

David Maisel

History's Shadow

April 6 - June 4, 2011

Opening reception: Thursday, April 7th, 2011, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

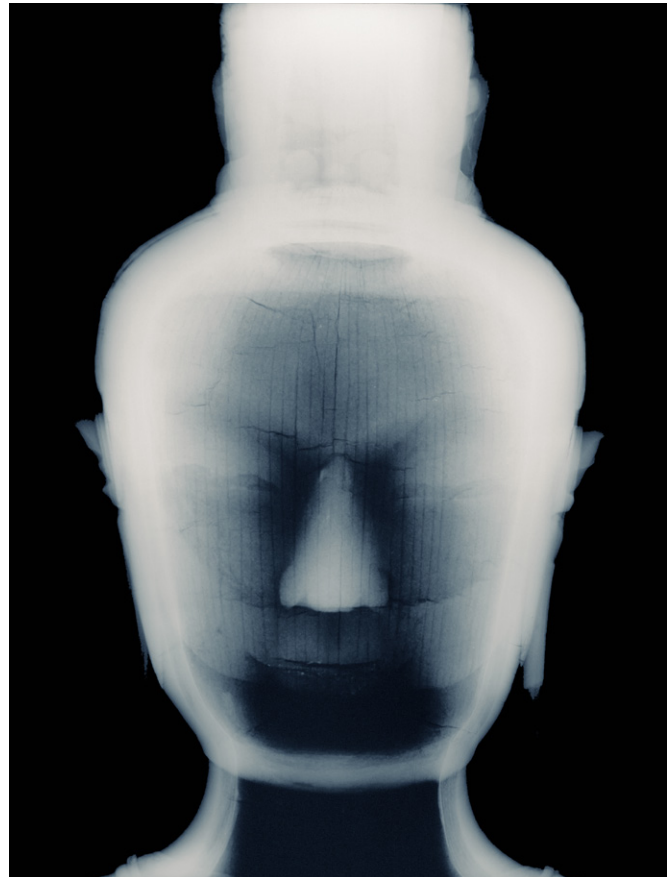
Conversation: Tuesday, April 26th, 2011, 5:30 - 7:30 pm between David Maisel & Julian Cox,
Founding Curator of Photography and Chief Curator at the de Young Museum

Bay Area artist David Maisel continues his inquiry into the dual processes of memory and excavation in *History's Shadow*, a new photography series derived from x-rays of art objects from antiquity. Initiated during a residency at the Getty Research Institute in 2007, Maisel became captivated by x-rays of art objects from the museum's permanent collections. Though utilized for conservation purposes, Maisel recognized the power of these images to transcend the original artworks' context and familiarity, conveying messages across time.

Maisel went on to source x-rays from the archives of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, culling through thousands of images between the two institutions. It is this process of uncovering and bringing selected x-rays to light, which, for Maisel, gives them their charge. Once he has made his selections, Maisel lays each x-ray on a light box in a darkened room and transmits emanations of light from the original image onto color film. He plans to develop this series over time through collaborations with museums around the world. In his fourth solo exhibition at Haines, Maisel exhibits 16 photographs in total, just a selection of what he has photographed thus far.

Maisel views these x-rays as "...expressions of the artists and artisans who created the original objects, however many centuries ago; as vestiges and indicators of the societies that produced these works; and as communications from the past, expressing immutable qualities that somehow remain constant over time... They encourage an understanding- made through feeling and art, as well as science and reason- that both spans and collapses time."

David Maisel's practice has often revolved around questions concerning the dual processes of memory and excavation. He has focused on environmentally impacted sites in a multi-chaptered series of aerial photographs titled *Black Maps*. A recent project, *Library of Dust*, catalogues individual copper canisters, each containing the cremated remains of patients from a state-run psychiatric hospital, whose bodies have been unclaimed by their families.



History's Shadow ABI, 2010, Archival Pigment Print, frame: 41 x 31 inches / photo: 40 x 30 inches, Ed. of 7

Maisel's work has been exhibited internationally, and is included in many public collections, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Victoria & Albert Museum; the Brooklyn Museum of Art; the Santa Barbara Museum of Art; the Yale University Art Gallery; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

This exhibition coincides with the release of a new monograph, *History's Shadow* (Nazraeli Press, 2011) by David Maisel, with a short story by Jonathan Lethem.