



Press Contact:

Mariclare Hulbert, Visual Studies Workshop Publicist
mariclare.hulbert@gmail.com
585.278.2302

**VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP ANNOUNCES
EXPLORATIONS IN THE ECOTONE EXHIBITION**
–Rochester Artists Meredith Davenport & Margaret LeJeune
Engage Environmental Concerns Through Art –



Improvisation No. 12 by Margaret LeJeune and *The barrier has not been breached by the fire* (2022) by Meredith Davenport.

Rochester, NY (July 7, 2026) – Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY announces its Fall 2026 exhibition ***Explorations in the Ecotone: Works by Meredith Davenport and Margaret LeJeune***, on view September 4 through December 19, 2026. Davenport and LeJeune are both Rochester-based visual artists; this new exhibition explores issues of climate change and the shifting boundaries between human and more-than-human worlds, through the mediums of photography, sculpture and moving images.

Taking the ecotone—a transitional space where distinct ecosystems meet and intermingle—as both subject and metaphor, the ***Explorations in the Ecotone*** exhibition examines warming and rising oceans, extraction technologies, and the ecological histories embedded within place. These works reveal the interconnectedness of environmental change, material processes, and social histories while inviting reflection on our relationships with the living world. Together, the exhibition and its public events encourage visitors to imagine more reciprocal futures grounded in ecological care, wonder, and responsibility. *Explorations in the Ecotone* is an artist-curated installation with programming developed by Meredith Davenport and Margaret LeJeune in collaboration with Jessica Johnston, VSW's Executive Director.

“The recent projects on display at VSW by Margaret LeJeune and Meredith Davenport are engaged with exploring complex entanglements between humanity and the natural world. *Explorations in the Ecotone* asks visitors to become immersed in the beauty of our planet at the same time acknowledging the devastating impact of rampant capitalism and resource extraction on fragile ecosystems. VSW presents this exhibition and its related programming at a pivotal time, uniting science and art to inspire our community toward meaningful climate action and advocacy,” shares **Visual Studies Workshop Executive Director Jessica Johnston**.

Meredith Davenport and Margaret LeJeune are both prolific visual artists with deep Rochester roots. Davenport lives in Lima, NY and received her BFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology, where she serves as Professor of Photo Arts and Sciences. She was also a VSW Project Space Residency artist in 2022.

LeJeune received her MFA from Visual Studies Workshop, was a VSW Project Space Residency artist in 2023, and taught at Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Brockport, and Monroe Community College in addition to her career as a Full Professor at Bradley University in Illinois. Her work can be found locally in the permanent collections of Nazareth University and MCC in addition to exhibitions and collections around the world.

Explorations in the Ecotone: Works by Meredith Davenport and Margaret LeJeune

September 4 – December 19, 2026

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Friday 11am-6pm and Saturdays 12pm-4pm

Visual Studies Workshop

36 King St, Rochester, NY 14608

<https://www.vsw.org/exhibition/explorations-in-the-ecotone-works-by-meredith-davenport-and-margaret-lejeune/>

Meredith Davenport is an artist and educator who uses photography as a way to witness and tells stories about the world around her. Her work explores the intersection between the language of imagery and internal psychological narratives. Davenport is the recipient of the American Aftermath Award, a Pew Fellowship and a Puffin Foundation grant.
meredithdavenport.com/

Margaret LeJeune's creative practice explores the relationship between art, science, and environmental studies. As a lens-based creator, she produces works that probe shifting landscapes, symbiotic relationships, and the nature of the photographic medium. In 2023, she was named the Woman Science Photographer of the Year by the Royal Photographic Society.
margaretlejeune.com/

A number of public events associated with *Explorations in the Ecotone* will be hosted this Fall. Additional details TBA.

First Friday, Friday, September 4, 6–9pm

Opening of *Explorations in the Ecotone: Works by Margaret LeJeune and Meredith Davenport*
Join VSW and the exhibition artists for an opening reception.

Saturday, September 5, 2–4pm

Explorations in the Ecotone: Land Matters presented by Liz Wells

VSW welcomes renowned British photography scholar and theorist, Liz Wells to present a talk in relation to the exhibition. Wells's research on photographic culture focuses on land, landscape, place, and environment, as well as on photographic theory and practices. She is the author of *Land Matters* (Routledge, 2011) and is the editor of numerous textbooks on the history and criticism of photography.

Saturday, September 12, 12:30 – 4:30pm

Explorations in the Ecotone Field Study: Foraging for Photo Botanicals along the Genesee River

\$10 suggested donation, limited to 12 people, wear walking shoes.

Sunday, September 13, 12:30 – 4:30pm

Explorations in the Ecotone Workshop: making anthotypes with foraged botanicals

\$10 suggested donation, limited to 12 people, bring a picture frame.

In this two-day workshop, participants will explore the banks of the Genesee River, a waterway whose history reflects the evolving relationship between Rochester's communities, industries, and ecosystems. Once heavily impacted by agricultural runoff, toxic discharges, and industrial pollution, the Genesee has become the focus of decades of ambitious cleanup, restoration, and revitalization efforts. As we walk the river's edge, we will consider this complex environmental history and the ongoing work of reclaiming the river as a shared ecological and cultural resource. The walk will be led by exhibition artists and environmental historian Dr. Jeffrey Kosiorek.

During the first day, participants will learn to identify and ethically collect displaced plant species found along the river corridor. These collected botanicals will serve as the raw materials for a range of experimental photographic processes. On the second day, participants will transform their collected materials into light-sensitive photographic emulsions. Through hands-on demonstrations and experimentation, we will explore how plants can be used to create photographic images while considering the ways artistic practice can engage with ecological stewardship, remediation, and place-based histories.

Participants may register for the full two-day workshop or attend only the first day, which includes the guided river walk, plant identification, and botanical collection.

Saturday, September 26, 2 – 4pm

Explorations in the Ecotone: Conversation in the Gallery

Join exhibition artists Margaret LeJeune and Meredith Davenport, and Dr. Solon Morse, conservation ecologist, for a tour of the exhibition followed by a conversation. Together, they will examine the vital role that creativity and exploration play in both science and the arts and discuss strategies for incorporating ecological care and wonder in our daily lives.

Thursday, October 29, 6– 8pm

Explorations in the Ecotone: Birding with a Camera while Female: A Researcher's Dilemma, Presented by Karla McManus, PhD.

VSW welcomes Karla McManus, Associate Professor at the University of Regina, to present her work on the history of bird photography and its impact on the conservation movement.

McManus is an art historian and visual theorist who specializes in the study of photography and environmental imagery. Following her talk, McManus will be joined by exhibition artists Margaret LeJeune and Meredith Davenport for a conversation about the broader role of photography in environmental activism.

Saturday, November 14, 2 - 4pm

Explorations in the Ecotone: Deep Listening Session

Limited to 18 people.

Join VSW in the gallery for a meditative Saturday deep listening session led by Margaret LeJeune. Embedded within LeJeune's *Sonorous Sea* project, is the practice of deep listening. This practice asks one to move beyond the involuntary nature of hearing into the realm of conscious listening. We can envision our time together as a sonic meditation, one in which we strive to cultivate a heightened awareness of the soundscape. Deep listening is the opportunity to explore relationships among sounds - both the external and the internal. It challenges us to narrow our attention and deepen our understanding of how we hear, listen, interpret, and respond to the world around us.

Thursday, November 19, 7:30 – 9:00pm

***Explorations in the Ecotone* Film Screening – NATURE SLUDGE**

Perhaps VSW's most unique cinematic experience, the SLUDGE series combines multiple 16mm films from the deepest corners of the VSW film archive and projects them simultaneously, creating a sensational experience in pop maximalism. This early winter iteration NATURE SLUDGE presents the perfect moment for series curator and projectionist Mary Lewandowski to mine the VSW collection for as many expressions and interpretations of NATURE as possible. What will she discover in her explorations?

Friday, December 18, 6–9pm

Explorations in the Ecotone: Closing Party

Join us for Spirit of the Archive, Open Studios, and the closing party for the exhibition *Explorations in the Ecotone: Works by Meredith Davenport and Margaret LeJeune*. Artists will be in attendance.

About Visual Studies Workshop: Visual Studies Workshop nurtures experimental and expansive approaches to photography and media arts, and builds community among artists and the public through exhibitions, publications and residencies. We envision a society that values the human need to create and share ideas. VSW was founded in 1969 in Rochester, NY by photographer, educator and curator Nathan Lyons (1930–2016), and became one of the earliest independent, not-for-profit, artist-run spaces in the country. More than 50 years later, the organization's mission is reflected in its core programs: VSW public programs and exhibitions, Project Space artist residencies, and VSW publications and workshops. In support of VSW programs, the organization holds substantial photography and moving image research collections and an art library for artists, critics and the general public to explore, research and reuse. vsw.org

Explorations in the Ecotone: Works by Meredith Davenport and Margaret LeJeune is supported by The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, The Joy of Giving Something Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Monroe County, NY, and all VSW members and individual supporters.

VSW programs are currently supported by The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the New York State Legislature, Joy of Giving Something, Monroe County NY, The Phillip and Edith Leonian Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and all our members and individual supporters.

###