

“Brian Oglesbee creates his images from the inside out. These photographs are purely the product of photography and function as such without the slightest doubt as to their integrity. Only photography could produce these images and only Oglesbee could produce these photographs. He is a photographer in the clearest sense of the word.”

—Ralph Gibson, *legendary fine art photographer and book artist*

BRIAN OGLESBEE is an American photographer living in New York State. He has been exhibiting his photographs in group and one-man shows, predominantly in USA but also in Canada and Japan, since the early 1980s. His work hangs in many public and private collections including the George Eastman House, Rochester, New York, the International Centre of Photography, New York, the Brooklyn Museum, in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, and the Museum of Fine Arts, St Petersburg, Florida.

Oglesbee is convinced that photography's power comes from its unparalleled ability to describe what is visible in front of the camera. He tries to provide subjects or combinations of light and substance which test that power. Oglesbee's photographs are very "straight," in other words the camera simply records what was in front of it—one standing at the lens would see exactly what the camera "sees." There is no manipulation after the initial single exposure of the negative either in the darkroom, nor with the aid of computers.

LESLEY BRILL has published essays on the photos of Diane Arbus, Eugene Atget, and Brett Weston, and books on the films of Alfred Hitchcock and John Huston. He teaches and is a professor and former Chair in the Department of English at Wayne State University in Detroit.

DR. THERESE MULLIGAN is the former Curator of Photography at the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House in Rochester, NY, and is currently a professor and Coordinator, MFA Program in Imaging Arts—Photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

*Aquatique: The Photography of Brian Oglesbee*

Foreword by Dr. Therese Mulligan

Essay by Lesley Brill

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AQUATIQUE

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN OGLESBEE

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## AQUATIQUE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN OGLESBEE

The watery confines of Brian Oglesbee's magnificent and unadulterated photography beguile the eye. Nothing is quite what it seems, and the rich, sensual images of his "Water Series," captured here, draw up back again and again, searching for clues as to just what these mysterious figures can tell us.

The photographs record without alteration what was within the field of view of the lens when they were exposed, but the worlds Oglesbee creates—often as elaborately constructed and illuminated as small movie sets—are designed to be paradoxical and richly expressive.

Lovingly reproduced here in rich quadtone printing, these photographs can be seen as they were intended, with all their depth and richness.

The foreword, by noted Eastman Center curator and photographic historian Therese Mulligan, helps to place Oglesbee in a grand tradition of photographic innovators.

The technique on display in Brian Oglesbee's watery work is mesmerizing, but when you get beyond the wonder of how the pictures were made you find a rich mysticism that is all too rare in today's dryly observational art photography. Rather than copy nature, Oglesbee's images seem to mimic it by offering a level of detail that gets more and more complex the closer you look. Unlike the one-note photographs that pervade our world, they invite that kind of scrutiny."

—Russell Hart, *Executive Editor, American Photo magazine*

“No one makes photographs like these. Brian Oglesbee, in his brilliantly creative use of water, has produced true art, magical and beautiful. The images are nothing short of amazing!”

—Howard Schatz, *world-renowned photographer and author of more than 15 books of photographs*