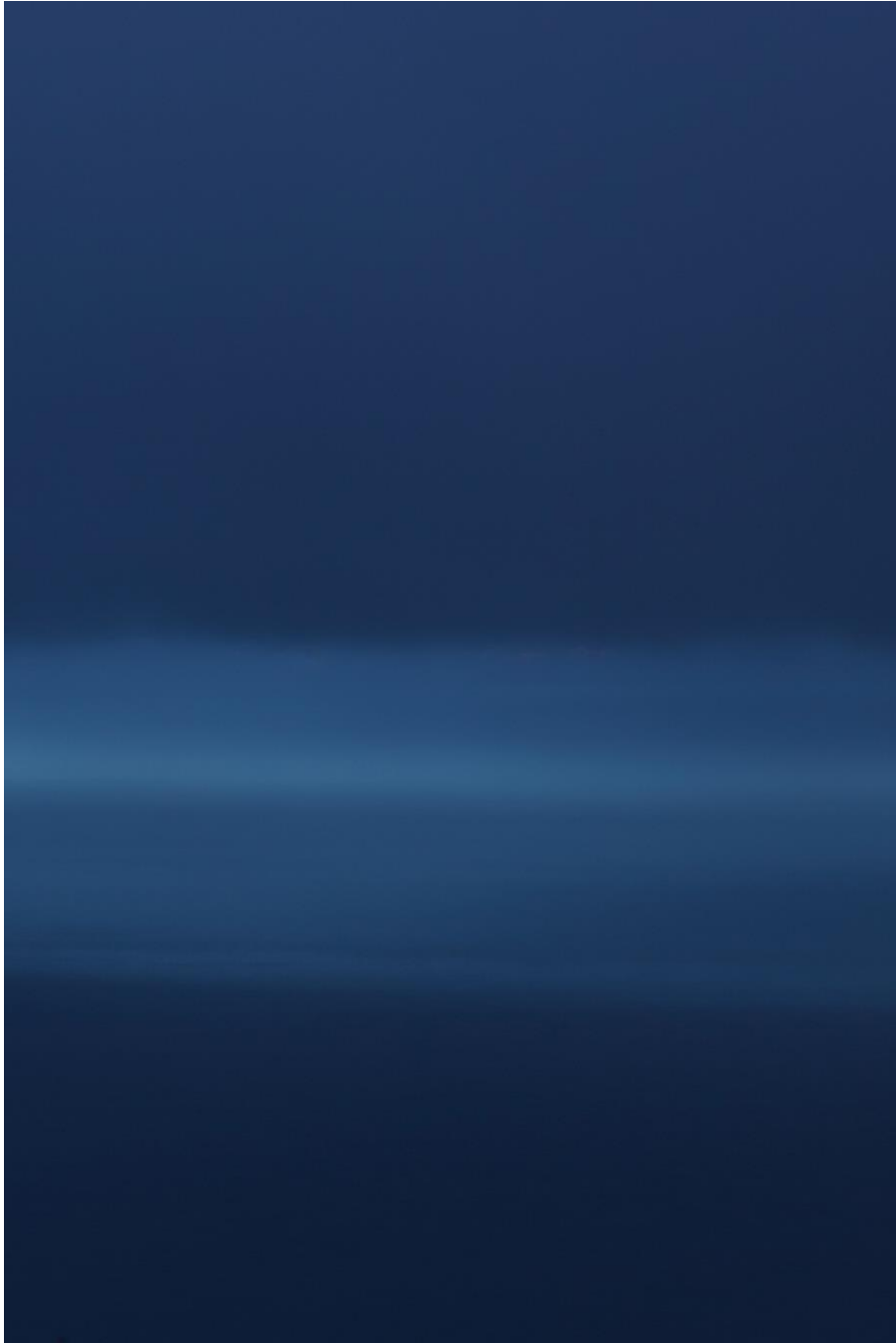


# LAKE A MIRROR

Photographs by François Ventura



June 2026

That on a day of contemplation, the thinker may draw from the serenity of the sky and  
the deep azure of Lake Geneva more noble ideas, more benevolent ideas, and more  
ideas of benefit to humanity than can be drawn from ten centuries of twenty  
revolutions  
*Victor Hugo 1802-1885*

The sea is like a sky that is blue, blue, blue,  
Above it, the sky is like the soft blue of Lake Geneva  
*Blaise Cendrars 1887-1961*

It was then that I realized clearly that even a landscape cannot be described purely  
objectively, cannot be captured by a camera, cannot be painted like a still life;  
A landscape is also something alive, a lived experience;  
And so that is what I have sought to achieve in a painting  
*Oskar Kokoschka 1886-1980*

Photography is the art of painting with light  
*Alphonse de Lamartine 1790-1869*



## BIOGRAPHY

François Ventura was born in 1967 in Vevey and lives on the shores of Lac Léman. As a teenager, after learning photography at school, he enthusiastically produced his first silver prints in his family's basement before taking his camera and lenses to many countries in Asia. A mountaineer, he has photographed the ascent of the most beautiful peaks in the Alps, including the Matterhorn, Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa and the Dent d'Hérens, ...

Since 2017, he has been photographing the same section of the lake and its mirror effects, depending on the light.

In 2022, the book *MIROIR DU LÉMAN – LAKE A MIRROR*, edited by Favre publishing, was selected as a Payot bookshop favorite and its launch took place at the Swiss Camera Museum in Vevey at the invitation of Luc Debraine (director).

In 2023, the book was presented among others at the *Open Books* exhibition at *PHOTO ELYSÉE* in Lausanne in collaboration with *EPFL+ECAL* and on the recommendation of Nicolas Henchoz (curator). This will be followed by exhibitions of large-format prints by Luca Delachaux on Hahnemuehle Art paper, at the *Musée du Léman* gallery in Nyon, the *TCarmine* gallery in Geneva and several others under the artistic direction of *Murs Porteurs*. Since 2026, François Ventura has been listed among the twenty or so renowned photographers recognised by Hahnemuehle.

François Ventura still works as a specialist in anesthesia and intensive care medicine in Geneva, and as an emergency doctor for helicopter rescue services in the Valais Alps... which he also photographs.

Interview TV Léman Bleu - January 2023

Interview - November 2025

Interview par Silvana Moï Virchaux - December 2025

Article L'Art à Genève - January 2026

**LAKE A MIRROR** is a collection of photographs all taken from the same place, and always from the same horizon, the lake... only the moment and the framing change. They are the raw reflet of the nature, seasons, wind, clouds, sun, ...

These images are the mirror of our moods, our emotions, ... our external lights and our internal shadows.

The lake, *like a mirror* of the human soul and solitude in the vast expanse... a place for contemplation.

## CONCEPT

The lake as a canvas. The sun, the light, and the shadows as paint. The wind, the waves, and the *natural ripples* as brushes. The photographer to capture this raw scene. The artist to reflect their emotions in the mirror—the lake. Photographs that mirror these scenes.

If, for Alphonse de Lamartine, *photography is the art of painting with light* (Photo from φωτος, photos: light; ... graphy from γραφειν, graphein: to paint, draw, write, ...), then might we create the term *limnigraphy* here? (λίμνη, límni: lake)

In any case, the **first part** of the LAKE A MIRROR project, which began in 2017, is to capture the reality of these lakeside scenes, to show it, to experience it, to feel it, ...

The **second part**, completed in 2022, is an extensive bibliographic research project, which is included in the book, aimed at comparing these paintings of Lake Geneva with the works they inspired in many famous artists <sup>[1][2][3]</sup>. To painters <sup>[4][5]</sup> such as Courbet, Hodler <sup>[6][7]</sup>, Kokoschka, Turner <sup>[8]</sup>, Vallotton <sup>[9]</sup> ... To writers such as Hemingway, Hugo, Ramuz, Rousseau, ... To poets such as Byron, Cendrars, Cocteau, Eluard, ... Filmmakers such as Chaplin, Godard, ... To musicians such as Freddy Mercury, Prince, ... *Beau Brant*. An attempt to mirror their quotations with the original source of their inspiration—a meeting of the photographed reality and the artists' creative freedom. Lake Geneva is indeed an inexhaustible source of inspiration for artists <sup>[10][11][12][13][14][15]</sup>.

And, building on this, an encounter with artists from other places who are also engaged in a universal search for reflections, light, darkness, color, and introspection. Quotes from artists such as Kafka, Rothko <sup>[16]</sup>, Soulages <sup>[17]</sup>, ...

Gazing in turn at the sky, that divine face, and the lake, that divine mirror!

*Victor Hugo 1802-1885*

My instrument was no longer darkness, but that secret light that came from the darkness

*Pierre Soulages 1919-2022*

A mirror of life and the sky, a great mirror stands there, in which I see myself;

And the mountain is reflected there too, and I, standing beside it, try to grasp this double image

*Charles Ferdinand Ramuz 1878-1947*

The third part, created in 2026, is an iconographic exploration of paintings and photographs also inspired by Lake Geneva, lakes, seas, oceans, light, mirrors... and to see if the LAKE A MIRROR images—these photographs, these raw *limnigraphs* (only slightly optimized in post-production for printing) of Lake Geneva—might humbly illustrate and put into perspective the famous works. “Like-lake” *limnographs* of Hodler’s Lake Geneva paintings? Of Vallotton’s? ... “Lake” of the famous paintings and photographs by Rothko? By Soulages? By Sugimoto? ...

## COLLECTIONS

The LAKE A MIRROR collection consists of seven art series of 12 to 32 photographs each. The two figurative series, LAKE A PAINTING & LAKE A PANORAMIC, and five more abstract and conceptual series: LAKE GOLD, LAKE SILVER, LAKE WAVES, LAKE BLACK & LAKE MATRIX.

The LAKE A JET OF LIGHT collection, comprising two series – LAKE A BOAT and LAKE A DECO – was originally specially selected through a design competition for the iconic Hôtel Métropole in Geneva.

## TECHNIC

The LAKE A MIRROR collection, which began in September 2017, contains over 8,000 photographs (RAW/JPEG), all taken from Lutry, Switzerland, using a Canon 6D Mark II, a Canon Ultrasonic 100-400mm f/4.5–5.6 lens, a Canon 1.4 extender, and a Benro FIF28C tripod.

Most of the photographs in the abstract series LAKE GOLD, LAKE SILVER, LAKE WAVES, and in particular LAKE BLACK & LAKE MATRIX capture completely blinding mirror effects, requiring the use of Category 4 polarised sunglasses to compose the shot. The shots are then taken, deliberately without an ND or polarising filter, in manual mode with a shutter speed between 1/800 and 1/4000 of a second and an aperture between f/16 and f/40, at ISO 100.

The chosen technique allows for the *black effect* in broad daylight... The *effect of seeing the mirror rather than the reflection*, the *effect of seeing the soul in depth*, the *effect of seeing the inner shadows rather than the outer lights*, not being dazzled but seeing. A deep and obsessive personal quest for truth, for authenticity... without filters, beyond our mirrors. Here, the man, the doctor, becomes the photographer.

## ART PRINTS

Filters and other techniques add contrast and spectacular colors to photographs. In an instant, these surreal images leap out at us... dazzling us and blinding us. Here, on the contrary, with these raw photographs you must take the time to let your gaze plunge into the image, the mirror, the lake... and see. As Henri Cartier-Bresson said: *The photos capture me, not the other way around.*

The photographs are not retouched in post-production, but are slightly optimised for printing on Hahnemuehle art paper (PhotoRag UltraSmooth 305 g/m<sup>2</sup> or Metallic 340 g/m<sup>2</sup> depending on the series, pigment inkjet) by Luca Delachaux, president of the Swiss Association of Professional Photographers (SIYU), in his Platinum-certified photographic studio in Lausanne. A maximum of five copies of each photograph is printed (in a format of your choice), signed, numbered, certified and registered on Hahnemühle MyArtRegistry.

The title of each photograph is the name of the series, along with the date and time it was taken.

## EXHIBITIONS

- PHOTO ELYSEE, Lausanne, 2023
- Murs Porteurs, Château d'Ouchy, Lausanne, 2024-2025
- Murs Porteurs & Stuart Forbes, Hôtel Métropole, Genève, à demeure
- Galerie du Musée du Léman, Nyon, 2025
- Murs Porteurs, OA Legal, Place Longemalle, Genève, 2025
- Murs Porteurs, Architectes Etienne & Associés, Morges 2025
- Galerie TCarmine, Quartier des Bains, Genève, 2026
- Murs Porteurs, la Foncière, Lausanne, 2026
- Murs Porteurs, Be Water, Casablanca, Maroc, 2026

## BOOK

Published in late 2022 by Editions Favre in Lausanne, the book **MIROIR DU LÉMAN - LAKE A MIRROR** is a selection of photographs from the LAKE A MIRROR collection, which humbly illustrate quotes from famous artists who have admired Lake Geneva and its mirror-like effects.

Available from PAYOT, fnac, ... and in museum bookshops (Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts MCBA in Lausanne, Swiss Museum of Photography in Vevey, Musée du Léman in Nyon), ... on Galaxus.



A subtle tribute to our Lake Geneva

Magazine Aimer Lire Payot

Inspiring and inspiring images

Journal des Indépendants de Genève

A highly accomplished work, as poetic as it is contemplative

Journal Lausanne Cité

There is no prescribed way to look at the images: everyone is free to engage with them, projecting their own emotions, memories and personal connection to the lake onto them. The collection as a whole has a deeply contemplative feel to it

L'Art à Genève

A photographic masterpiece on Lake Geneva: a subtle tribute to your lake

This book is a marvel! It hasn't found a place on a shelf where it would lie lifeless...

It's simply sitting on my sofa...

These photos move me deeply. Each one is a meditation

Anonymes

# LAKE A PAINTING

32 photographs 2018–2026

These photographs are like paintings

The weather plays its part, and Lake Geneva changes its appearance every hour

*Marcel Duchamp 1887-1955*



## LAKE A PAINTING #1

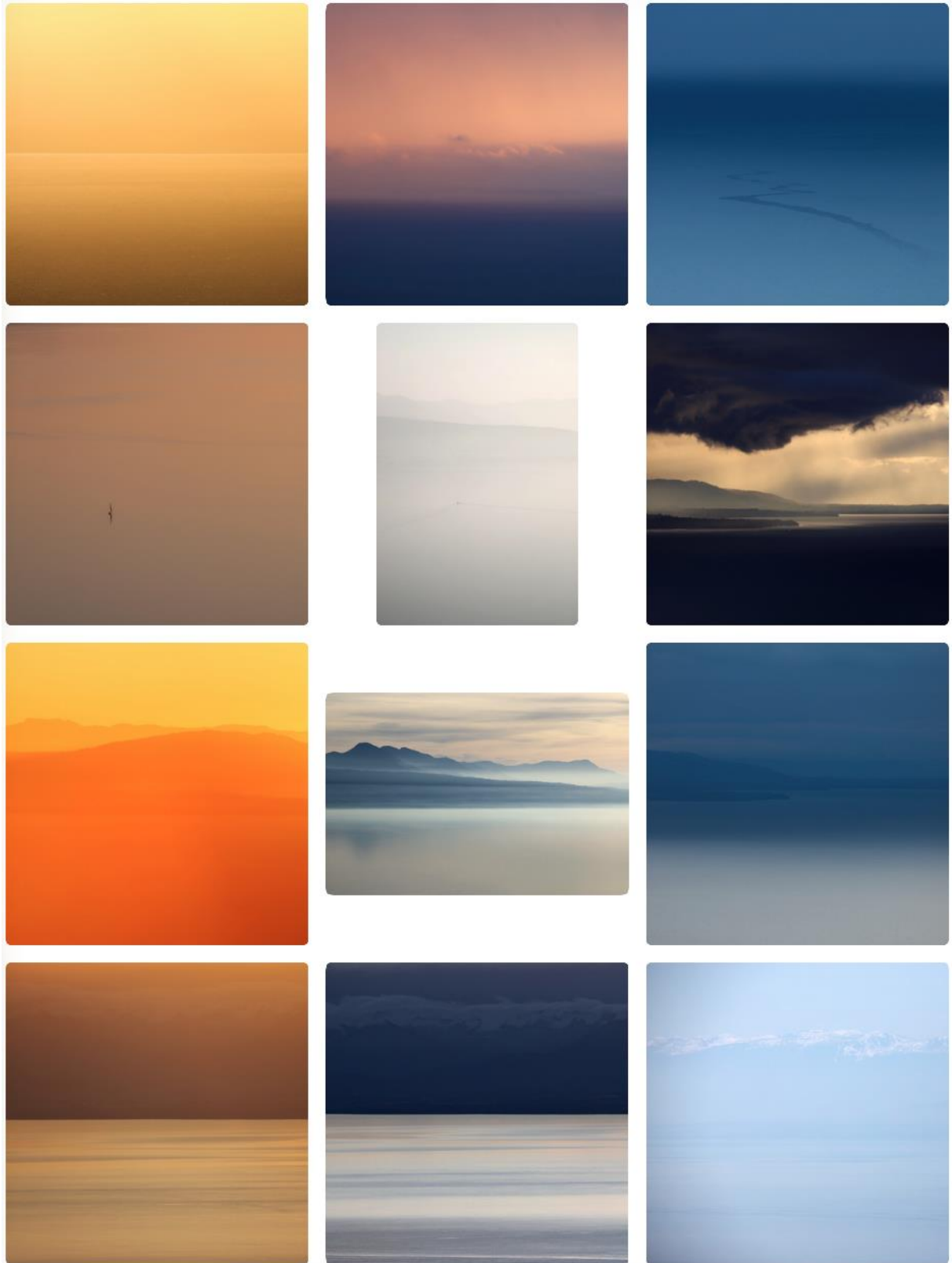
Sunday 17 February 2019 – 6.09 pm

He sits before his lake, like a child before a picture book; leaning on both elbows, bending over it, his forehead pressed forward, he gazes at the smooth surface, at the beautiful patterns created by the reflections of a sky laden with clouds or, even darker still, of its azure expanse alone.

And the lake is there, ...

You can see patches of oil on its surface; it is like paving or a roof; it is scaly, it is zinc, it is blue, it is pink... Just as the child, with every page turned, finds a new opportunity to dream, but you do not even need to turn the page, for the sky turns it for you.

*Charles Ferdinand Ramuz, 1878-1947*



Just look how everything ahead is nothing but lines and space! Don't you feel as though you're standing at the edge of the world, conversing freely with the universe...

*Ferdinand Hodler 1853-1918*

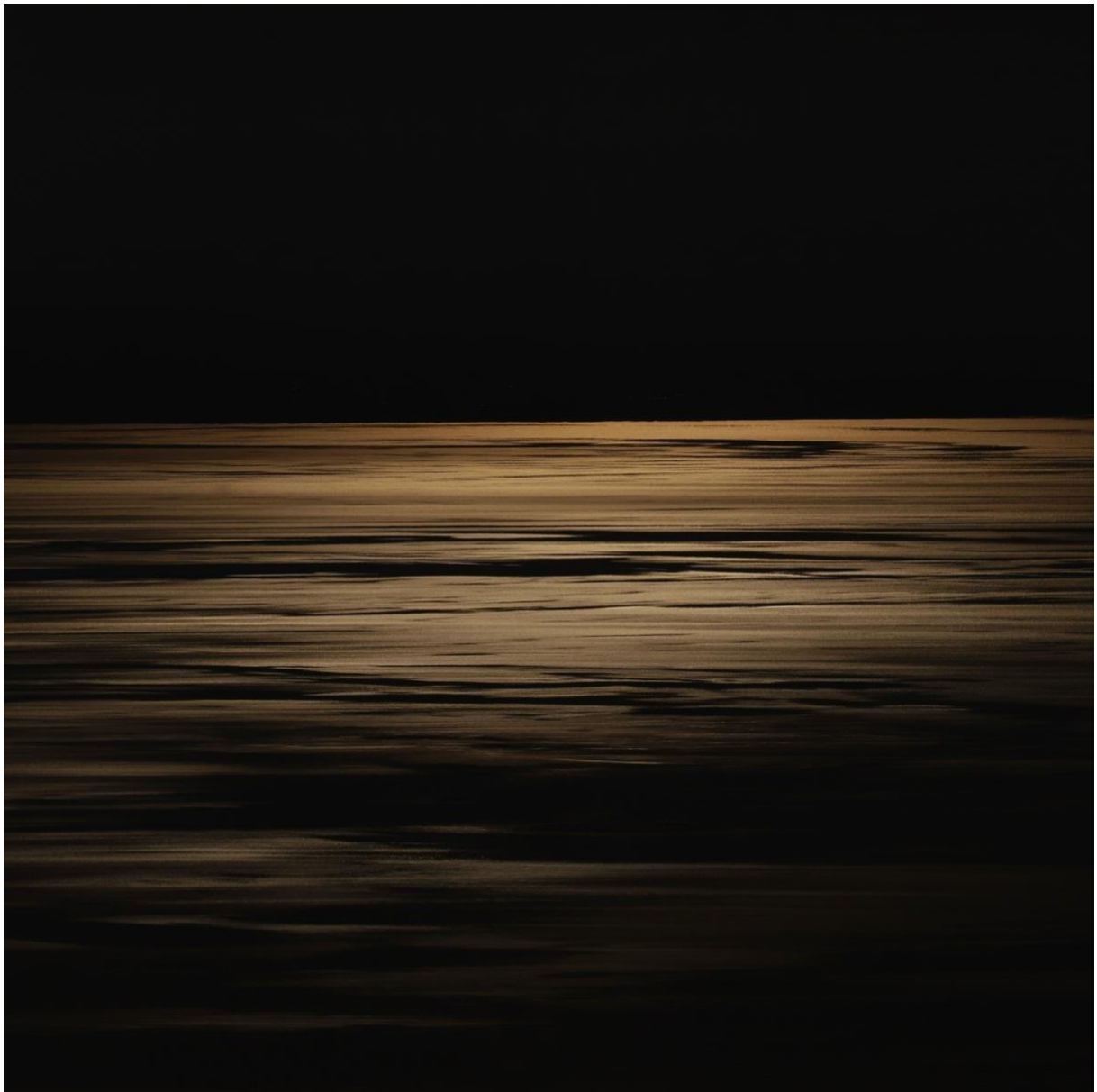
# LAKE GOLD

23 photographs 2018–2026

The lake, like a golden mirror

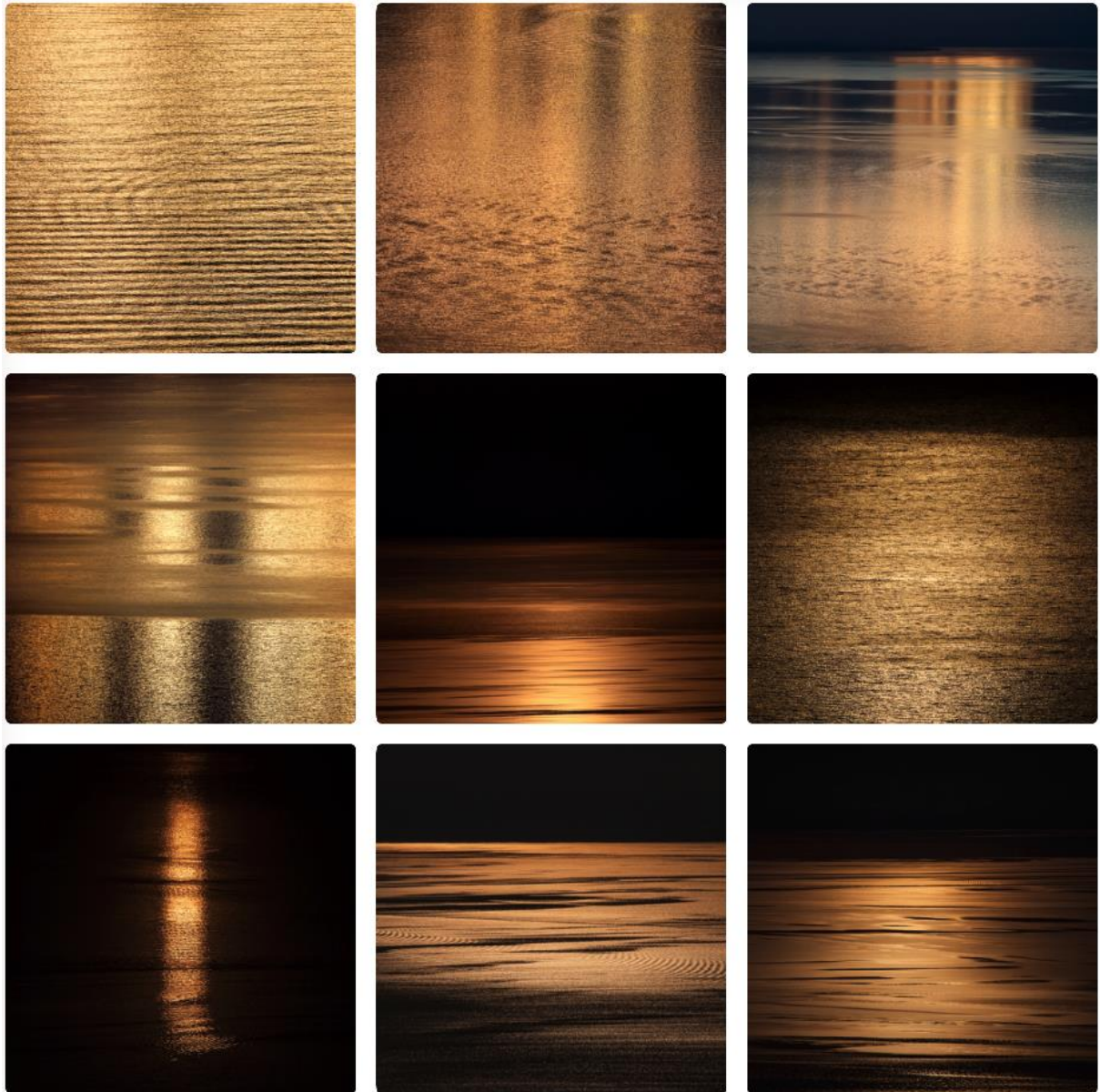
This is an emergency; the light is on, and it will stay on for ten seconds, so this is an emergency.

*Jean-Luc Godard 1930-2022*



LAKE GOLD #20

Monday 10 November 2025 – 3.51 pm



So quiet and peaceful  
Tranquil and blissful  
There's a kind of magic in the air  
What a truly magnificent view  
A breathtaking scene  
With the dreams of the world  
In the palm of your hand  
*Freddie Mercury 1946-1991*

# LAKE SILVER

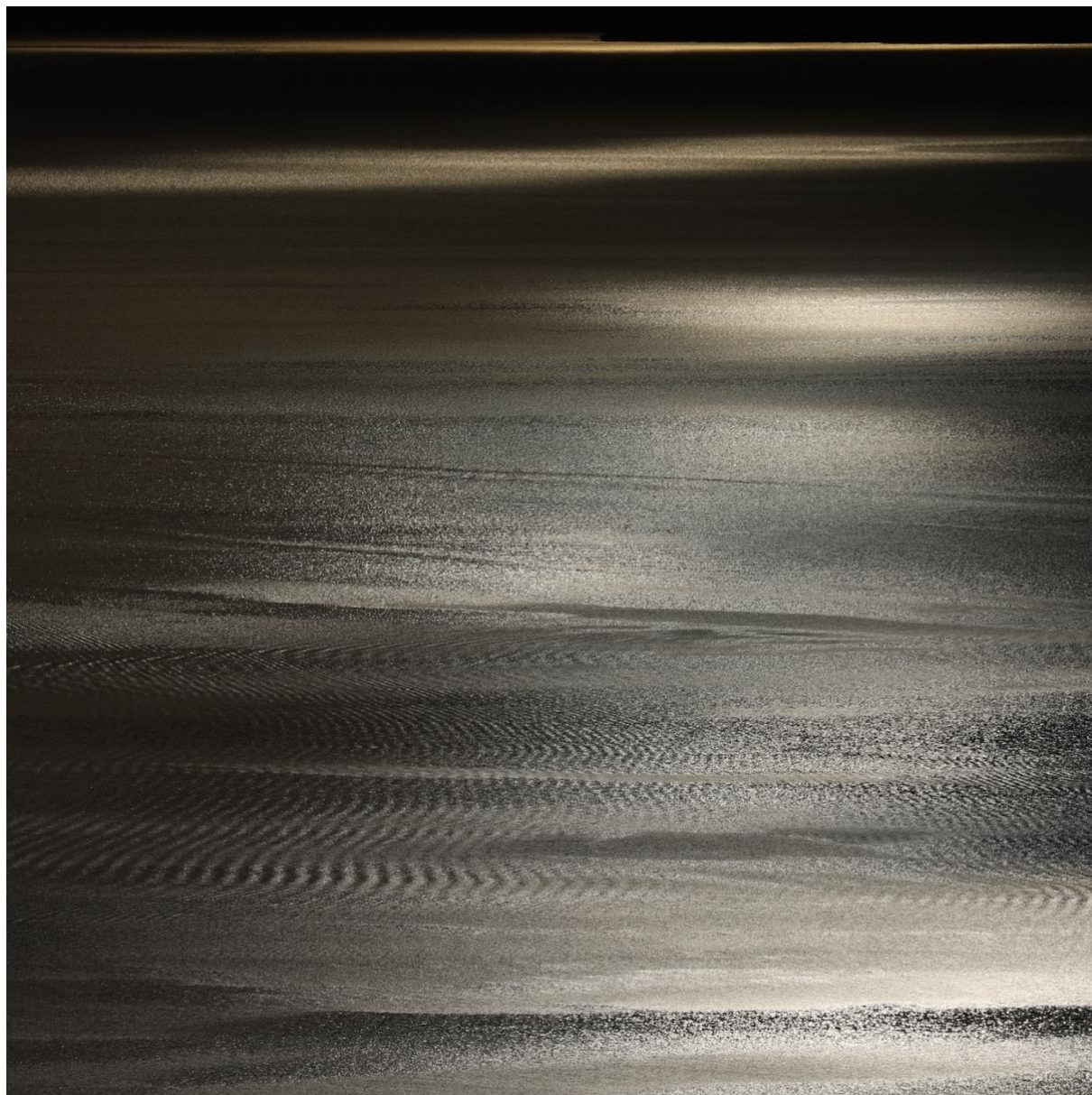
20 photographs 2024–2025

The lake, like a silver mirror

It is not the gaze that captures the images; it is the images that capture the gaze

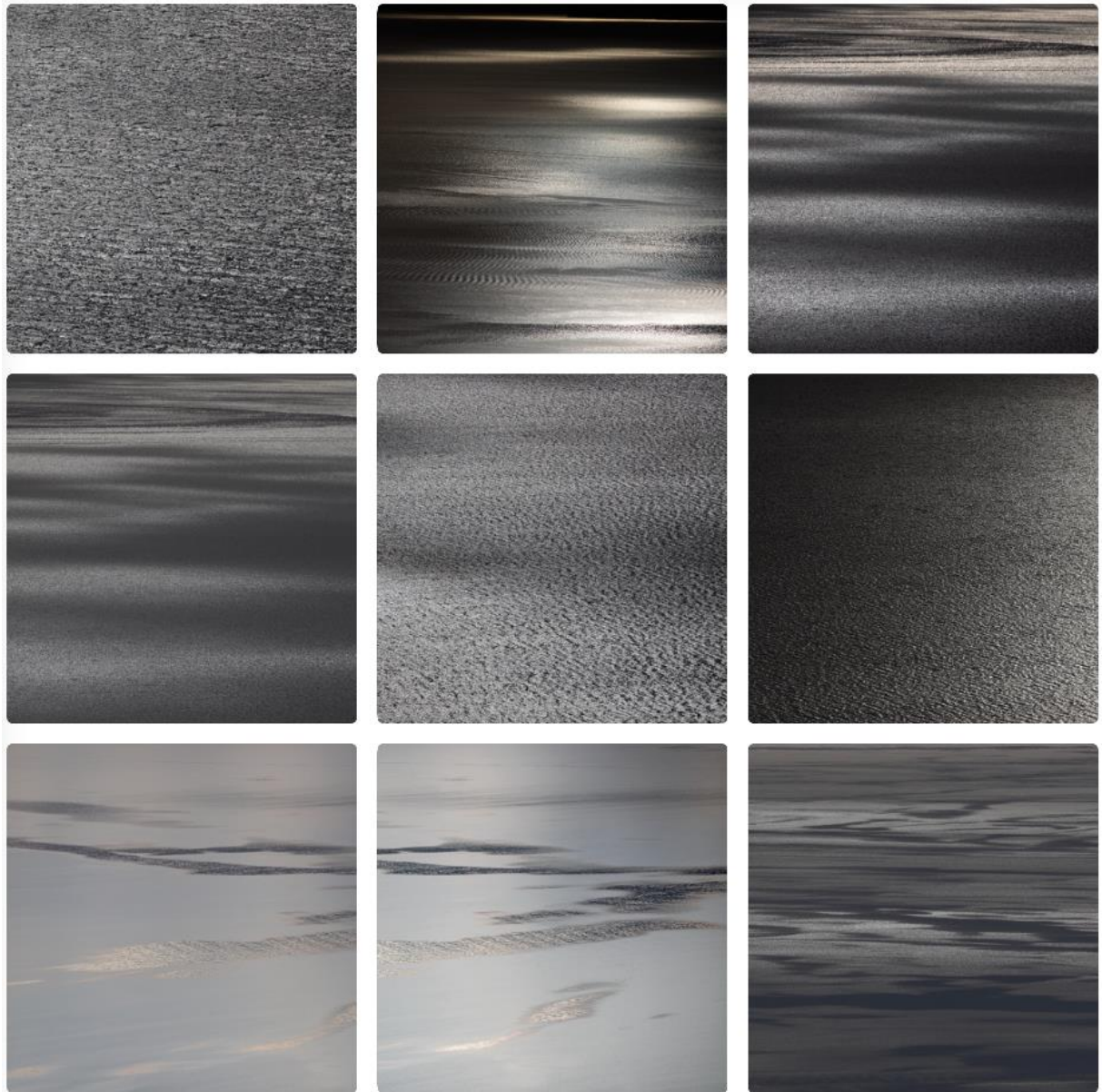
They flood the consciousness

*Franz Kafka 1883-1924*



LAKE SILVER #9

Wednesday 9 October 2024 – 4.53 pm



Et The lake! Indomitable. Monday morning's shot was the complete opposite: a misty lake, veiled mountains, a hazy, languid dawn... He'd taken loads of gentle photos...  
But Wednesday's shot was simple: it really grabbed you by the throat  
*Metin Ardit*

# LAKE WAVES

23 photographs 2018–2026

Waves like ripples of light and shadow

Gazing in turn at the sky, that divine face, and the lake, that divine mirror!

*Victor Hugo 1802-1885*



LAKE WAVES #7

Friday 4 February 2022 – 5.31 pm



A painting is not a picture of an experience, but it is the experience.  
*Mark Rothko 1903-1970*

# LAKE BLACK

24 photographs 2024–2026

Black as the lake

I want the viewer to be with the painting, not with me;

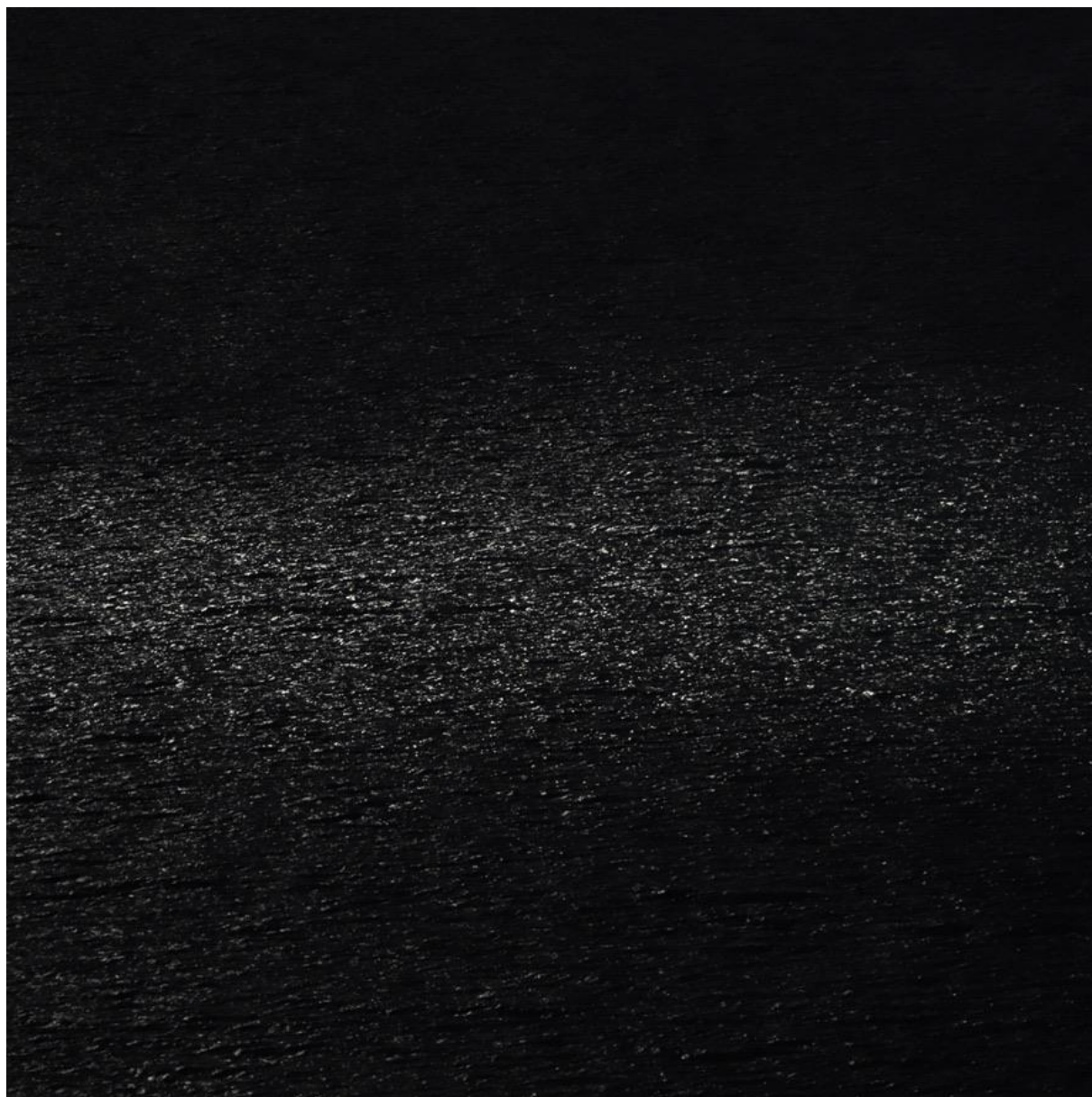
I want them to see what's on the canvas;

Nothing else;

Black is brilliant for that—it reflects;

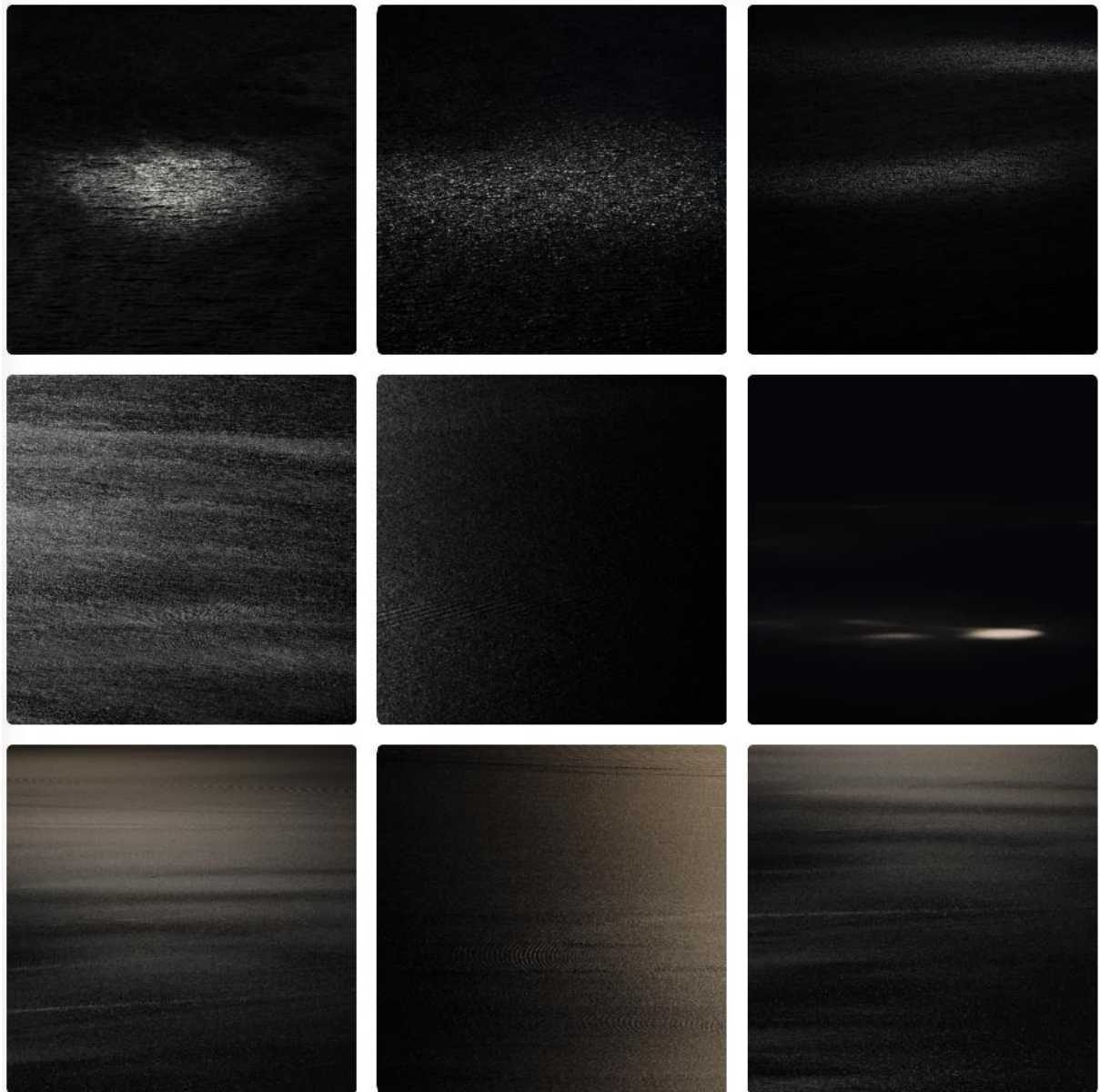
the movements that matter are those of the viewer

*Pierre Soulages 1919-2022*



LAKE BLACK #4

Wednesday 3 January 2024 – 3.14 pm



This lake? An inkwell in which everyone has dipped their pen.  
*Jacques Chessex 1934-2009*

# LAKE MATRIX

12 photographs 2025

The waves, the reflections, like pixels... like a matrix.

Lake Geneva: one must resign oneself to its moods

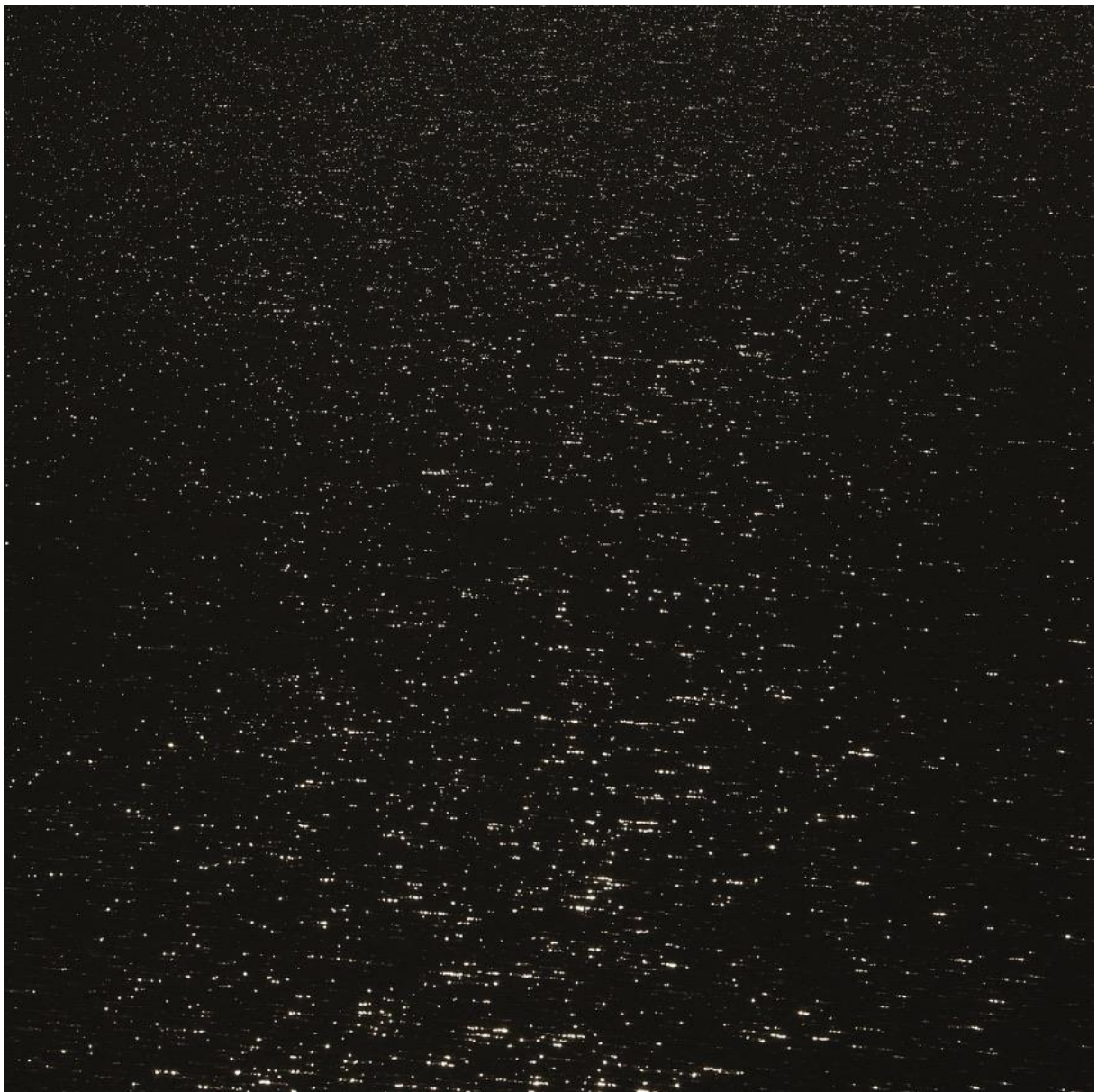
One more drop, and it overflows

Its charm defies interpretation

Only God is responsible for its setting

It is the abode of selflessness

*Jean Cocteau, 1989-1963*



LAKE MATRIX #1

Wednesday 29 January 2025, 15:15:20



The center of the world is everywhere; the theory of relativity has proven it  
But the fact that the center of the world is actually situated somewhere in the air above Lake  
Geneva, halfway up the great Lavaux vineyards, requires no proof whatsoever, nor can it be proven:  
you experience it 'as naturally as breathing', or else you have never truly been here, have never  
existed in this place  
*Denis de Rougemont 1906-1985*

# LAKE A PANORAMIC

24 photographs 2018–2026

These photographs are like panoramas

Everything is too big – the scenery and the water

*Oskar Kokoschka 1886-1980*

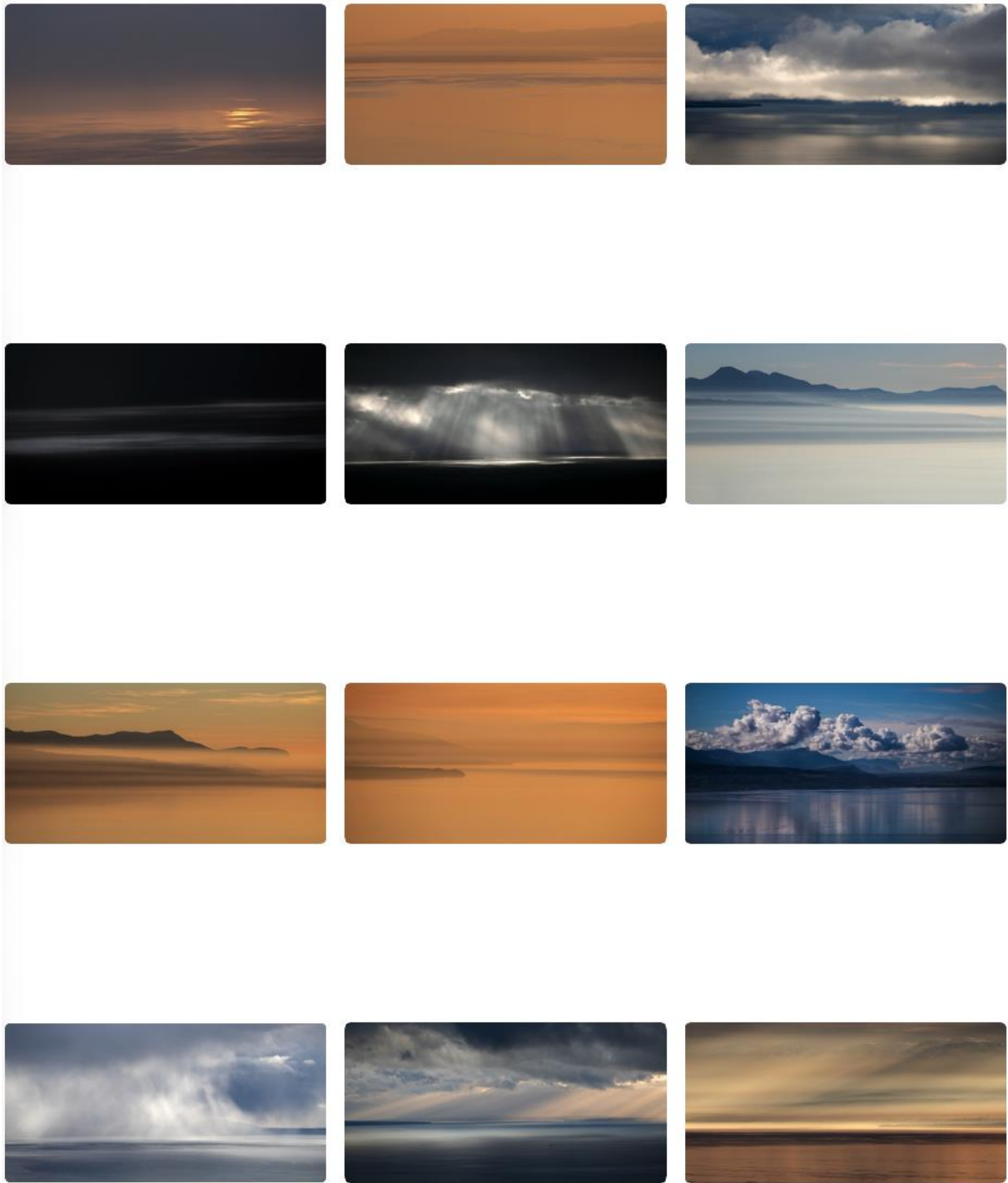


## LAKE A PANORAMIC #12

Saturday 3 February 2024 – 5.21 pm

How much happier are those who are awake yet at ease... who can derive intense pleasure from the light and the lake they overlook, from the shapes of the distant mountains that blend into the deep apricot hues of the setting sun...

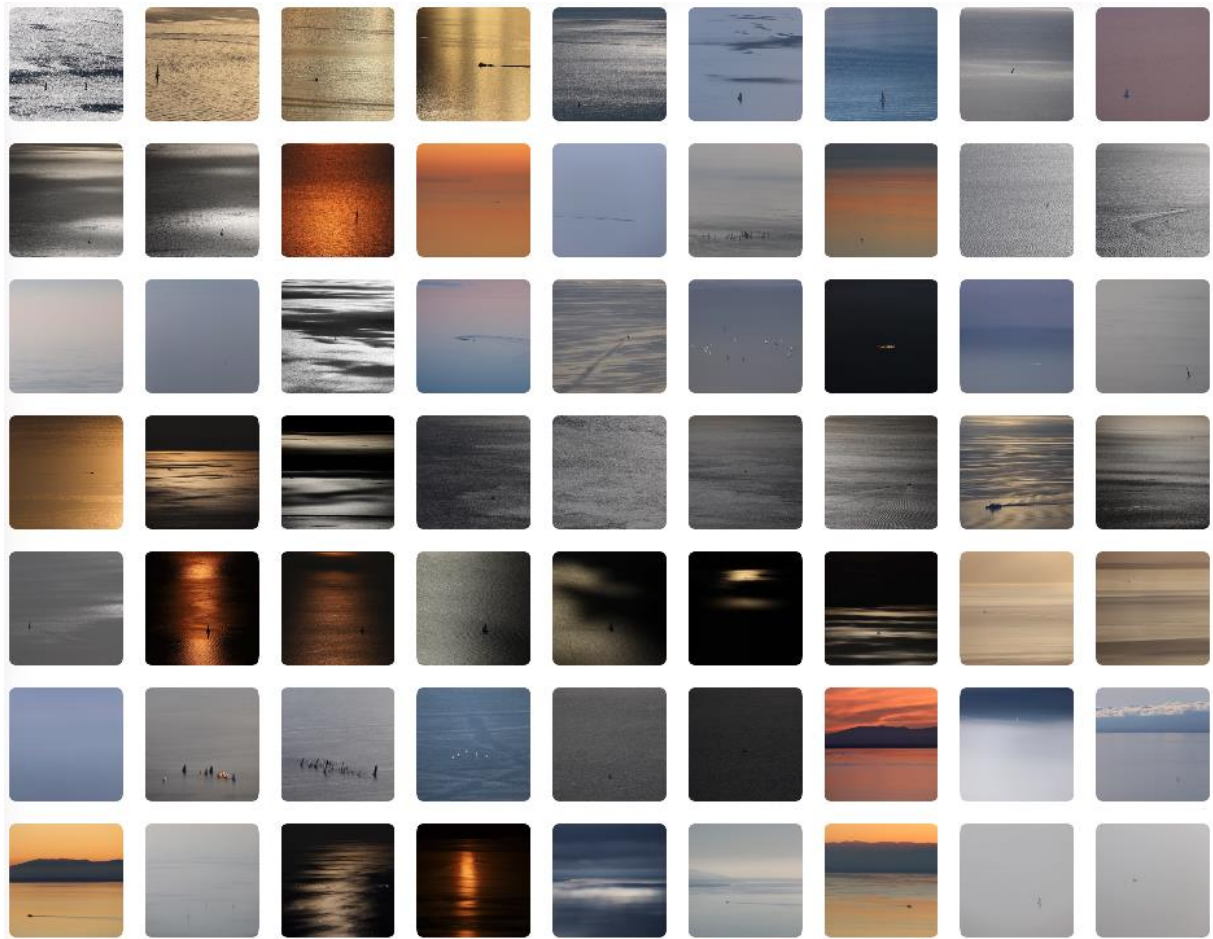
*Vladimir Nabokov 1899-1977*



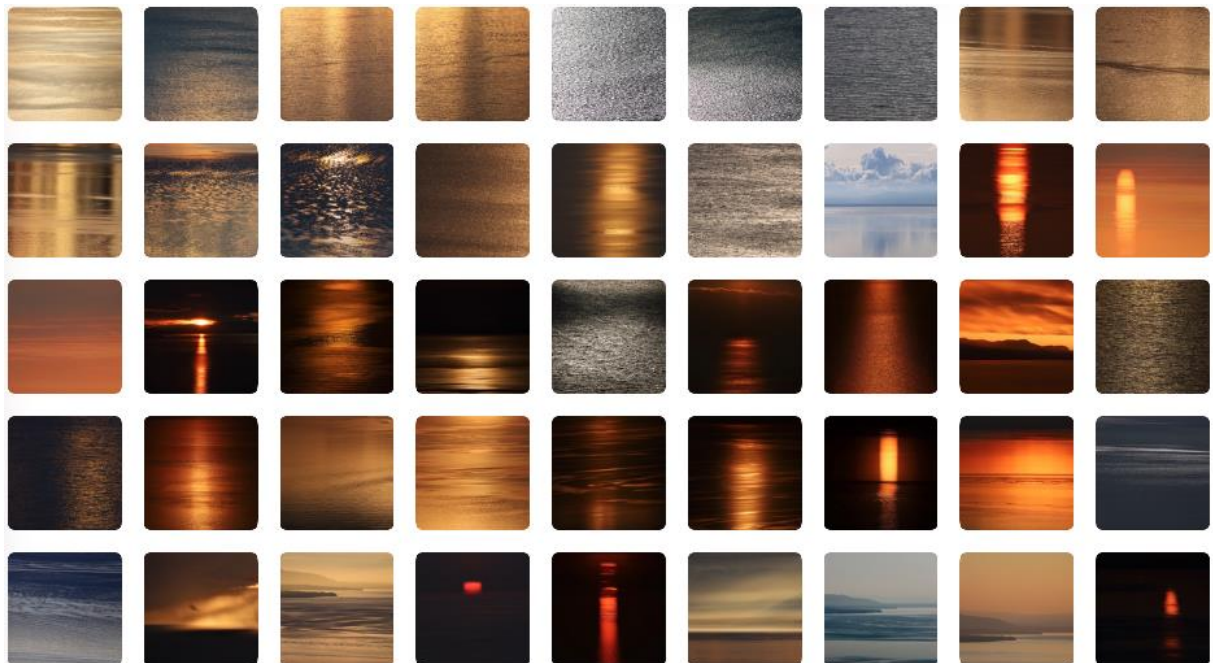
Revolution time has come today  
'Cause it took a black face to see the same decay  
Like the chocolate of Vevey, in the sun they'll melt away  
As for me, I'll laugh and go to the mountains where the waters flow  
Back to the vineyards of Lavaux  
*Prince 1958-2016*

# LAKE A JET OF LIGHT – Metropole’s Collection

## LAKE A BOAT



## LAKE A DECO



## QUOTES REFERENCES

- [1] P. Fry and J. Michael, *Autour du Léman. Histoire et esthétique d'un espace lacustre*, Genève: Métispresses, 2017.
- [2] B. Peyrani and A. Bandle, *Ils ont changé le monde sur le Léman. Voltaire-Rousseau-De Staël-Hugo-Stendhal-Chateaubriand-Dumas-Flaubert-Rolland-Byron*, Genève: Slatkine, 2020.
- [3] D. Radrizzani, *Lemancolia. Traité artistique du Léman*, Vevey: Noir sur Blanc - Musée Jenisch Vevey, 2013.
- [4] C. d. Alencastro, *Bocion. Peintre du Léman*, vol. Collection Presto, Gollion: Infolio, 2022.
- [5] M. Jean-Petit-Matile, *Le Léman vu par les peintres*, Lausanne: Edita, 1983.
- [6] C. Amoruso, *Ferdinand Hodler et le Léman - Chefs d'oeuvres de collection Suisse*, Musée d'art de Pully - Hatje Cantz ed., Diana Blome & Niklaus Manuel Güdel im Auftrag vom Archiv Jura Brüscheiler, 2018.
- [7] N. M. Güdel, L. Langer and P. Clerc, *Ferdinand Hodler. Un modèle pour l'art suisse*, Vols. Musée d'art de Pully - Musée d'art et d'histoire de Neuchâtel, Genève: Editions Notari, 2025.
- [8] J. Bindé, "Hodler, Turner, Vallotton... Le lac Léman, miroir cristallin qui a ébloui les maîtres du paysage au XIXe siècle," *BeauxArts*, 15 juillet 2025.
- [9] C. Lepdor and K. Poletti, *Vallotton Forever*, Vols. Musée Cantonal des Beaux-arts Lausanne, Zürich: Scheidegger & Spiess.
- [10] M. d. e. d. MAH, *Le Léman des artistes. Une source intarissable*, Genève.
- [11] G. d. Pourtalès, *Marins d'eau douce*, Carouge: ZOE - Poche, 2016.
- [12] I. Falconnier, *LEMEN. Légendes d'un lac*, vol. Collection l'âme des peuples, Bruxelles: Nevicata, 2021.
- [13] R. Juge, "Nous autres, nous avons le lac," vol. 100, juin 2016.
- [14] M. Marozeau, "Le Léman, miroir de la mélancolie," *Le Journal des Arts*, 16 septembre 2013.
- [15] V. Schmitz-Grucker, "L'art du paysage en Suisse de Hodler à Vallotton," *La gazette Drouot*, 20 novembre 2024.
- [16] M. Céhère, "Mark Rothko, la peinture-miroir," *Anti Thèse*, 8 décembre 2023.
- [17] P. Vaudray, "Pierre Soulages – La lumière comme matière," [Online]. Available: <https://www.pierre-soulages.com/document/pierre-soulages-la-lumiere-comme-matiere/>.

## MERCI

Thanks to Isabelle Falconnier, Chevalière de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la République de France, former president of the Salon du livre de Genève, former delegate for the book policy of the City of Lausanne and currently director of the Club Suisse de la presse, for putting me in contact with the world of books and publishing.

In 2021, Isabelle published *Léman, Légendes d'un lac* with Nevicata Editions.

Thanks to Luc Debraine, former director of the Swiss Camera Museum in Vevey for his professional eye, the artistic validation of this series of images, its invitation and reception for the opening of the book.

Thanks to Editions Favre in Lausanne and to Sophie Rossier, publishing director, and Elisa Bergaz, editor, for their confidence, the realization and the publishing of the book.

Thanks to Nicolas Henchoz, Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la République de France, director of EPFL-ECAL-Lab, curator of numerous art exhibitions (American Institute of Architecture New York, Royal College of Art London, The Laboratory@Harvard, Le Lieu du Design Paris, etc), for carefully placing my book among other photographic books in his Open Books exhibition at the prestigious PHOTO ELYSEE in Lausanne.

Thanks to Luca Delachaux, professional photographer and President of the Swiss Union of Professional Photographers, for its expertise and the optimized printing of photographs in its Hahnemühle Platinum certified Atelier.

Thanks to Nathalie Hecker, curator and artistic director of Murs Porteurs, for allowing me to prepare my first exhibition from June 2024 to March 2025 at the famous and historic Château d'Ouchy in Lausanne... on the shores of Lake Geneva. Since then, our fruitful collaboration has led to the staging of several other exhibitions.

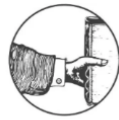
It was also Nathalie who submitted my work to the competition organised by the renowned London design and architecture firm Stuart Forbes Associates for the artistic decoration of the iconic Hôtel Métropole in Geneva following its renovation.

Thank you to Silvana Moi Virchaux, intercultural mediator and artistic director of the TCarminé Gallery in Geneva, for hosting the LAKE A MIRROR exhibition in 2026 and for continuing to support me in my artistic endeavours.

Thank you to Beau Brant, an American pianist who composed *Winter at Lac Léman*, among other pieces, and who enthusiastically accompanies my photographs with his inspiring melodies. A truly wonderful artistic encounter.

Thanks to Anouk Smetana at her Atelier du Cadre in Puidoux, to Pierre-André Roduit, art framer in Fully, and Adeline Roch at Atelier 9A for their expertise and advice on framing the photographs.

Thanks to Mehrshad Foroughan and Andrew Barry, researchers at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), who published a physical explanation in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters* in 2022 for the natural frontal slick that form on Lake Geneva and that Hodler was one of the first to immortalize.



FAVRE



**PHOTO ELYSÉE**



François Ventura  
Chemin de la Sapelle 39  
CH-1090 La Croix sur Lutry  
+41.79.346.00.87  
[info@lake-a-mirror.ch](mailto:info@lake-a-mirror.ch)