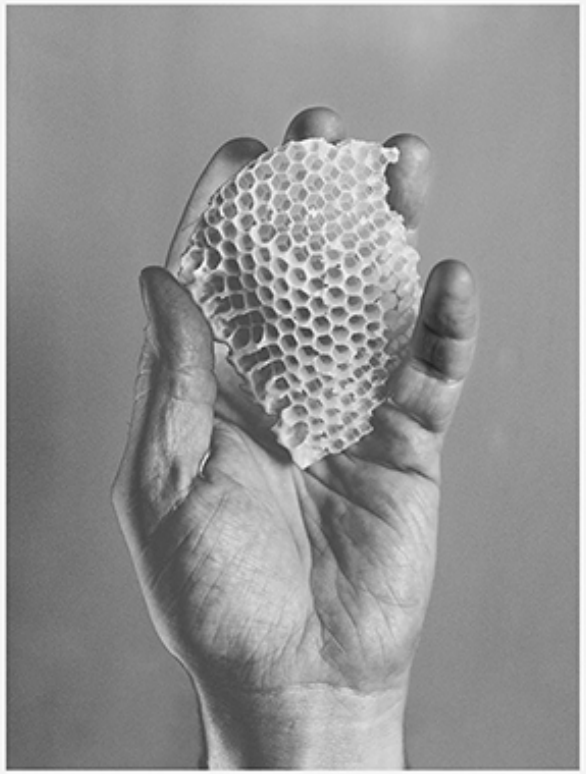
Silence (4th hour), 2024, Pigment print, C60 ferric oxide type one cassette, 29 x 43,5 cm

Silence (9th hour), 2025, Pigment print, C60 ferric oxide type one cassette, 29 x 43,5 x 8 cm

Silence (7th hour), 2025, Pigment print, C60 ferric oxide type one cassette, 29 x 43,5 x 8 cm

ECHOES

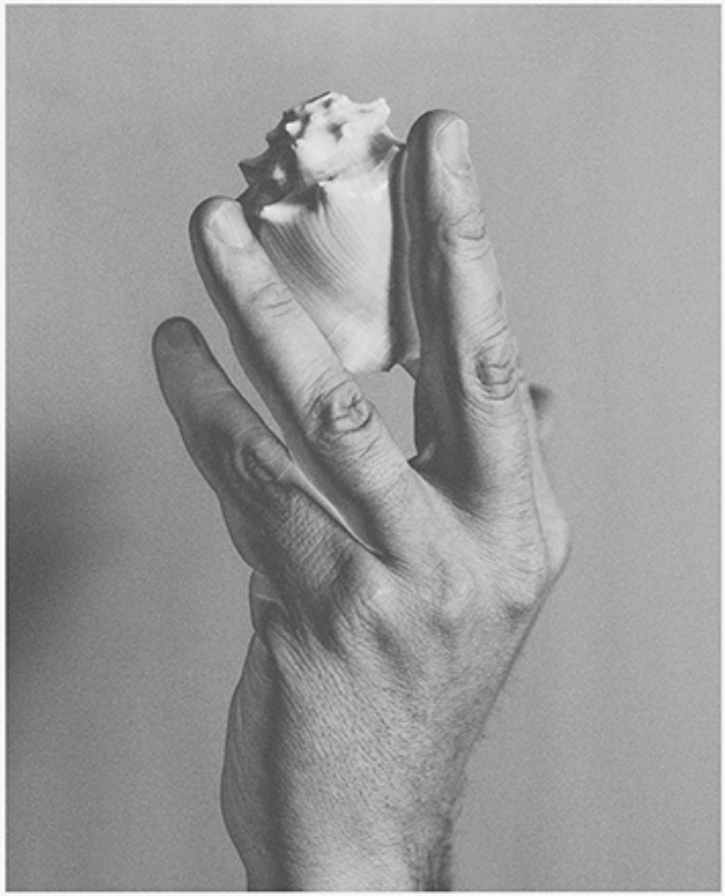
Throughout Mikko Rikala's career, he has focused on different conceptual ways of visualizing the passage of time. Wind, tides, seasons and many other various means found in nature find their story in his creative language. In Rikala's most current series he utilizes collected objects both natural and man-made from his childhood that carry a memory for him. The photographs depicting his hands touching this assortment of objects are symbolic for the act of releasing the memories imbedded in their history. They all play a part in Rikala's relationship with his approach to humanity and the natural order within the world we coexist with. "I have been collecting small items from both the natural and man-made worlds since I was a child. Each of these objects has a story behind them. By touching and looking at these objects, I am activating my memory. Similar to how seashells and coins are part of a greater natural system, my memories are intertwined with a collective memory that shapes and sustains our humanity," explains the artist.



Self-portrait with Honeycomb (Hexagon), 2023, Pigment print, 37,4 x 28,4 cm

Self-portrait with a Coin (France), 2023, Pigment print, 37,4 x 28,4 cm

So Little Changed, So Little Remained, 2024, Persons Projects, Berlin

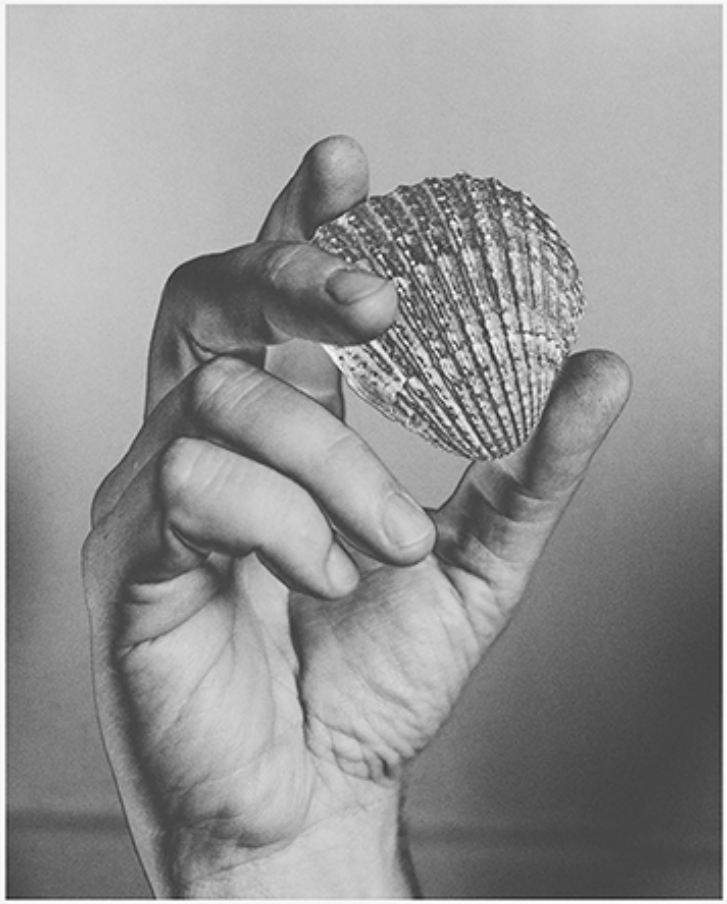


Self-portrait with a Seashell (Atlantic Ocean), 2023, Pigment print, 120 x 95 cm

Self-portrait with a Parasol (Honolulu Winter), 2023, Pigment print, 120 x 95 cm

So Little Changed, So Little Remained, 2024, Persons Projects, Berlin

All Shine On, 2023, Pigment print, 37,4 x 28,4 cm



Self-portrait with a seashell (Aegean Sea), 2023, Pigment print, 120 x 95 cm

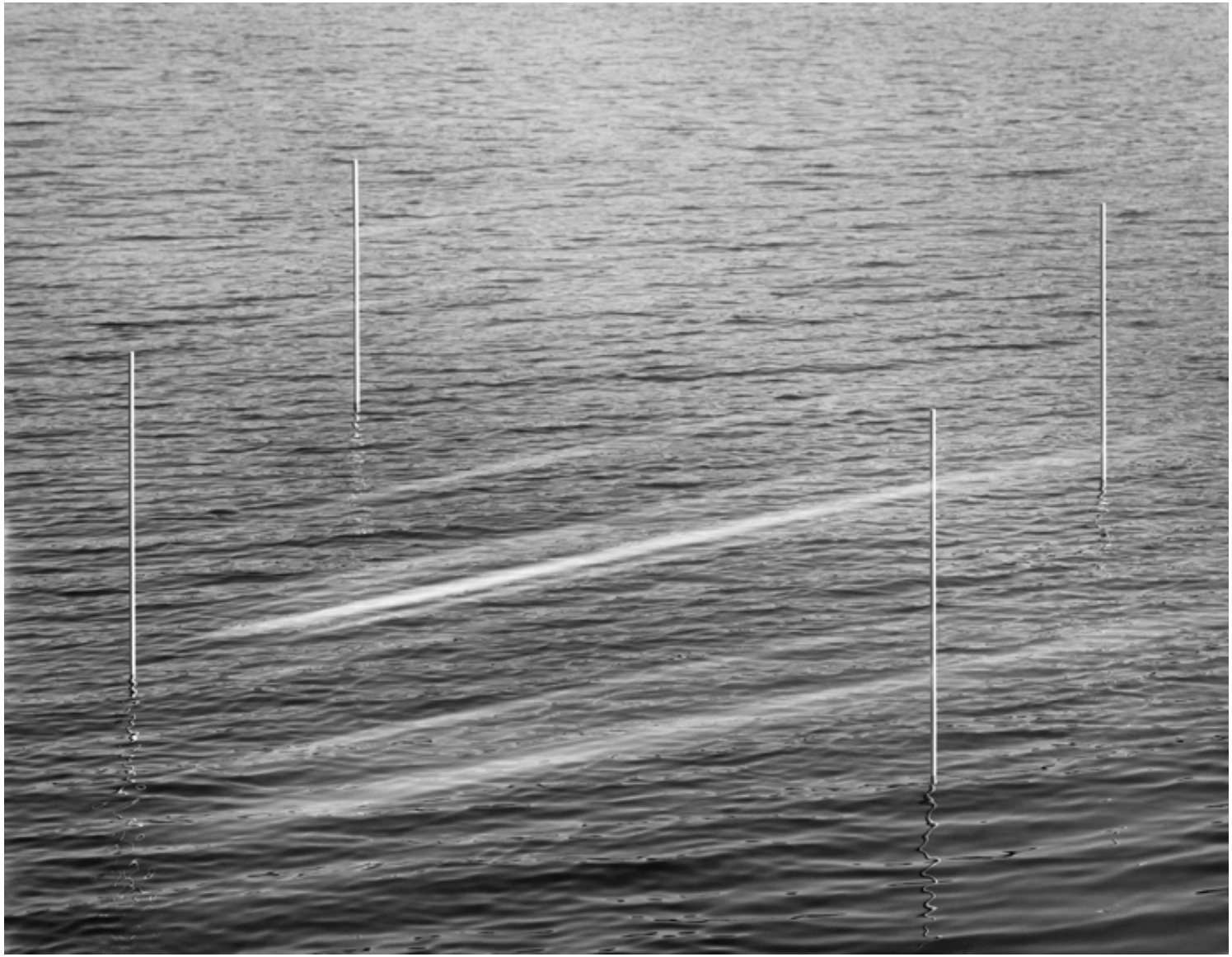
Why not?, 2020, Weserburg Museum für Moderne Kunst, Bremen

Hope 1, 2023, Pigment print, 37,4 x 28,4 cm

Crescent Moon, 2023, Pigment print, 37,4 x 28,4 cm

FRANCESCA WOODMAN

In the series Francesca Woodman, Mikko Rikala draws his inspiration from the drawings by José Antonio Suárez Londoño on the late American photographer and her early photographs, which functioned as Rikala's point of departure. He concentrated on the theme of Londoño's visual translations that transformed the late photographer's images into his own graphite language. Rikala then joins in on this mutual imaginary conversation with his own artistic filters to form his own conceptual dialogue with the deceased Ms. Woodman. By allowing himself to freely explore the idea of photographic language without its historical burden of indexicality, Rikala creates images based on looking and association. Mikko Rikala uses the photographic process as a tool for gathering and recording material to help him in his philosophical pursuit of finding different ways to explore what's behind the rational self. Rikala states, "I'm trying to uncover the relationship between what is seen as rational on the one hand and what is perceived as irrational on the other." His work is a reflection that merges mystical and philosophical thoughts through the empirical process of observation.



A Room at the Verge of an Unknown, 2017, Pigment print, framed, 94 x 119 cm

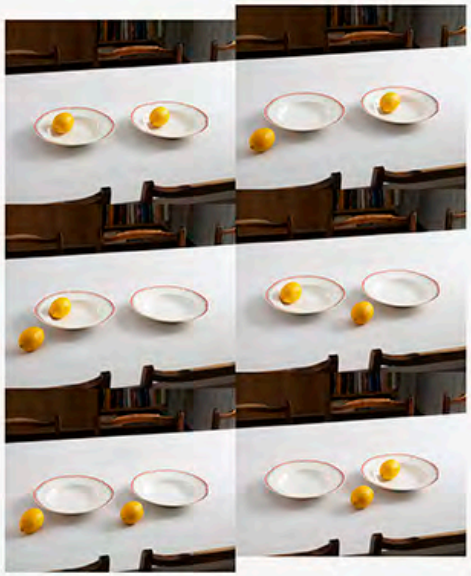
Approaching the Sky, 2017, Pigment print, self-made stamp, pencil, framed, 43,5 x 33,5 cm

Disappearing Through Repetition, 2017, Inkjet print, framed, 43,5 x 33,5 cm

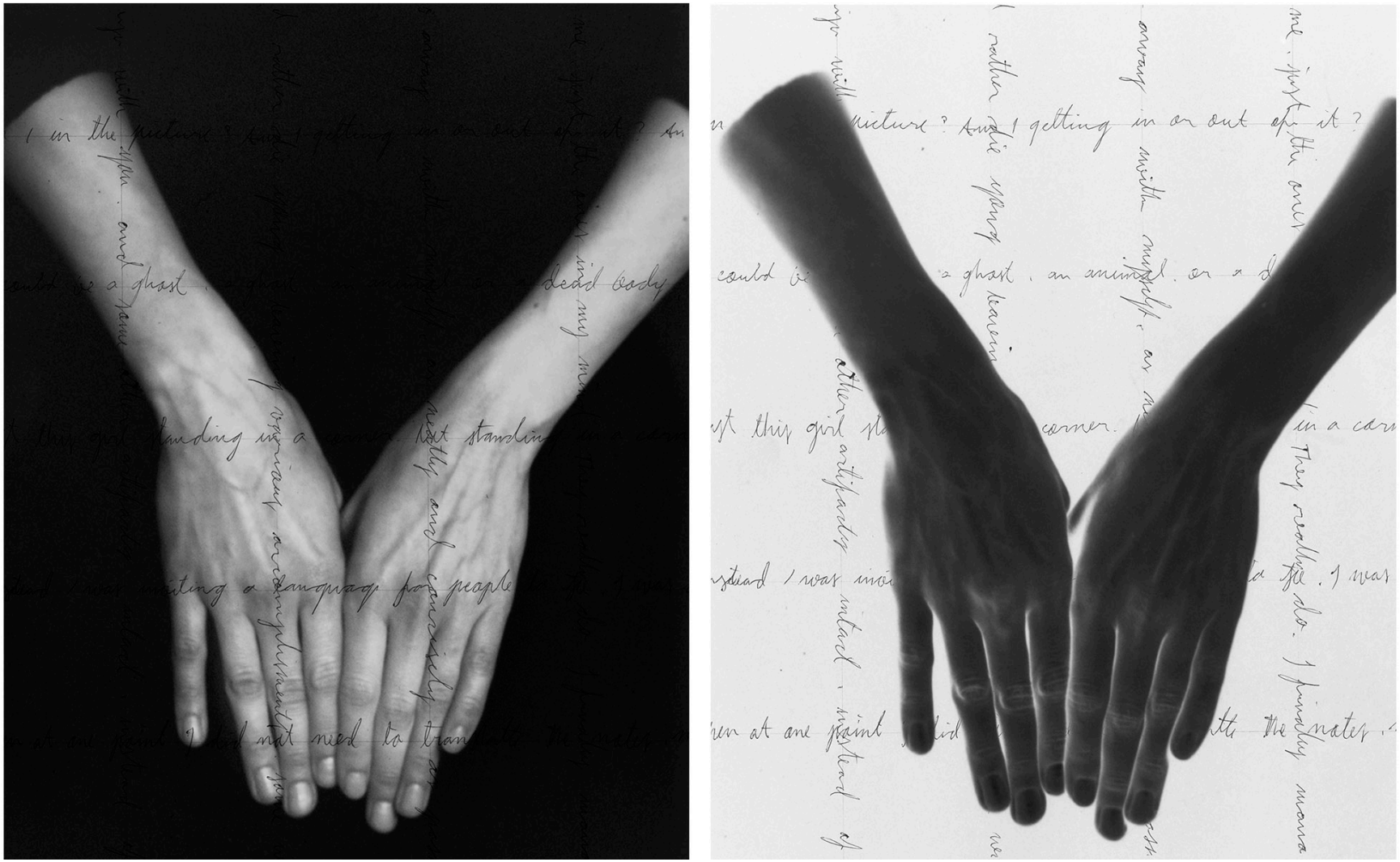
Note on Visibility (reflection), 2017, Pigment print, framed, 43,5 x 33,5 cm

Juuso Noronkoski and Mikko Rikala: Overlaping Instants, 2018, Gallery Sinne, Helsinki

The Why of the Visibility, 2017, Digital C-print on glass, shelf, 40 x 30 cm



Study of Variation (Lemons), 2023, Pigment print, 90 x 68 cm



Reveal / Conceal, 2017, C-print on glass, pigment print, framed, diptych, 30 x 24 cm, each, diptych

Dear Francesca,

It´s been stormy as it often is during the month of October. The other night I went for a walk to collect branches brought down by the storm. The storm was called Ofelia. Today the sun has been red. Storm winds carried sand and dust from the Sahara and Portugal all the way to here up north. Storms have the tendency to transform the world we see.

Being an angel is bringing the unexpected to the ordinary. And it is to fly too, or merely to float with the winds. Would you call grains of sand angels, colouring the sun all shades of red?

Yours,
Mikko

Several Stormy Days, 2017, Pigment print, framed, 33 x 43,5 cm

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