

CHUNG 24 GALLERY
NOVEMBER 6 - DECEMBER 21, 2024



At work in his darkroom, Mark Citret's playlist features Beethoven, Schubert – and Mel Brooks. Alongside his exquisite photographs of architecture, forests shrouded in fog, and sweeping ocean vistas is another sprawling body of work – quirky, funny, more intimate, and less often seen. Strange juxtapositions, unlikely pairings, fleeting instants of light and shade reveal marvels in the mundane. For over five decades he has roamed, eyes open and camera ready to render foibles, fortuities, and the intrinsic mystery of everything.

Mark provides a precious link to the storied legacy of California photography. An assistant to Ansel Adams in the famous Yosemite workshops, he brings those same immaculate skills to all of his images, photographing two paint drips as perfectly as a waterfall in Yosemite, without irony, nostalgia, or condescension.

He has passed along those skills to his own legion of students and has a treasure chest of stories. But, for me, it is his lifelong dedication to his own image-making that inspires and keeps that lineage alive. The wonder in his work is not from concepts, nor preconceived hierarchies of preferred subject matter, but the grace with which he simultaneously maintains craft while following his insatiable curiosity. As Mark has written,

"What I look for when I'm photographing is something, anything, that reaches out and seems to speak directly to me. And what that voice is suggesting is along lines of, 'Hey you! There's a picture hiding here.'"

"What keeps me coming back with fresh film in my camera is an endless fascination with the threads that are woven together to create the tapestry that surrounds us."

I am so grateful for this chance to glimpse some of that tapestry – the mystery of everything – in Mark Citret's photographs.

-Michael Starkman