



**STEPHANIE WASHBURN**

**MARK MOORE GALLERY** | STATEMENTS



# STEPHANIE WASHBURN

## STATEMENTS

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**Mark Moore Gallery: *Statements* introduces a featured gallery artist through images and candid interview. From noteworthy early examples to present bodies, the works featured in *Statements* act as an overview of the varying practices and movements implemented by a given artist in tandem with their thoughts and interpretations.**

Stephanie Washburn (born 1980, MA) works in various media including drawing, painting, photography, and video. Her practice explores the material digital interface and the persistence of the body and human touch in pictorial space. In her latest series *Reception*, Washburn combines domestic everyday materials and televised imagery to stage a series of photographs. The images that result generate a range of painterly abstractions and counter narratives to the programmed content flickering beneath. With references to Abstract Expressionism, feminist art practice, and early performance, they pose a real physicality as the dramatic player in the fictive space of both the digital spectacle and her own hybrid image making.

Washburn received her MFA from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her work has been exhibited at The University Art Museum (CA), The Palms Bar (CA), Atkinson Gallery (CA), Santa Barbara Museum of Art (CA), Eagle Rock Center for the Arts (CA), Los Angeles Municipal Gallery (CA) and Davidson Art Center (CT). She currently lives and works between Ojai and Los Angeles.



*Reception 10*, 2011. Digital c-print, 15 x 15 inches.

## STEPHANIE WASHBURN

Interviewed by: Lauren Licata, Mark Moore Gallery

### **What is the thought process behind *Reception*? How did the series begin?**

So I'm staging these photographs using a combination of televised imagery and domestic everyday materials. Television was central to putting the passivity of a screen experience into our private lives. At this point it's basically so obsolete as a technology that it began to feel to me like a found object I could think about repurposing. I decided to treat the screen as a support and the content as a backdrop to something else that might happen there. I started affixing materials from around my home that were intimate and ordinary like butter, pillow stuffing, and clingwrap. I liked their modesty as things in contrast to how thoroughly they are able to shift perceptions of the screen content. I first became interested in that kind of formal malleability through painting and keep coming back to some idea of touch and its relationship to the flatness of pictorial space.

### **How do you go about choosing corresponding channels? Is there an intended juxtaposition,**

### **or is the combination subject to chance?**

The programming is out of my control so there's always an element of chance. I look at how the materials and background images start to interact both formally and through content. These interactions vary. Some marks deface. Some feel almost celebratory. Some end up rewriting the narrative onscreen. I'm interested in generating a real range of possibilities, filling up a cousin world to ours.

### **There are a few levels of visualization happening here. What does it mean to have these images end up as photographs?**

To some extent, I'm relying on the authority of the photograph as a document. I often think of this series as a kind of evidence of the body in digital space. In other ways though, the work really undermines that documentary authority. The images are very theatrical. I don't work serially, but play with different exposure times, scaling up and down, rotating, cropping. These decisions emphasize

the constructed nature of a photograph and distance us from the original referents. I think this tension, between document and construct, really drives the work.

**Are there intentional political and social overtones in your work? Is there a somewhat didactic message involved, or is your practice inherently objective?**

You hear a lot about the world going digital, virtual, etc. We are simultaneously producing ever more physical crap at a really criminal environmental and human cost. I think we need to be much more conscious about where the digital and material interface. This seems important politically in that the body remains the primary object in the power grab this digital information increasingly supports. So I'm definitely working with the idea of distancing. I'm less interested in critique though. The photographs have a lot of fun with spectacle, and there's an element of collaboration, a blending of the real and fictive states, that is creative and often joyful. I'm really hoping to get at an idea of agency and the persistence of human touch.

**Do you intend the images to be humorous?**

The process is. I'm interested in how humor gets at power and so often finds its way there through a kind of base materialism. But the mood of the images really varies. I tend to like work where humor invites you in to the challenge of a new way of thinking but also allows you the experience of a broader range of feelings.

**Can we expect to see any shifts in your upcoming exhibition's body of work?**

I suppose the most significant shift is starting to work with video. I've also been getting back to straight up painting. We'll see.



*Reception 13*, 2011. Digital c-print, 12 x 12 inches.

STEPHANIE WASHBURN

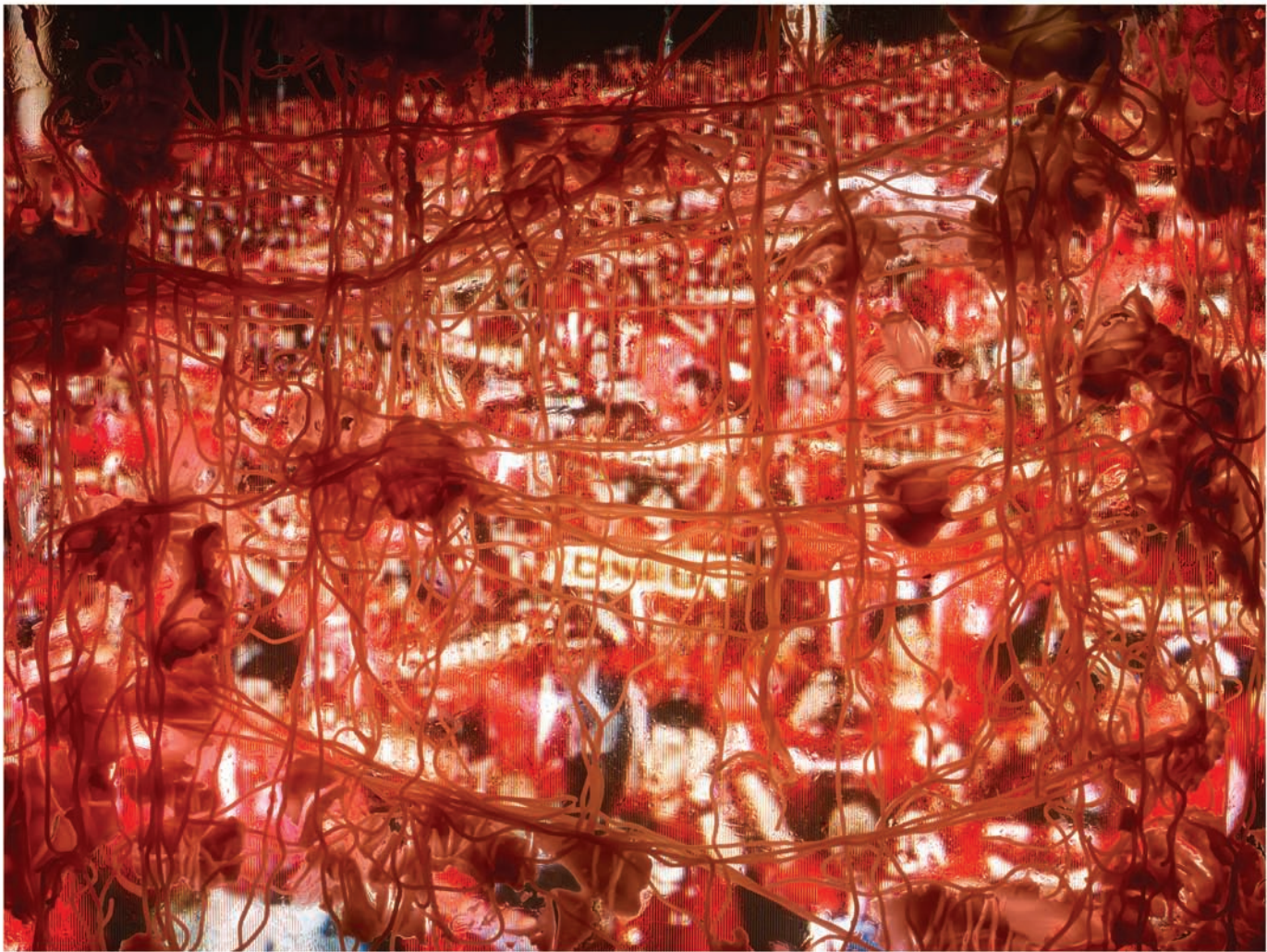
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*Reception 1*, 2011. Digital c-print, 15 x 15 inches.



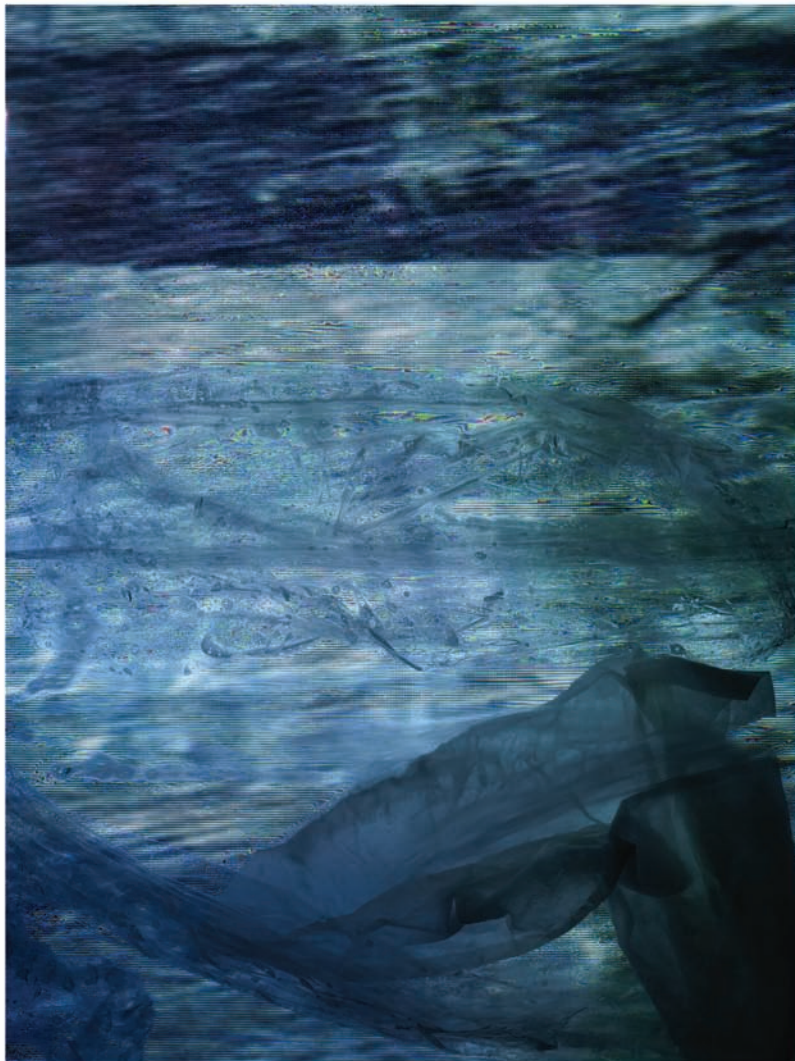


*Reception 2*, 2011. Digital c-print, 30 x 40 inches.

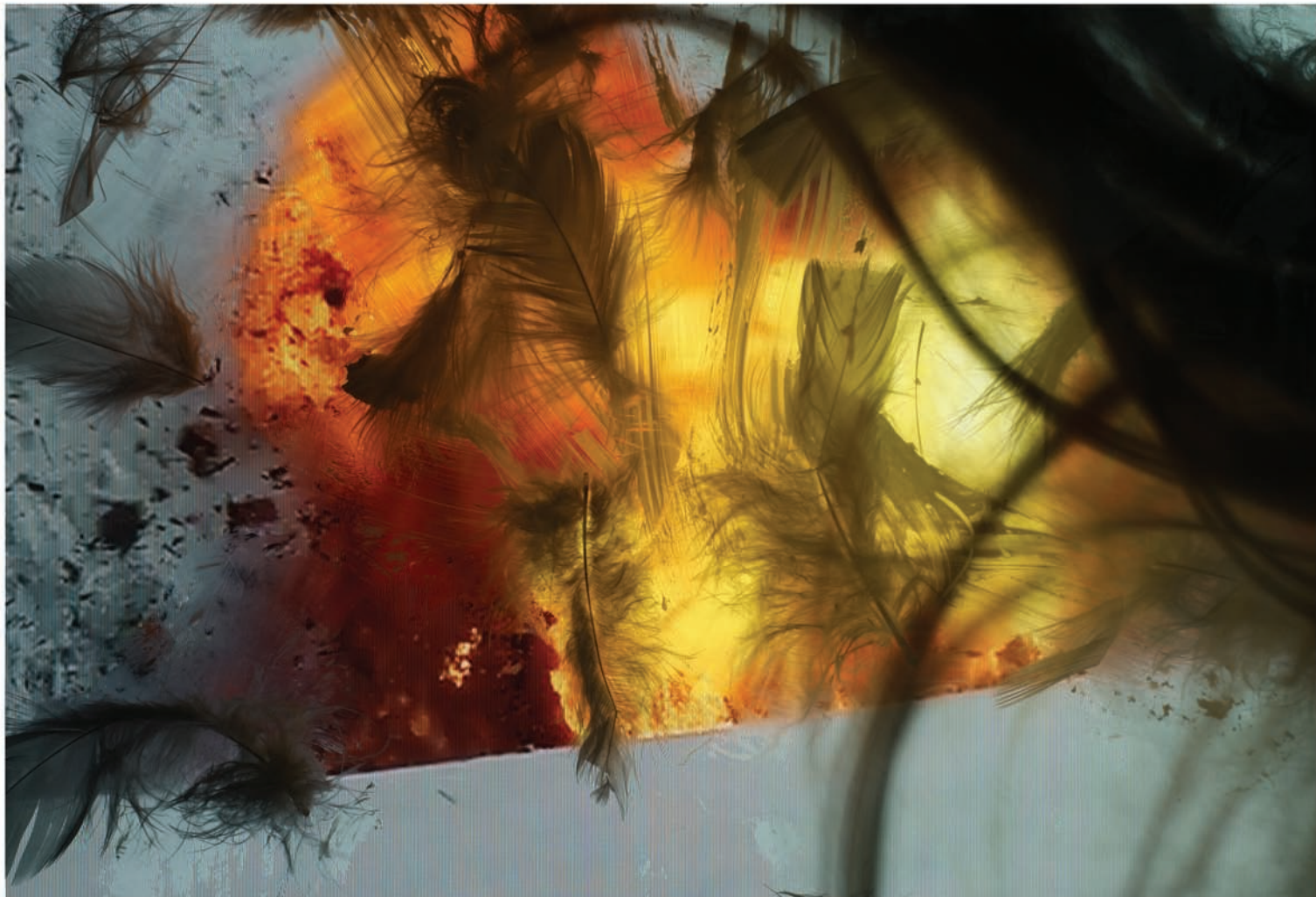
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*Reception 4*, 2011. Digital c-print, 40 x 30 inches.



*Reception 11*, 2011. Digital c-print, 15 x 22 inches.

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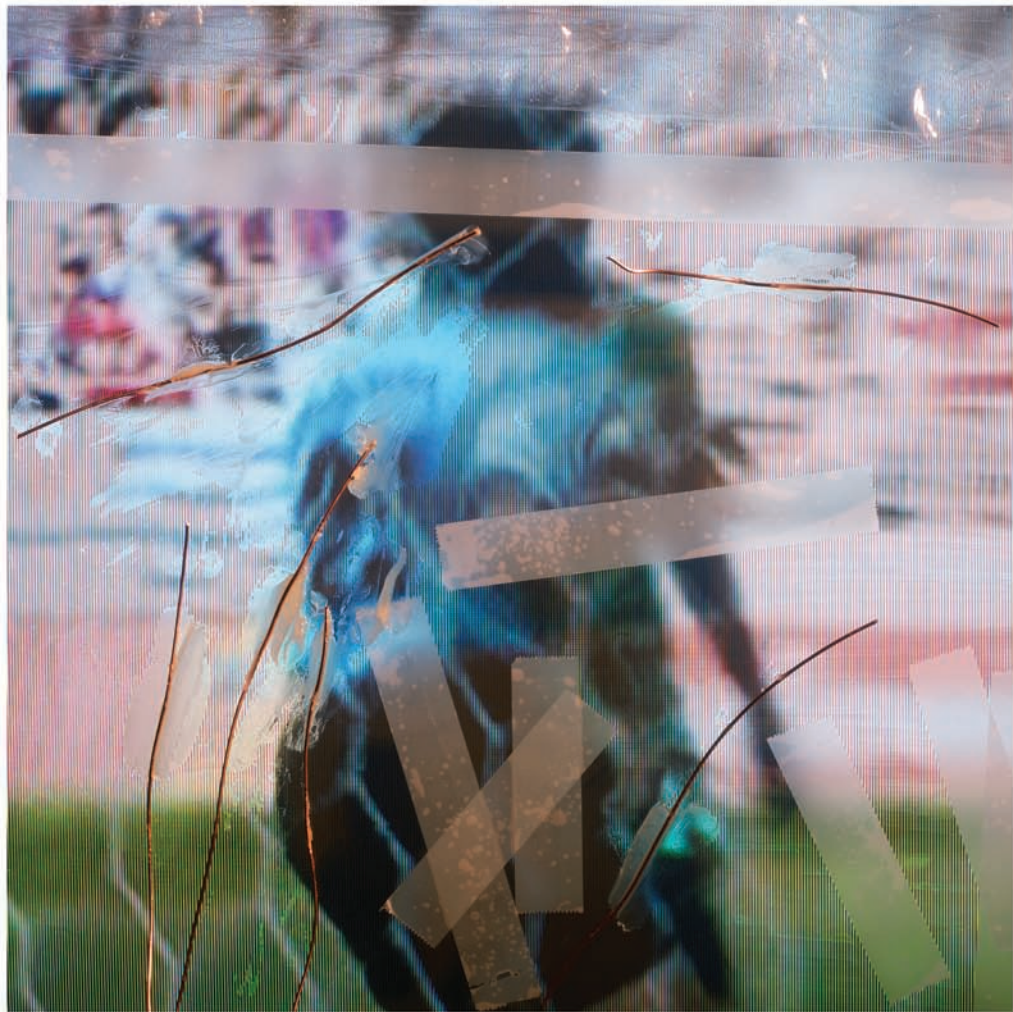
*Reception 9*, 2011. Digital c-print, 15 x 15 inches.



*Reception 5*, 2011. Digital c-print, 30 x 30 inches.



*Reception 7*, 2011. Digital c-print, 8 x 12 inches.



*Reception 6, 2011. Digital c-print, 30 x 30 inches.*

# BIO

## **Stephanie Washburn**

Born 1980, Berkshires, MA

Lives and works in Ojai and Los Angeles, CA

### **Education**

2010 MFA, University of California Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA

2003 BA, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

### **Selected Exhibitions**

2012 ArtPad SF, San Francisco, CA

*Twice Told*, Mark Moore Gallery, Culver City, CA

*Varsity*, UCSB Faculty Show, Upper Bunk, Goleta, CA

*Reception*, Grand Hotel Abyss, curated by Simon Taylor, Goleta, CA

2011 PULSE Contemporary Art Fair, Miami, FL

*Vertigo*, Durden and Ray, Los Angeles, CA

*Recrafting History*, Taylor de Cordoba Gallery, Culver City, CA

2010 *Visible Spectrum*, The University Art Museum, Santa Barbara, CA

*Desert Immersion*, The Palms, curated by Dick Hebdige, Wonder Valley, CA

2009 *Another Year, Another Fire*, Gallery 479 UCSB, Santa Barbara, CA

*Small Images*, Atkinson Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA

*Room With a View*, Atkinson Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA

2008 *Twelve*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Ridley Tree Center, Santa Barbara, CA

*Drawing LA*, Center for the Arts Eagle Rock, Eagle Rock, CA

*Los Angeles Juried Exhibition*, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, juried by Carl Berg, Lisa Melandri and Tyler Stallings, Los Angeles, CA

2003 *Eternal Return*, Davidson Art Center, Middletown, CT

### **Awards**

UCSB Interdisciplinary Humanities Award, Faculty Collaborative Grant, 2012

UCSB College of Creative Studies Teaching Fellowship, 2010-2011

UCSB Interdisciplinary Humanities Award, Graduate Collaborative Grant, 2010

UCSB Department of Art Graduate Merit Award, 2009-2010

University of California Regents Special Fellow, 2008-2010

Wesleyan University Art Department Honors, 2003

Wesleyan University, Phi Beta Kappa, 2003

Wesleyan University, Cum Laude, 2003



*Reception 8*, 2011. Digital c-print, 18 x 12 inches.

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**Front Cover:** *Reception 3*, 2011. Digital c-print, 30 x 40 inches.

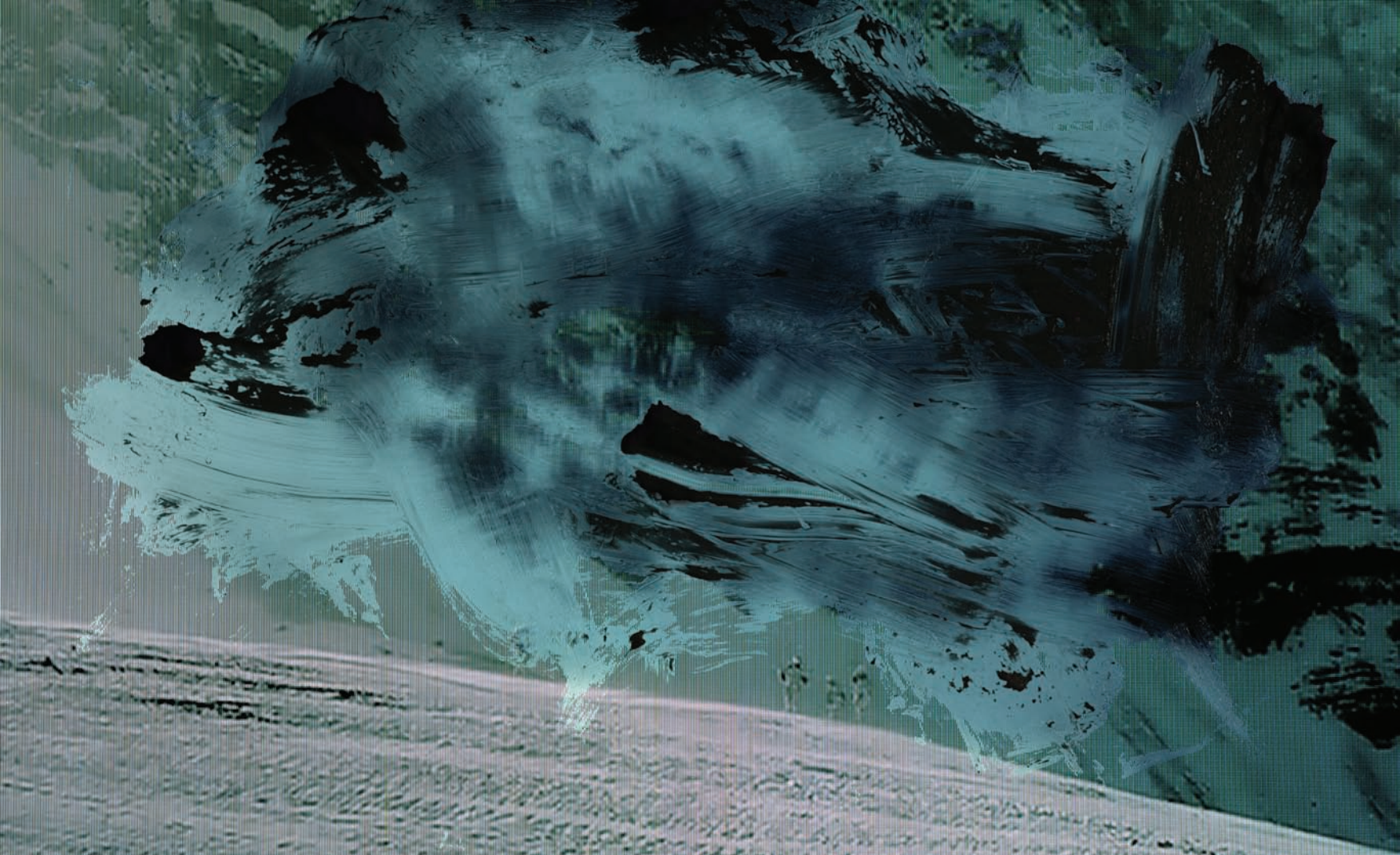
**Back Cover:** *Reception 12*, 2011. Digital c-print, 12 x 18 inches.

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