

## **Virginia Hanusik**

*New Orleans, Louisiana, USA*

### **Louisiana 2014–2022**

For the better part of the past decade, my work has been influenced by the role of visual media in shaping the physical realm and our lived experience. With my projects, I am interested in parsing the complexity of living with a changing climate to unfold the spiritual qualities of existing in the world at a time of ecological degradation and collapse.

Many of my images were made after returning to a specific area again and again over many years in order to illustrate time through subtle changes, or lack thereof, in the built form or landscape. The photographs I am often drawn to produce capture moments of quiet that point to something beyond the frame, to that which holds an ephemeral quality.

Water, and the need to control it, is omnipresent in Louisiana. In 2021, Hurricane Ida was the biggest test of the multibillion-dollar levee system surrounding New Orleans and its suburbs. Once the storm had passed, it was clear that ambitious investments in infrastructure work. Still, the system remains vulnerable to a 100-year storm, the kind that has a 1% chance of occurring every year. And the system grows weaker with each square mile of coast lost to the Gulf of Mexico. I capture these moments of ethereal beauty to convey the complexity of living with a shifting landscape while advocating for the value of this place that the rest of the country has often treated as a climate buffer zone.

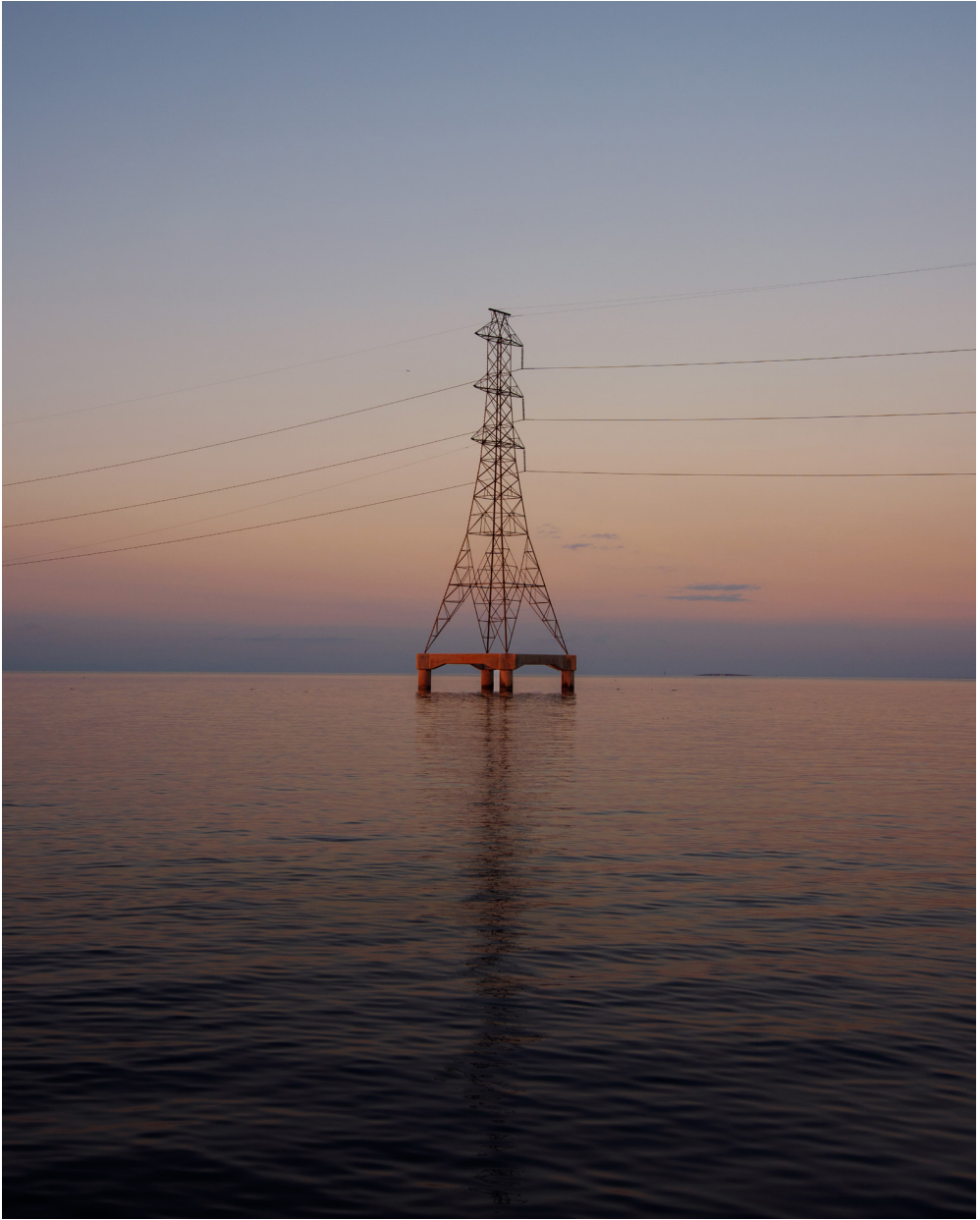
My approach to making photographs over the past ten years has also been influenced by this concept of scale and distance, particularly as they relate to perception. The distance between

buildings and between a house and a body of water that surrounds it communicates our relationship with the earth. In embracing the reality in which no two people see or react to things in the exact same way, I am interested in exploring perception, both experientially and ideologically, and how this layering of experience challenges the limits of representation in visual material.

I am fascinated by the connection between landscape art and identity, and the history of landscape representation in America. I was born in the Hudson River Valley, which instilled a deep understanding of how art can be used to sell an idea around the value of certain spaces. My work over the past ten years along the Gulf Coast takes this idea further by analyzing the impacts of landscapes not represented in the canon of American landscape art and the exploitation of that land as a result.



The End of the Mississippi River, Port Eads, Louisiana (2020) Copyright: Virginia Hanusik



Power Lines in Kenner (2020) Copyright: Virginia Hanusik



Hurricane Katrina Memorial on the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (2021) Copyright: Virginia Hanusik



Full Moon Over Lake Pontchartrain (2021) Copyright: Virginia Hanusik



Lake Pontchartrain #8 (2021) Copyright: Virginia Hanusik



Lake Pontchartrain Causeway #1 (2020) Copyright: Virginia Hanusik