John Chiara

John Chiara (b. 1971, San Francisco, CA) earned a B.F.A. in photography from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City in 1995 and an M.F.A. in photography from the California College of the Arts in 2004. Chiara pushes the boundaries of the photographic medium through his choice of process and the mastery of its possibilities. His approach is distinguished by its physicality and recalls the early days of the medium, when artists dealt with heavy equipment and long exposure and development times. Chiara's giant cameras, which he designed and built himself, are transported to locations on a flatbed trailer to produce one-of-a-kind large-scale prints. Images are recorded directly onto oversized photosensitive paper, allowing the artist to shoot and perform his darkroom work simultaneously. This process invites anomalies in his final prints and adds to the mystery and lyricism of his pictures.

EDUCATION:

1995
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, B.F.A. in Photography
2004
California College of the Arts, San Francisco, M.F.A. in Photography

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

2026
SF Camerawork x Haines Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "John Chiara: Bay Panel"
2024
Haines Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "John Chiara: Sea of Glass"
ROSEGALLERY, Santa Monica, CA, "John Chiara: Alchemy in Materiality"
2022
ROSEGALLERY, Santa Monica, CA, "Starr King / Lands End"
2020
ROSEGALLERY, Santa Monica, CA, "Dust of Angels"
2018
Yossi Milo Gallery, New York, NY, "Pike Slip to Sugar Hill"
Musée des beaux-arts, Le Locle, Switzerland, "Triennale de l'art imprimé contemporain"
Galerie Miranda, Paris, France, "California/Mississippi"
2016
Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, CA, "Boundless: A California Invitational"
2015
ROSEGALLERY, Santa Monica, CA, "Coahoma County: Mississippi Part I and II"
2014
Seven Chimneys Farm, and the Porch Society in conjunction with ROSEGALLERY, Atmos Building, Clarksdale, MS, "Coahoma County: Mississippi"
2013
ROSEGALLERY, Santa Monica, CA, "John Chiara: Los Angeles"
2012
Haines Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "Crestmont at Coral"
Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA, "In Conversation, June Schwartz and John Chiara" (dual exhibition)

2011
Von Lintel Gallery, New York, NY, "Fort at Lime Point"
2010
Eleanor Harwood Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "Point Bonita"
2008
Von Lintel Gallery, New York, NY, "Land's End" Eleanor Harwood Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "Land's End: Starr King"
2007
Club Sportiva, San Francisco, CA (sponsored by Gen Art and Johnny Walker)
2003
BUILD Gallery, San Francisco, CA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

2025
Haines Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "Elemental II: Photography and the Hand of Nature"
Photographic Center Northwest, Seattle, WA, "Fringe Practice: Alternative Methods in Photography"
Jackson Fine Art, Atlanta, GA, "Angela West and John Chiara in Conversation"
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK, "Fragile Beauty, Photographs from the Sir Elton John and David Furnish Collection"
2022
Pier 24 Photography, San Francisco, CA, "Looking Forward: Ten Years of Pier 24 Photography"
2019
Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO, "NEW TERRITORY LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY TODAY"
2018
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA, "A Brilliant Spectrum: Recent Gifts of Color Photography"
Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA, "New Southern Photography"
Musée des beaux-arts, Le Locle, Switzerland, "Triennale de l'art imprimé contemporain"
2016
Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, CA, "Boundless: A California Invitational"
George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY, "A Matter of Memory"
2015
Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, "New Photography Acquisitions"
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA, "Light, Paper, Process, Reinventing Photography" (curated by Virginia Heckert)
2014
Pier 24 Photography, San Francisco, CA, "A Sense of Place"
2013
Museum Bärengasse, Zurich, Switzerland, "TWISTED SISTERS: Reimaging Urban Portraiture"
de Young, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, "Crown Point Press at 50"

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Oakland Museum of California, Oakland, CA
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA

Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX

AWARDS:

2019
A*rtist in Residence*, Budapest Art Factory, Budapest, Hungary
2017
A*rtist in Residence*, Budapest Art Factory, Budapest, Hungary
2016
A*rtist in Residence*, Crown Point Press, San Francisco, CA
2010
A*rtist in Residence*, Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA
A*rtist in Residence*, Gallery Four, Baltimore, MD
2006
A*rtist in Residence*, Crown Point Press, San Francisco, CA
Spark Education Honorarium, KQED, Channel 9, San Francisco, CA
2004
Dennis Leon and Christine Nelson Scholarship, California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA
All College Honors, Masters of Fine Arts Honorable Mention, California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA

PUBLICATIONS:

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