

DAVID MAISEL

Library of Dust

September 4th - October 4th, 2008

Opening Reception: September 4th, 2008
5.30 - 7.30pm

San Francisco—David Maisel's third solo exhibition at Haines Gallery comprises *Library of Dust*, a series of large-scale photographs of individual copper canisters, each containing the cremated remains of a patient from an Oregon state psychiatric hospital. The canisters have transformed over time and are now blooming with secondary minerals, causing each to become highly differentiated. Maisel used a medium format camera that enabled him to treat the canisters without distortion, like architecture. By employing a shallow depth of field, Maisel allows parts of each image to fall out of focus, lending a dimensionality to the canisters. In order to convey the sheer quantity of canisters in existence, Maisel also includes a grouping of 14 x 11 prints in the gallery exhibition.



Maisel began working with themes of memorialization in the 1980s, when he made aerial photographs of sites that had undergone traumatic environmental impact. His earlier work considered vast mineral deposits and copper mines, and it was in part Maisel's ongoing involvement with the materiality of copper that led him to the *Library of Dust* canisters. "There are certainly physical and chemical explanations for the ways these canisters have transformed over time," says Maisel. "But perhaps the canisters also encourage us to consider what happens to our own bodies when we die, and what may happen to the souls that occupied our bodies. Matter, these canisters show, lives on when the body vanishes, even when it has been incinerated to ash by an institutional practice. Is it possible that some form of spirit lives on as well?"

David Maisel is the recipient of a 2008 artist residency at the Headlands Center for the Arts and a 2007 scholar/artist residency at the Getty Research Institute. His work is in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum of Art; George Eastman House, Rochester, New York; Houston Museum of Fine Art; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Princeton University Art Museum; and Victoria and Albert Museum, London; among others.

Library of Dust by David Maisel, with essays by Geoff Manaugh, Terry Toedtemeier, and Michael S. Roth, (\$80.00/oversized hardcover/ISBN 978-0-8118-6333-9) is published by Chronicle Books. Signed copies are available at www.chroniclebooks.com.

For further information on the artist or the works included in the *Library of Dust* exhibition, please visit www.hainesgallery.com.

Images available upon request.