

Victoria Sambunaris
Fall Line
May 29 – July 2, 2026



Yancey Richardson is pleased to present *Fall Line*, an exhibition of new work by Victoria Sambunaris that continues her ongoing project of examining changes to the landscape of the American West resulting from human intervention. Featuring seven large-scale photographs taken over several years with a large format, five-by-seven wooden field camera, this exhibition investigates the complex topography of waterflows, their cultural significance and their current precarity, particularly that of the vast Colorado River system with its seven-state reach and many of its tributaries and drainage systems now diminished or dry. Highly detailed

and dramatically composed, Sambunaris' topographic portraits convey a deeply layered sense of place and our complex relationship to a post-colonial West. The exhibition will be on view from May 29 through July 2, 2026. An opening reception will be held on Friday, May 29 from 6–8PM.

Fall Line builds upon Sambunaris' 2023 exhibition with the gallery, *High and Dry*, which explored the California desert from the reservoir at Lake Mead in Nevada to the All-American Canal, a marvel of engineering that delivers water to California's Imperial Valley. Following the heavy rains of Hurricane Hilary in August of that year, Sambunaris took a detour to Death Valley's Badwater Basin, the lowest point in North America, which had transformed into an ephemeral lake—a six-mile wide, one-foot-deep body of water that appears only rarely, then evaporates. From there, she shifted emphasis to the Colorado River's broader geography. Over several trips made between 2023-2025, covering northeast Colorado down to the Mexican border of California and Arizona, Sambunaris made images not only of the river but of the monumental terrains shaped by its presence and its absence.

Captivated by the primordial landscapes that now serve as sites for agriculture, industry and recreation, and inspired by the intrepid 19th-century photographers whose historic work helped to form an earlier understanding of the region, Sambunaris has embarked on extended, solitary road trips each year since 1999, creating her own unique form of cultural landscape photography, which details the ever-changing ways humans inhabit the landscape. The awesome perspectives in her photographs—each of which she achieves with a restrained and methodical approach, traversing the terrain on foot and waiting sometimes hours for the precise light to appear—are troubled by the subtle traces of powerlines, housing developments, railways and people themselves, reduced as they often are to nearly microscopic proportions. Though nature remains sublime in Sambunaris' work, it is ever tempered by civilization's steady march.

Even where human subjects are absent, evidence of their activity disrupts otherwise placid views, highlighting the long-term effects of rapacious development of the land for extractive purposes. In her photographs, Sambunaris effectively situates competing and oftentimes contradictory concerns of different communities—ranchers, oil workers, miners and urban populations who look on from afar—

within the deep time scale of geological history. As water depletion continues to impact the Colorado River and in turn shape the broader region, Sambunaris' photographs remind us of the urgency of this crisis while also vividly depicting the abiding beauty of the landscape, showing us what can still be lost.

Copies of *Victoria Sambunaris: Transformation of a Landscape*, published by Radius Books in 2024, will be available at the gallery. Her first book in over ten years, *Transformation of a Landscape* shares the nuance and majesty of Sambunaris' practice in a large-scale book format that features archival documentation of experiences and observations on the road, such as snapshots, maps, road logs, journals, geology and history books, mineral specimens artifacts and an essay by Angie Keefer.

Victoria Sambunaris was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1964, and currently lives and works in New York. She received a BA from Mount Vernon College in 1986 and an MFA from Yale University School of Art in 1999. She has held teaching positions at Yale University and Sarah Lawrence College, and is currently Guest Critic at Yale School of Architecture.

Her work has been widely exhibited in museums and galleries throughout the United States including National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; and New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe. Her work can be seen in numerous collections throughout the United States, including those of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Lannan Foundation, Santa Fe; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Sambunaris has received numerous awards, including the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship (2021); Charles Red Fellowship in Western American Studies, Brigham Young University (2015); Aaron Siskind Foundation Individual Photographer's Fellowship (2010); and the Anonymous Was a Woman Award (2010). A monograph of her work, *Taxonomy of a Landscape: Victoria Sambunaris*, was published by Radius Books in 2013.

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Image: Victoria Sambunaris, *Untitled, (Wahweap marina), Lake Powell, Page, Arizona*, 2023. Archival pigment print, 39 x 55 inches.