

KOKORO

Brooks Jensen Arts ~ August 2021, Vol 7, No 1





Perhaps Lafcadio Hearn will not protest too much if I paraphrase (almost word for word) from *Kokoro*, his 1895 book of Japanese life. He explains this important Japanese term far better than I ever could:

The entries comprising this volume treat of the inner rather than the outer life, — for which reason they have been grouped under the title *Kokoro* (heart). Written with the above character, this word signifies also *mind*, in the emotional sense; *spirit*; *courage*; *resolve*; *sentiment*; *affection*; and *inner meaning*, — just as we say in English, 'the heart of things.'

#146

Contour: The Wheat of Least Resistance

An aerial photograph of a vast, dry, brown landscape. The terrain is characterized by numerous wavy, parallel ridges and valleys, creating a rhythmic, undulating pattern. A prominent, dark, winding path or stream cuts through the field, following the contours of the land. The overall scene is one of a rugged, agricultural landscape.

Contour

The Wheat of Least Resistance

Brooks Jensen





















#147

The Gods Are Pissed at Us

The Gods Are Pissed at Us

Brooks Jensen



We live in the age of Science. We understand weather.
That does not mean, however, that The Gods
can't still be angry.

Perhaps we should sacrifice a goat
or something.





























#148

More Dreams of Japan



More Dreams of Japan

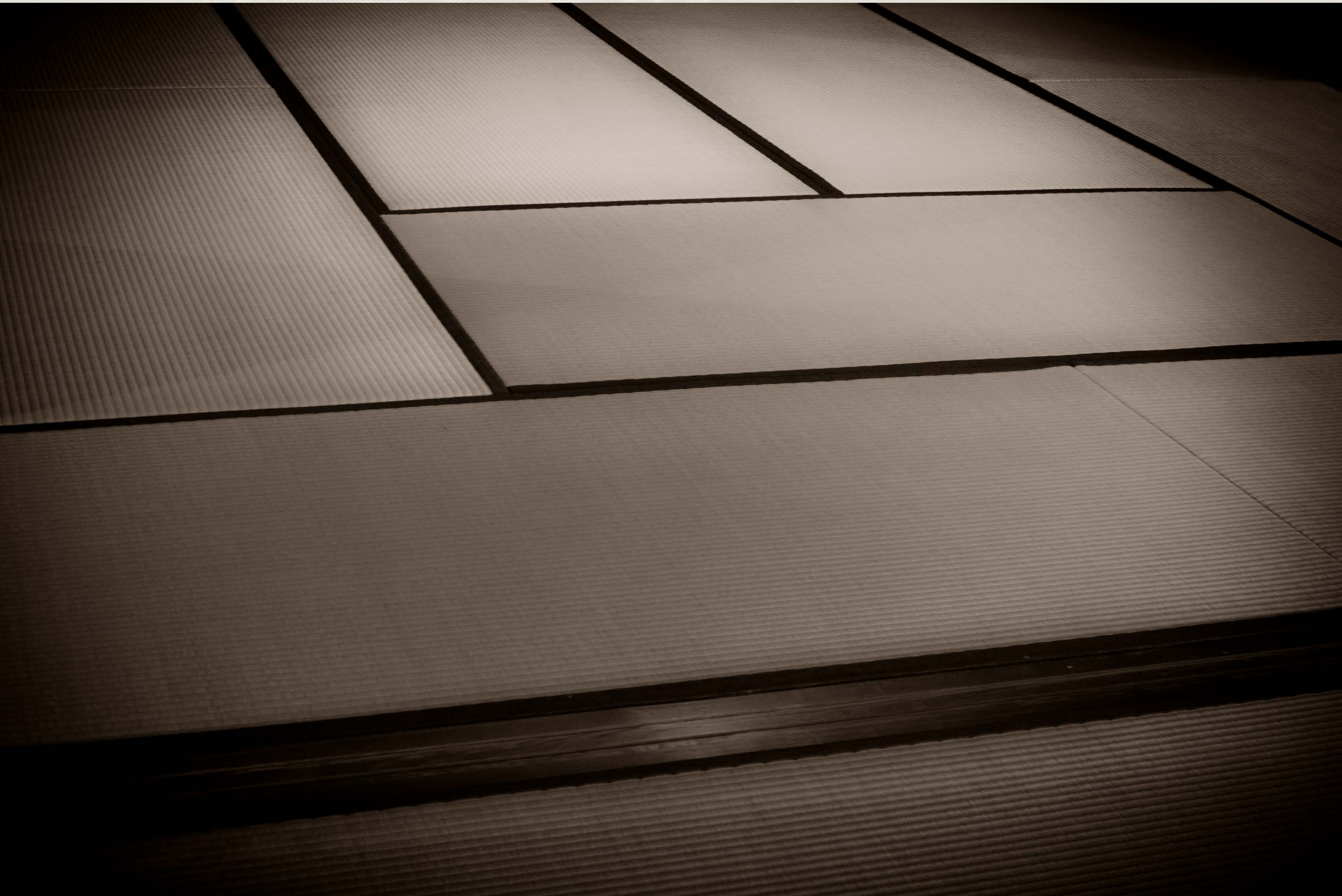
Brooks Jensen

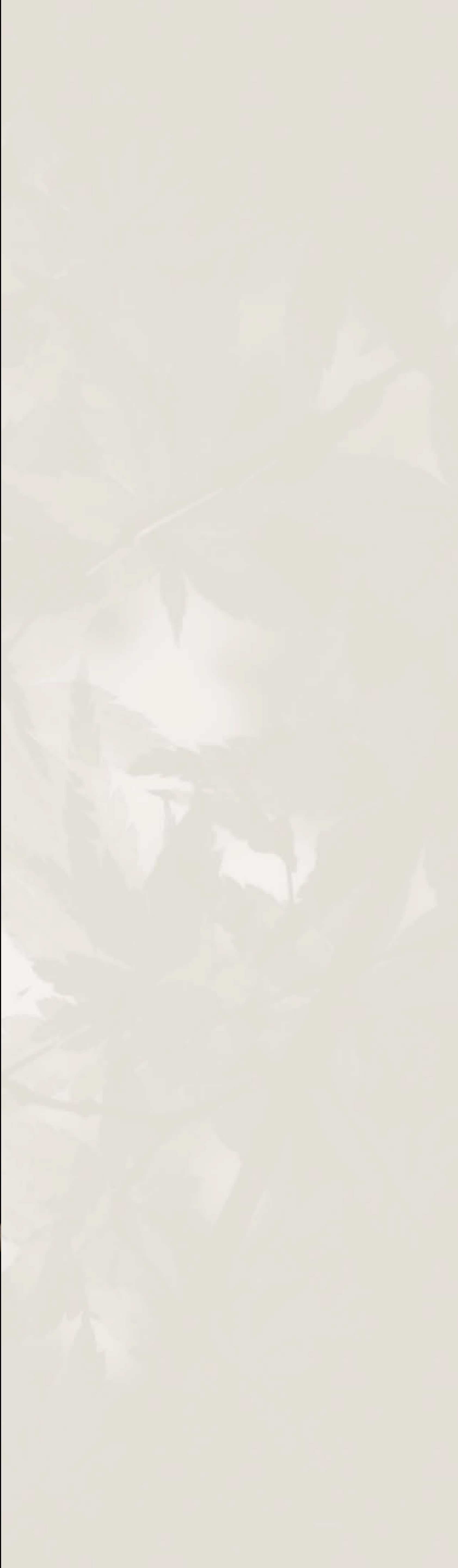
In the selection process of images to be included in my 2021 monograph, *Dreams of Japan*, there were difficult decisions required. We had room for only 71 photographs in the book. I have over 20,000 photographs from my travels in Japan. Here are a few of the ones that pained me the most to leave out of the book. Thankfully, I can share them here.











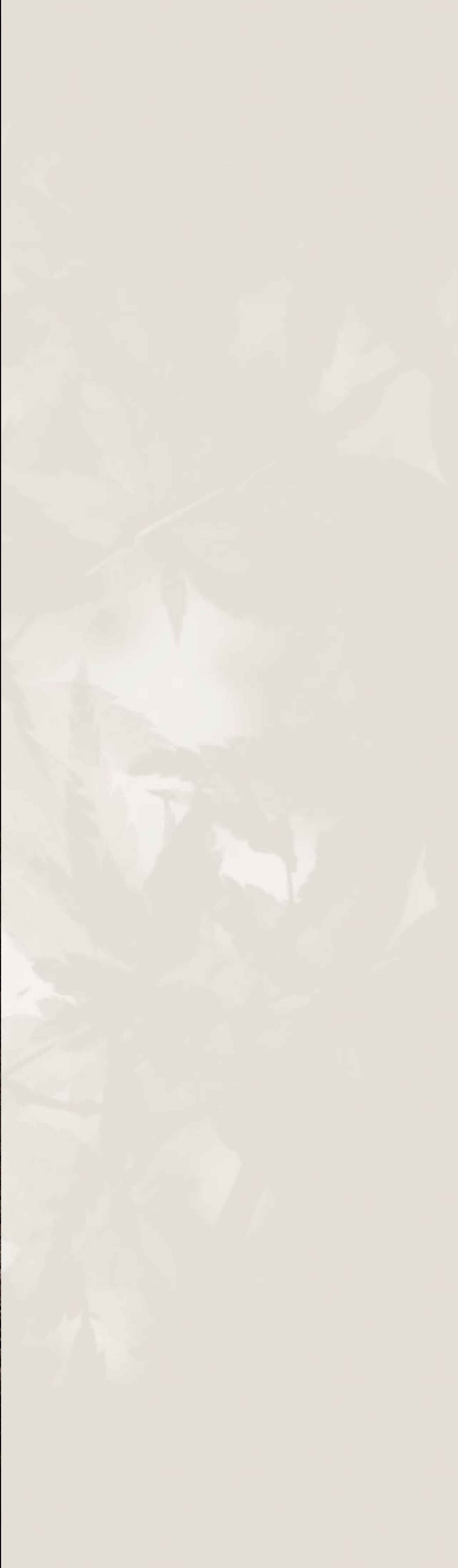








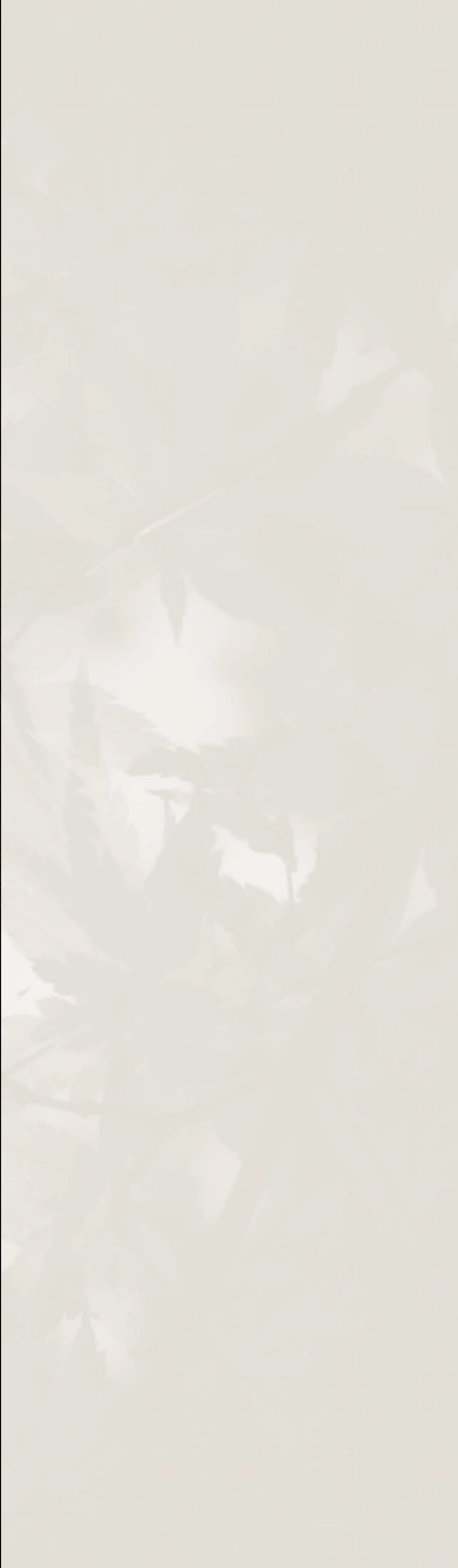


















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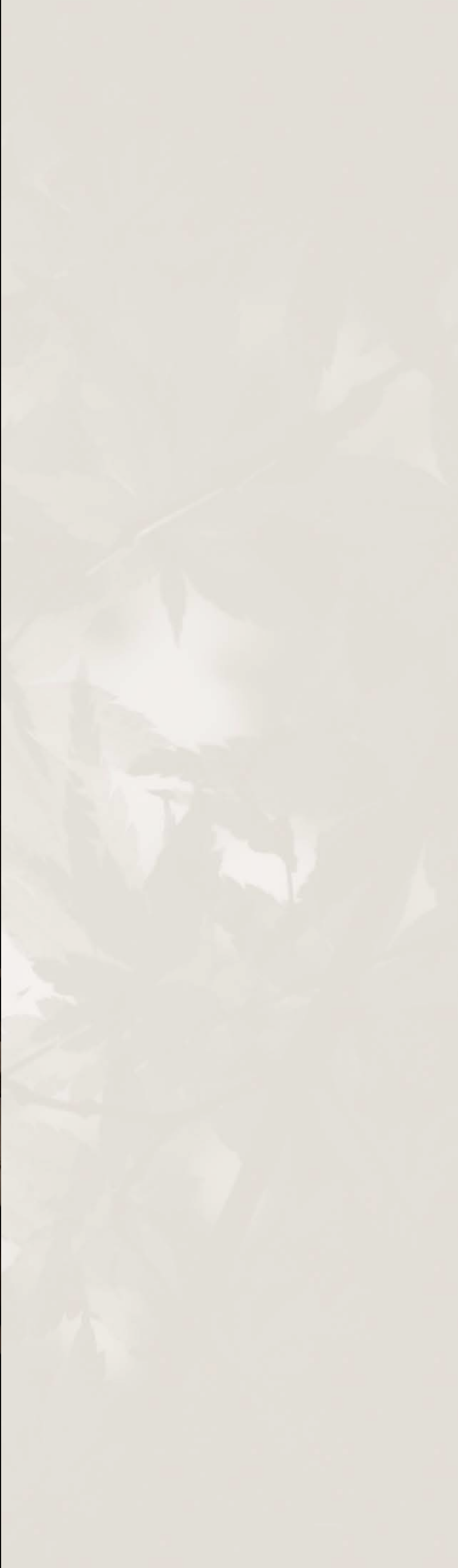




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清光院豊空妙隆大姉 彼岸水向

木村正恒

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尚徳院叡岳隆道居士
先祖

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彼岸水向

引為

淨操院暢空
洋原

木村和子

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洋童

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女子

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#149

The Former Lake Abert

The Former Lake Abert

Brooks Jensen







I've photographed Lake Abert for four decades. It's aqua waters and extensive wildlife have drawn me year after year. This year it is a salt bed.

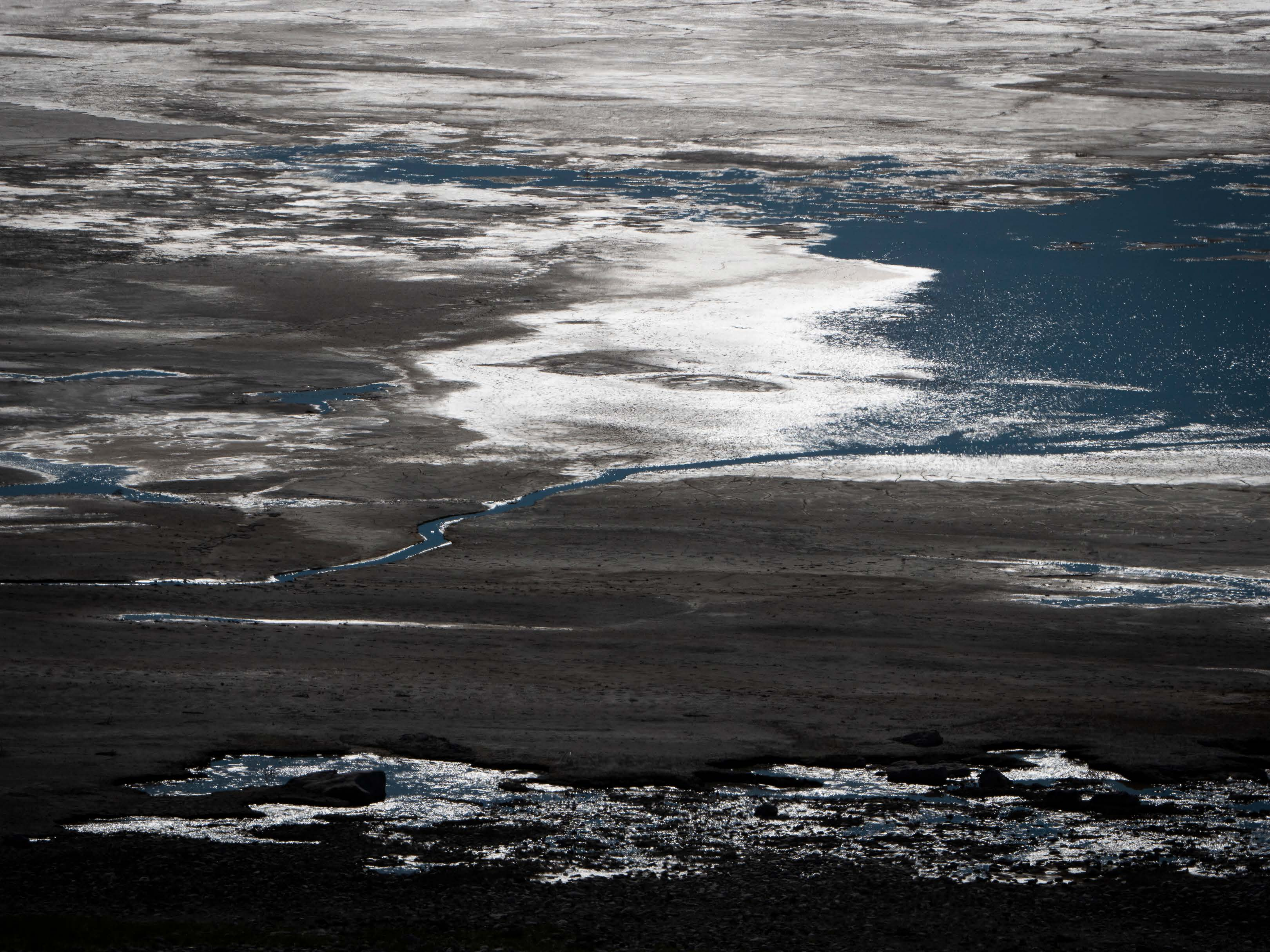














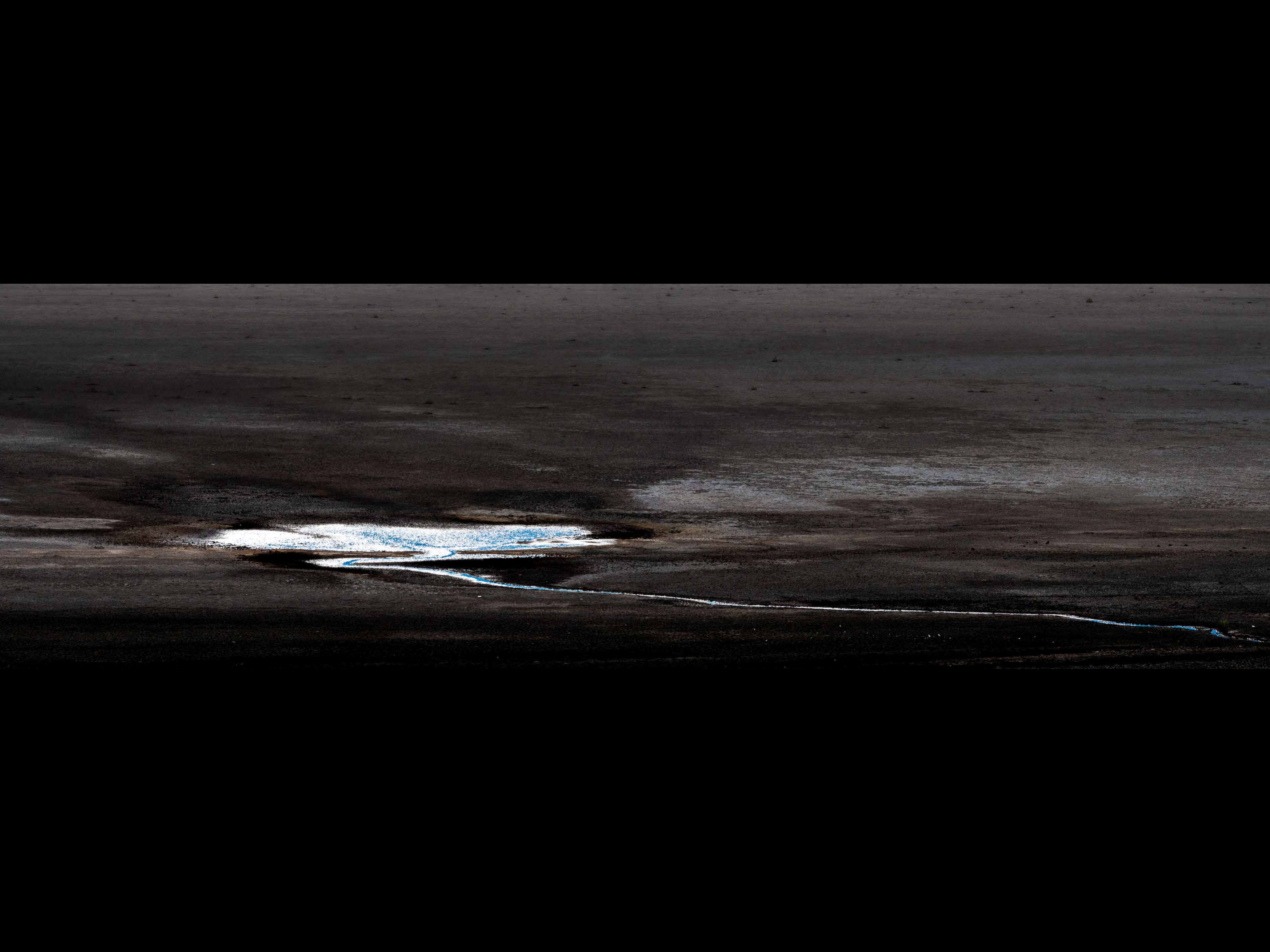














Nature mystifies.

Is this global warming?

A natural rhythm that will return the water, eventually?

An occurrence that has happened before?

Unknown.

Life is change. Life has always been change. *That*, we cannot change.

#150

Remembering Oliver

The Creative Eye

Remembering Oliver

The Creative Eye

Brooks Jensen





Late in his life, I met Oliver Gagliani. We became friends. He's been gone now almost 20 years, but I think of him often and am thankful for all he shared with me about the creative life and the eye of a photographer/artist.



At a Yosemite workshop he was teaching with Ansel Adams, he didn't photograph the majestic rocks and waterfalls. He was drawn to the tents where the bears had clawed them open, and the patches where the park rangers had repaired them. This image is one of his.

I carry this image in my mental gallery with me always. So how could I not think of Oliver when I saw this . . .



Do you know those big, white bundles of hay, wrapped in plastic out in the hay fields? Maureen used to call them “giant marshmallows.” I came across a stack of them next to the road and they called to me. Like the tent patches called to Oliver. We are powerless to resist. The Creative Eye. And if we are lucky, we make something someone will remember.

















Thank you, Oliver.



#151

Views from the Surface of Venus

Views from the Surface of Venus

Brooks Jensen



At long last, we've landed a craft on the surface of Venus.

And a strange world it is. Average surface temperature of 864° Fahrenheit. The atmosphere is mostly carbon dioxide, with an atmospheric pressure about 92 times that of the Earth. Gravity slightly less than Earth. Surface illumination about 3% of the sunlight striking the uppermost clouds.

Rocks exhibit intense radioactivity. Strange oceans of carbon dioxide fluid once covered the surface. Some fossilized evidence of life. Inhospitable to humans. Current inhabitants, unknown.









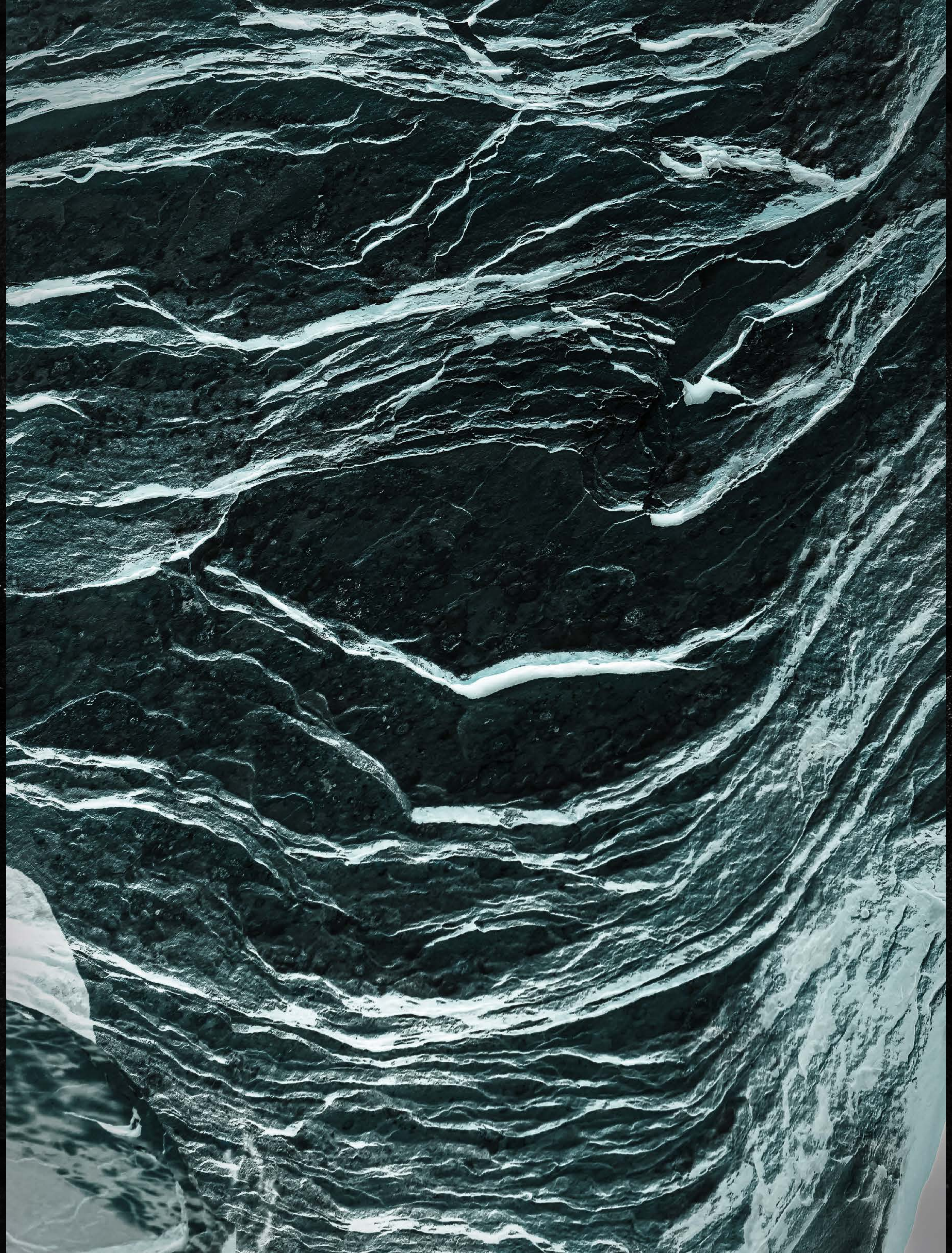






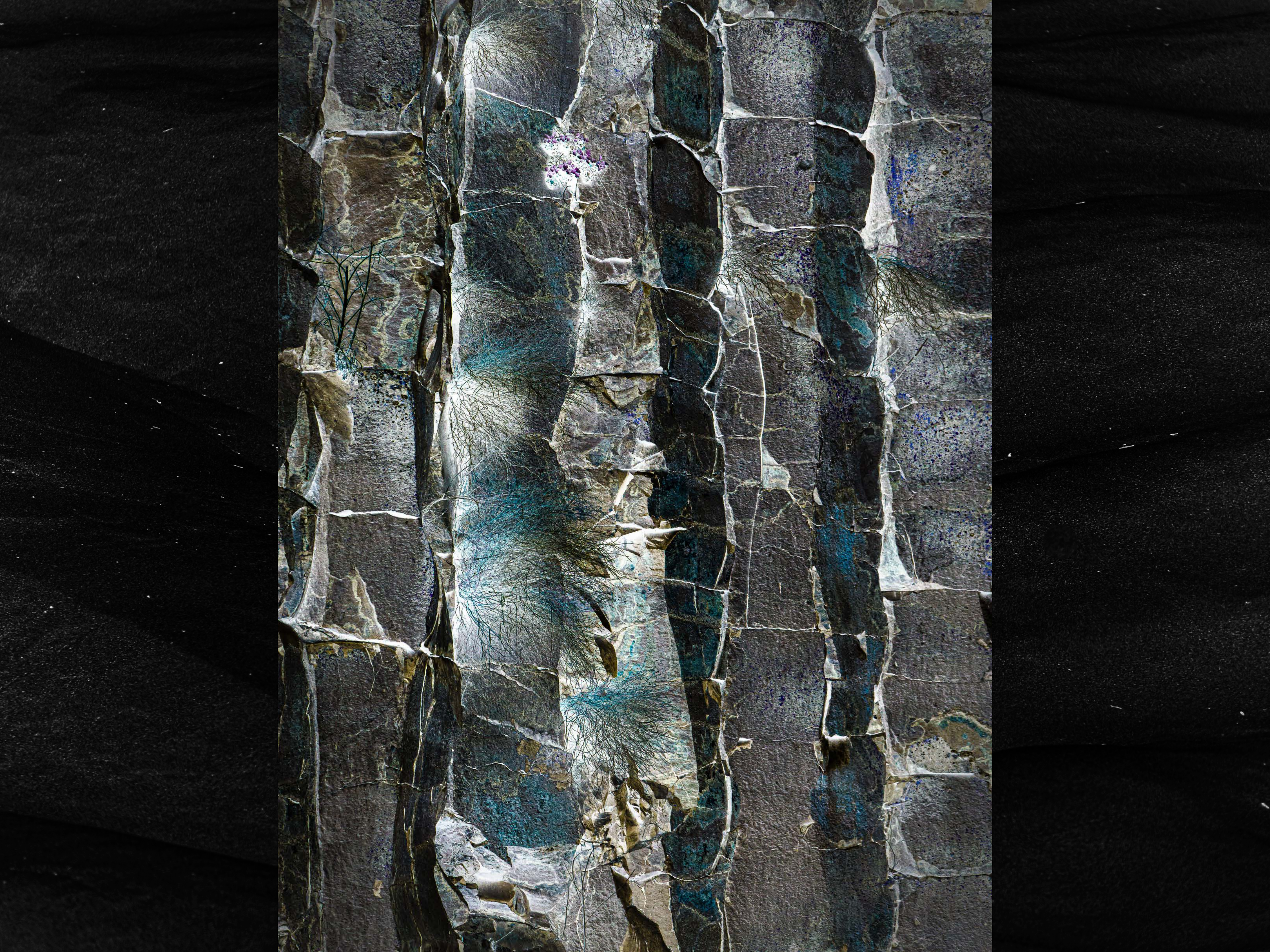






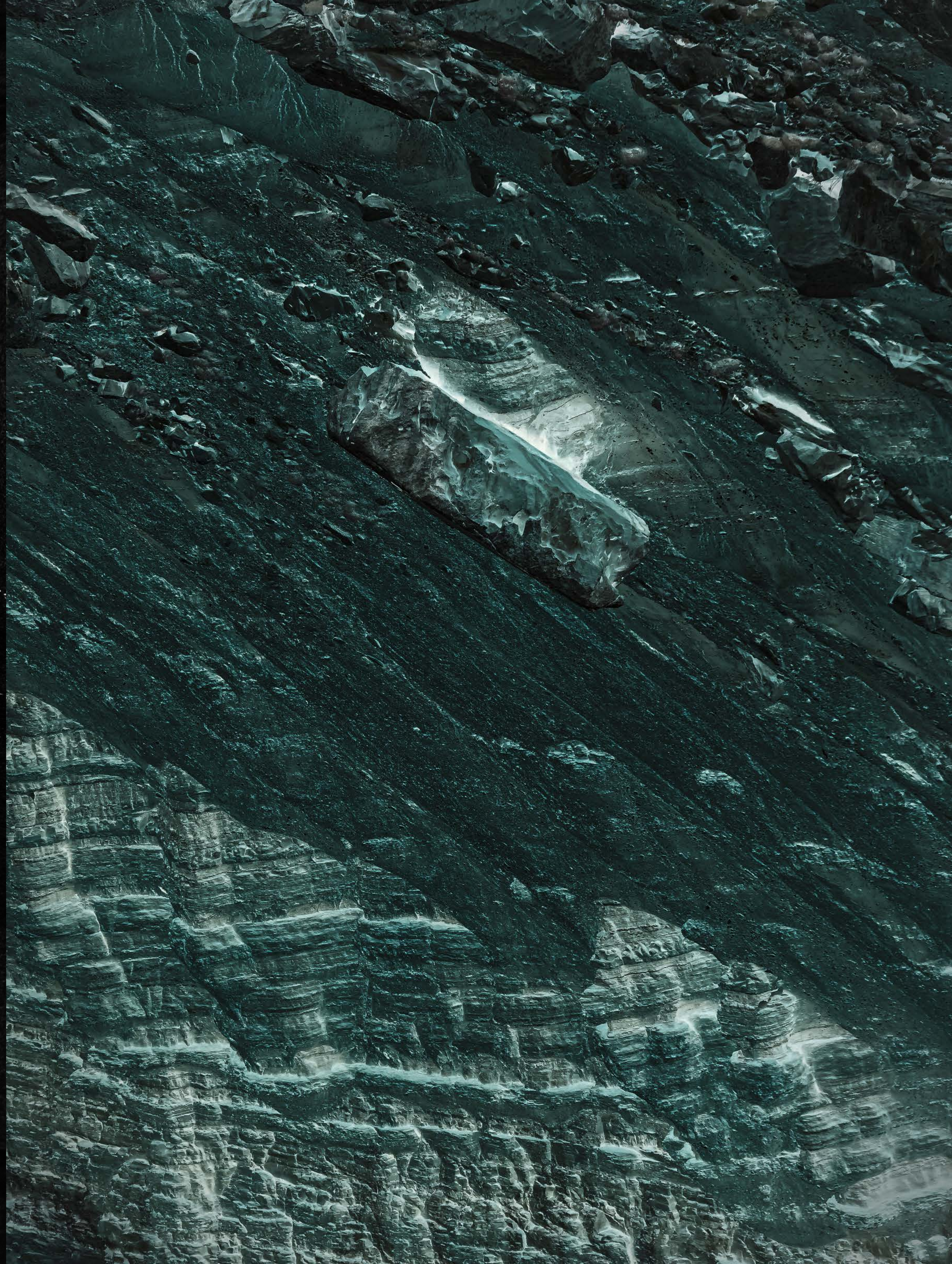


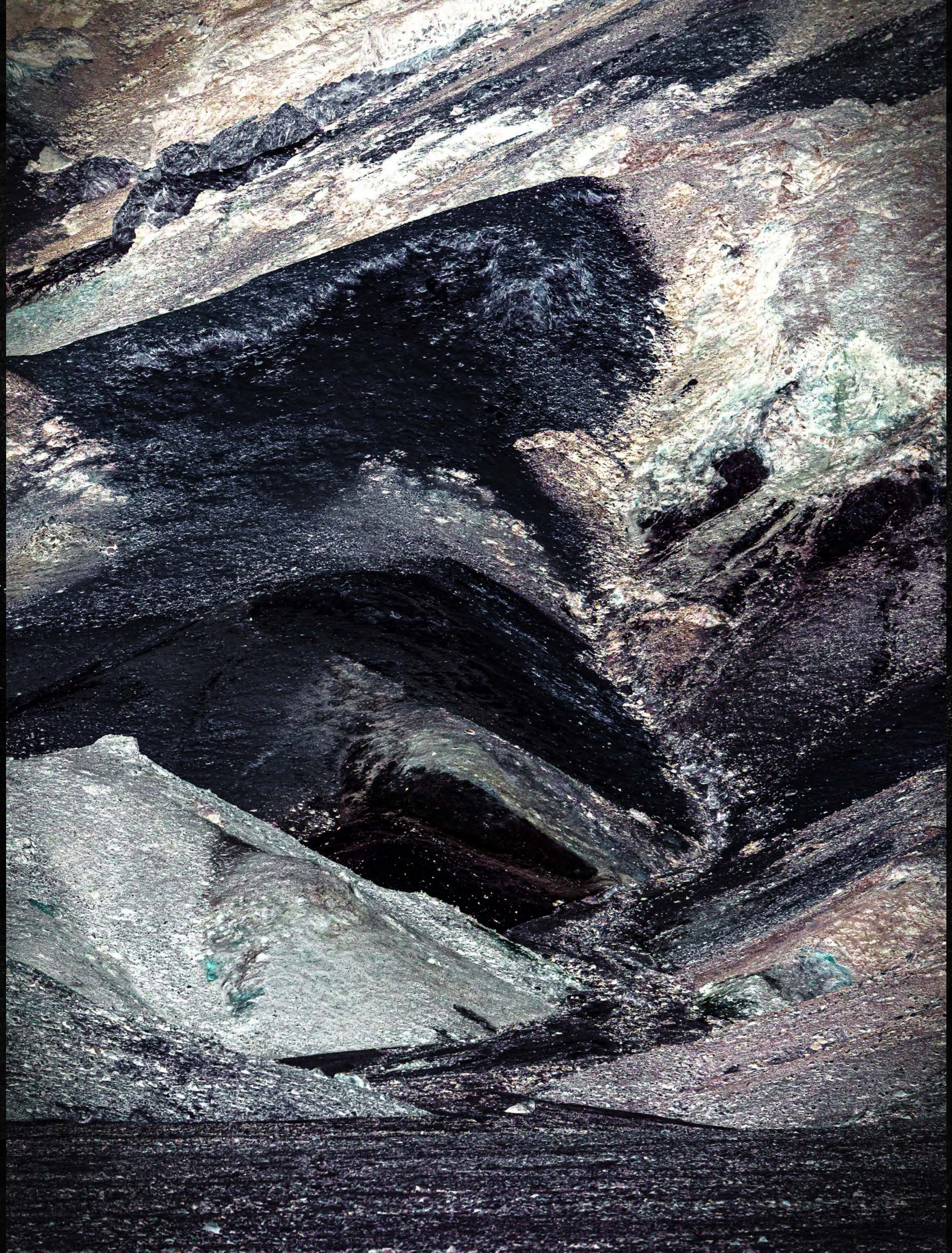






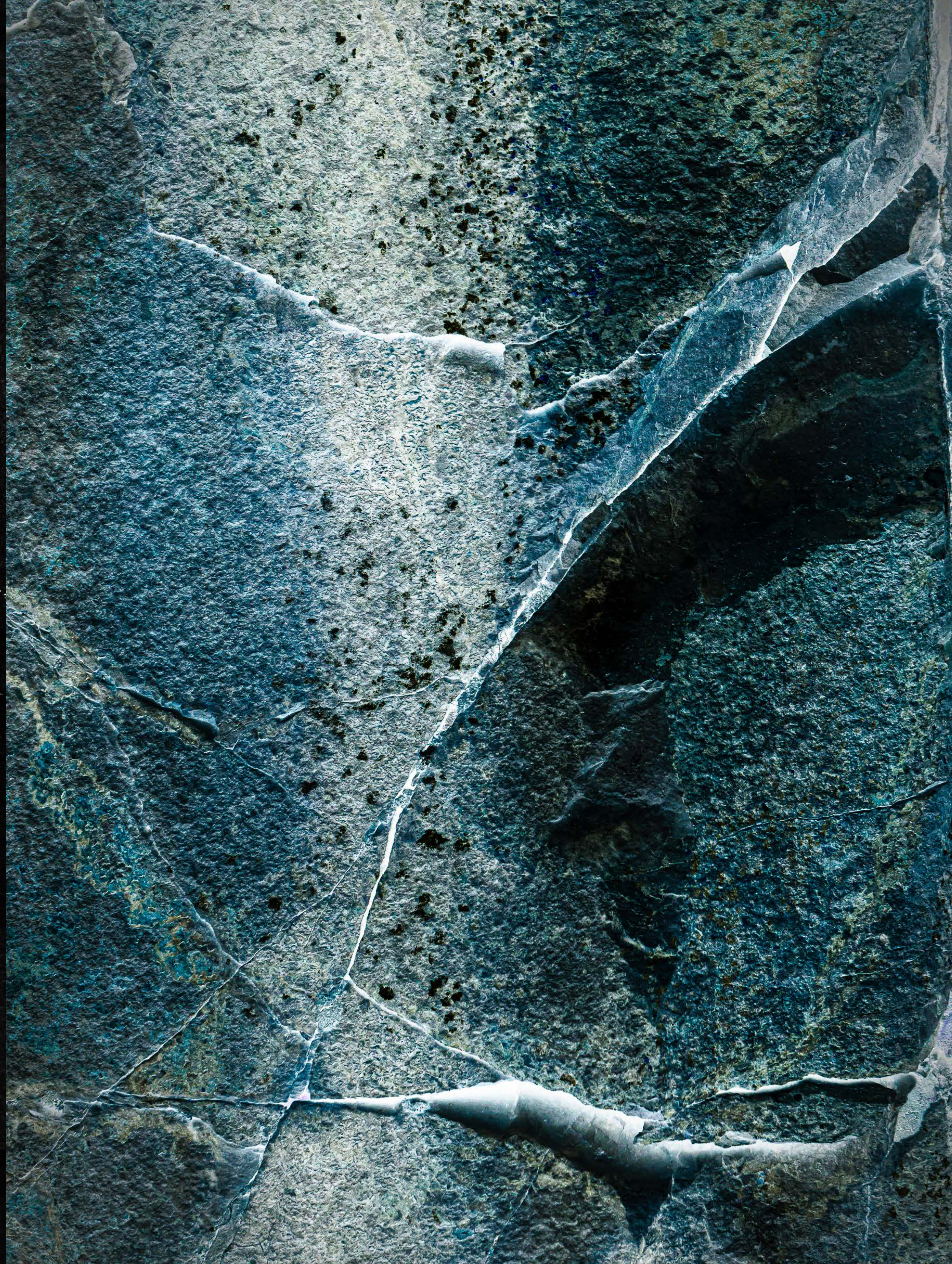






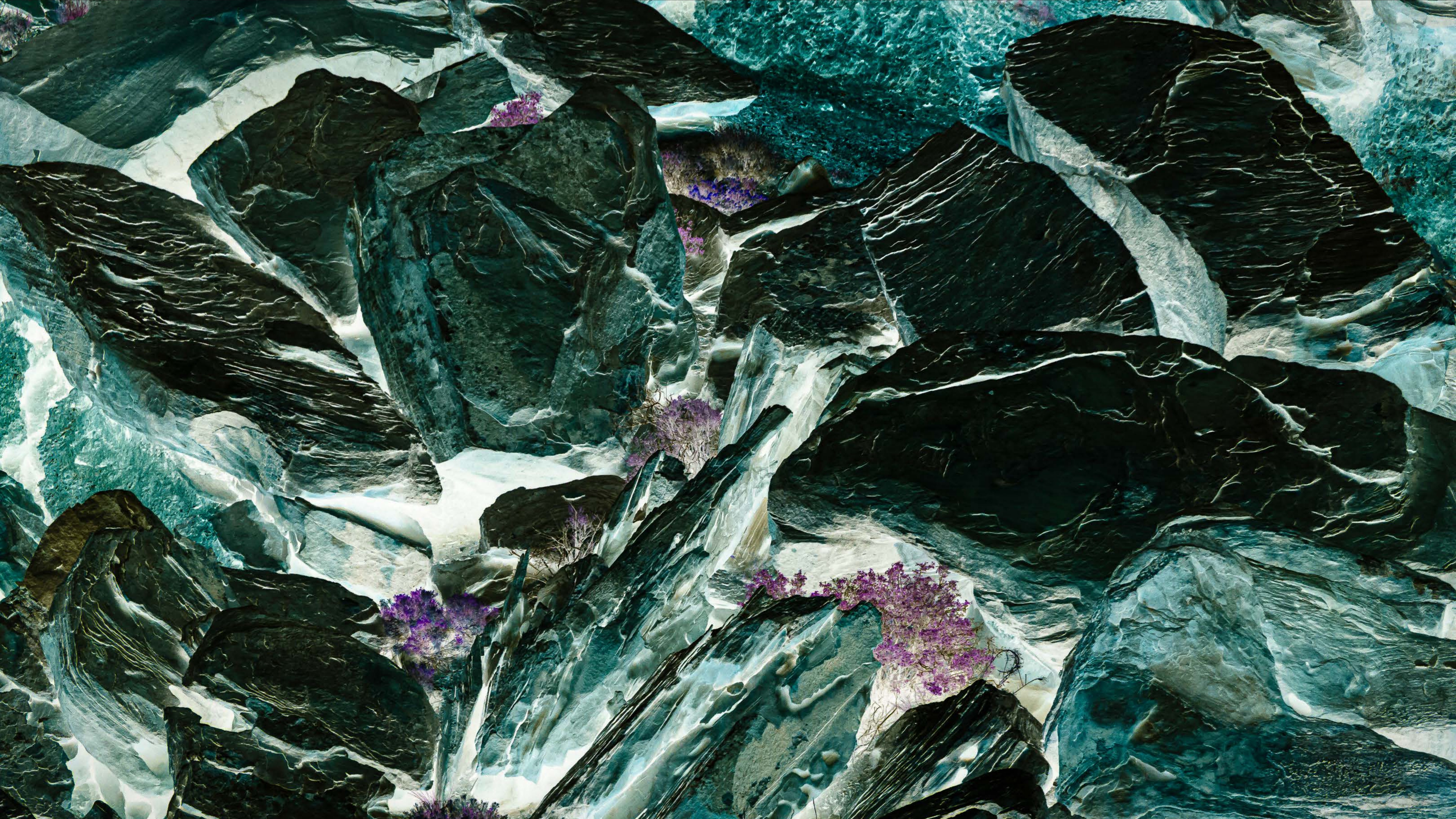




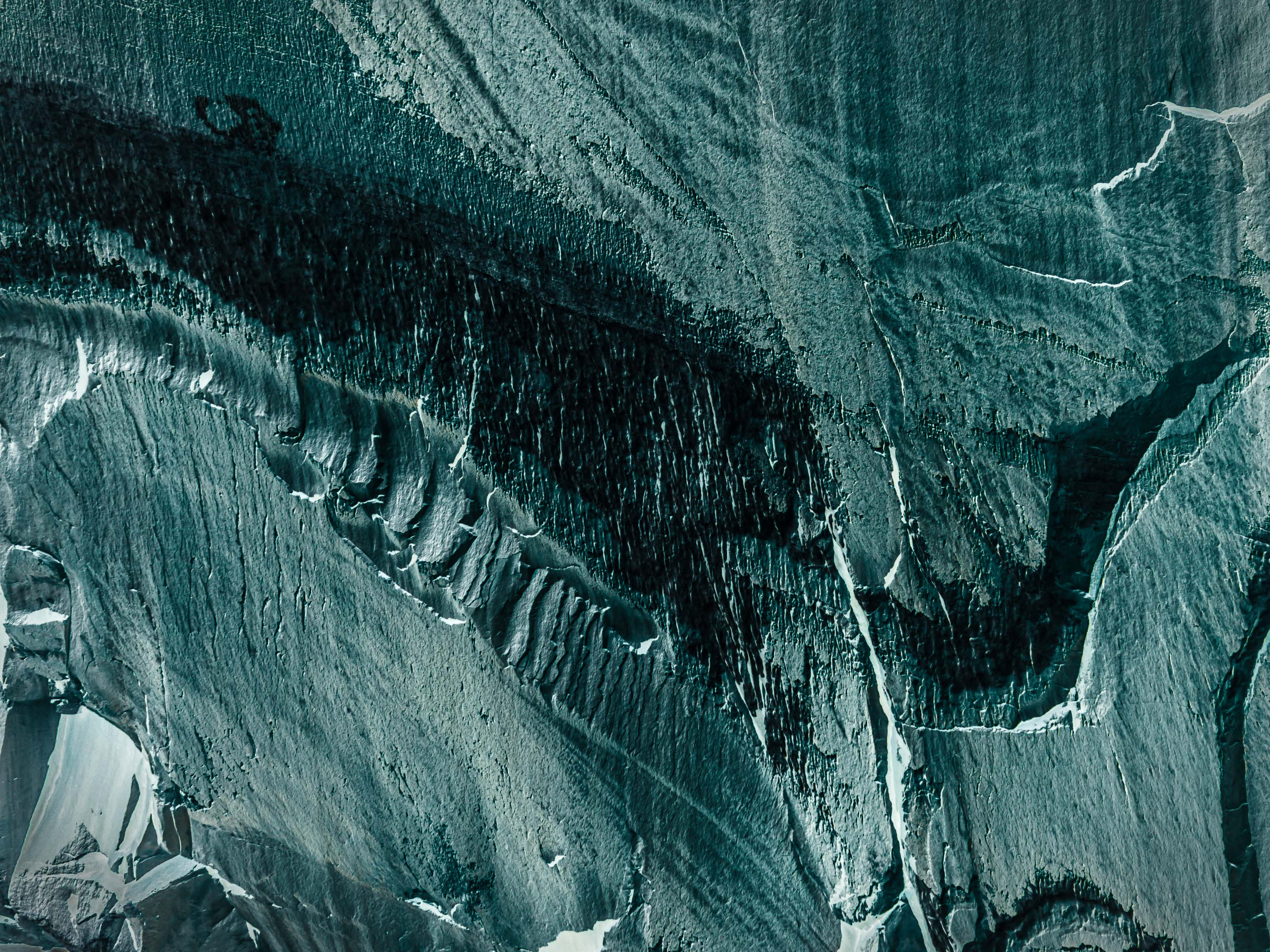
















Notes

Contour, The Wheat of Least Resistance

The Palouse in southeast Washington state is a beautiful landscape. It is also one of the most productive wheat growing regions in America. On one particular morning in 2020, it was also graphics on parade for this photographer.

Tech notes: An incredibly windy morning which was handled beautifully by a Panasonic G9 with its dual image stabilization.

The Gods Are Pissed at Us

A powerful thunderstorm in Utah. As I sat and watched the evening turn to night, the clouds kept darkening and I couldn't help but wonder what we'd done to bring this upon us.

Tech notes: These are all high ISO images. But with subjects with low frequency detail like clouds, it's thankfully easy to minimize the noise.

More Dreams of Japan

I have over 20,000 photographs from my travels in Japan. My 2021 mono-

graph, *Dreams of Japan* has 71. Predictably, there were many images that were excluded because of page limitations. Here are some of the ones that were downright *painful* to leave out.

Tech notes: Because this project is about dreams, I've used a soft focus processing technique that blurs the highlights in particular.

The Former Lake Abert

There is something about the chemistry in Lake Abert that gives it a beautiful aqua green color. It's simply breathtakingly beautiful, especially against the backdrop of the Oregon desert. This year, however, the lake was almost completely dry, making for a unique photographic opportunity.

Tech notes: I love projects that can be photographed in a short amount of time. Intense, concentrated, and immersive work. These images are all from a 40-minute drive the length of the lake.

Remembering Oliver

When I go out looking for photographs, I typically have no idea what I'll find or even what I'm looking for. I just react

to whatever catches my eye. And what catches my eye can sometimes be the oddest things — like hay bales of white plastic. I'm sure I'd never set out to find and photograph them, but then again, maybe I should.

As Oliver Gagliani once said to me, "To make art, first just be *aware*."

Tech notes: One camera, one lens, and about 20 minutes by the side of the road. Panasonic G9 with the Panasonic Leica 50-200mm lens.

Views from the Surface of Venus

Artmaking is a matter of applied imagination. That's my story and I'm sticking with it. Yes, I *have* been to Venus. Well, not *physically*.

But, because you insist, landscapes and rocks reversal processed and then played with until they felt Venetian. Hey, this is art.

Tech notes: All accomplished in Lightroom. No Photoshop. I only state this here to demonstrate that Lightroom is a really, really capable image editor.

Folios, Chapbooks, Prints

Support the artist!

For over 30 years, Brooks has shared his photographic lessons, failures, inspiration, creative path — and more than a few laughs. If you've enjoyed his free *Kokoro* PDFs publications, or been a long-time listener to his free audio commentaries (his weekly podcast *On Photography and the Creative Life*, or his daily *Here's a Thought* commentaries), here is your chance to tell him how much you appreciate his efforts. Support the artist!



Choose whichever level of support fits your appreciation and pocketbook. We thank you, he thanks you, and here's looking forward to the exciting content that is yet to come in all our *LensWork* publications and media as Brooks continues exploring this creative life.

\$15 Applause - Thanks!

\$25 Standing Ovation - You'll receive a signed copy of *Dreams of Japan*

\$50 Basic Support - You'll receive a thank you of a signed 6R (8-page, 6x8") chapbook, handmade and signed by the artist

\$100 Essential Support - You'll receive a signed Full Quarto (16-page, 8x11") chapbook handmade and signed by the artist

\$250 Sustaining Support - You'll receive a thank you of an original, signed print + wall hanger

\$500 Friend of the Arts - You'll receive a thank you of a signed original print with wall hanger plus a Full Quarto chapbook

\$1000 Patron of the Arts - You'll receive a special thank you of, well, you'll see!

[You can donate to support Brooks' creative life using this link.](#) Thanks!



Brooks Jensen is a fine-art photographer, publisher, workshop teacher, and writer. In his personal work he specializes in small prints, handmade artist books, and digital media publications.

He is the owner, co-founder (in 1993, with his late wife, Maureen), editor, and publisher of the award winning *LensWork*, one of today's most respected and important periodicals in fine art photography. With subscribers in more than 70 countries, Brooks' impact on fine art photography is truly worldwide. His long-running weekly podcasts on art and photography are heard over the Internet by thousands every day. All 1,200+ podcasts are available at [LensWork Online](#), the LensWork membership website. He also publishes a daily *Here's a Thought...* video with short inspiration for creative photographers.

LensWork Publishing is also at the leading edge in multimedia and digital media publishing with the *LensWork Tablet Edition*, and *LensWork Extended* — a PDF-based, media-rich expanded version of the magazine.

Brooks is the author of thirteen books about photography and creativity: *Photography, Art, & Media* (2016); *The Creative Life in Photography* (2013); *Letting Go of the Camera* (2004); *Single Exposures* (3 books in a series, random observations on art, photography and creativity); *Looking at Images* (2014); *The Best of the LensWork Interviews* (2016); *Seeing in SIXES* (2016); *Seeing in SIXES* (2017); *Seeing in SIXES* (2018); *Seeing in SIXES* (2019); and *Our Magnificent Planet* (2020).

[Kokoro](#) is a free, bi-monthly PDF e-publication of his personal work and is available (both current and back issues) for download from his [website](#). He has published two printed monographs of his photography, [Made of Steel](#) (2012), and [Dreams of Japan](#) (2021).

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