

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VVVVVVVVVVVVVV
CJ Heyliger

Oct. 8 – Dec. 3, 2022

Gallery Luisotti is pleased to announce **VVVVVVVVVVVVVV**, its second solo exhibition with photographer CJ Heyliger, on view from October 8 – December 3, 2022. This new series of seascapes was inspired by the dynamic and sometimes unsettling forces of the Pacific Ocean, observed by the artist during repeated trips along the California coast. Despite being made on the iconic Southern California coastline, the sites depicted are rendered unrecognizable by Heyliger's technique, which probes the material limits of photographic film. Bathed in extreme light, these pictures venture into the void between camera and human vision.

Through Heyliger's lens, seascapes undergo a radical transformation, loosening their resemblance to our understanding of the natural world, and at times verging on pure abstraction. While familiar details of the coastline are present, they are points of departure for formal exploration. The shimmering surface of the ocean resembles a fleck painting. Partially transparent cliff structures fade into darkness, recalling how they are, in fact, slowly eroding. Swells of waves and the accompanying puffs of foam are reduced to a set of diagrammatic forces, ripples, and eddies. The sun and its reflection on the horizon, normally too bright to look at directly, are rendered in inky shades of black. The image and the after-image coexist within a single frame.

The photographs in this exhibition employ solarization, a phenomenon in which the luminance striking areas of the film becomes so intense that it passes a threshold and begins to break away from a direct transcription of the world as seen by the human eye. In these areas of the print, the resulting positive looks like a negative. *Surf Line # 1* and *#2* (the most recent works on view) are taken from a fixed vantage point, capturing the infinite permutations of solarization caused by the light reflected off the waves lapping at the shore below. The serpentine line dividing sand and water is a visual counterpoint to the stark horizon lines that dominate other photographs in the series.

Heyliger's process is one of slow looking and meditation. He taps into the constant flux of a single site, in addition to noticing otherworldly details often overlooked by a casual glance. This is a deliberate rejection of a desire to arrest the landscape – to preserve its grandeur forever – as is common in nature photography.

CJ Heyliger (*1984) grew up on the Colorado Front Range and is based in Southern California. He received an M. F. A. from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2015. His photographs have been exhibited at The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, The Columbus Museum of Art, and San Diego's Museum of Photographic Arts. His photographs have been purchased by LACMA, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Capital Group, and JP Morgan Corporate Collections, as well as many private collectors. In 2020, he produced **VVVVVVVVVVVVVV** as a spiral-bound book.