Guide to the Laura McPhee Photographs of the American West

WA Photos Folio 152

by Matthew Daniel Mason

May 2018

P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
beinecke.library@yale.edu
http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/

CALL NUMBER: WA Photos Folio 152

CREATOR: McPhee, Laura

TITLE: Laura McPhee Photographs of the American West

DATES: 2008–2013

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 4.1 linear feet (2 boxes)

LANGUAGE: In English.

SUMMARY: Photographs created by Laura McPhee that document sites in the American West, 2008-2013, including landscapes and communities in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.mcpheepotaw

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.mcpheepotaw.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Laura McPhee on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2014 and 2017, and gift of Laura McPhee, 2014 and 2018.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.
**Preferred Citation**
Laura McPhee Photographs of the American West. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

**Processing Information**
Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

**Related Materials**
Laura McPhee *River of No Return* Collection (WA Photos 591). Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

**Laura McPhee (born 1958)**
Laura McPhee is a photographer. Born in New York City and raised in central New Jersey, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Princeton University in 1980, and a Master of Fine Arts in Photography from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1986. Her work, which ranges from portrait to landscape to still life, is widely exhibited nationally and internationally. She has been a member of the faculty at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design since 1986 and lives in Brookline, Massachusetts.

**Content Description**
Photographs created by Laura McPhee that document sites in the American West, 2008-2013, including landscapes and communities in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. The collection consists of 23 chromogenic color prints, 44 x 56 cm, include two pairs of prints presented as diptychs, as well as a single print measuring 51 x 61 cm. The collection also includes a portrait of her daughter, Isobel McPhee, created in Nevada.

Photographs of Arizona in 2012 include views of the former open pit copper and turquoise mine operated by the Phelps Dodge Corporation at Lavender Pit in Bisbee and a view of the Ray Mine Project, a copper mine in Pinal County.

Photographs of Idaho, 2007-2013, include discrete views of the Silver City and the Meadow Creek Wind Farm in Ririe as well as sites along the Big Wood River and Salmon River. Two prints document the aftermath of a forest fire at the White Cloud Peaks.

A diptych of photographs of Nevada in 2012 documents the Smoke Creek Desert with the railway of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company.

Photographs of Utah, 2010-2011, include discrete views of Burr Creek in Long Canyon and Lime Creek in Valley of the Gods as well as views of electric lines along the Book Cliffs, the interior of a store in the ghost town of Mutual, and tanker railcars on a railroad siding at the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) project site in Crescent Junction.

Photographs of Wyoming in 2013 include views of natural gas wells in the Wind River Basin, an abandoned automobile service station in Green River, and the Kemmerer Mine coal strip mining complex in Lincoln County as well as images of Scotty Lake in Sweetwater County and the Worthen Meadow Reservoir in Shoshone National Forest.
Manuscript inscriptions of titles and dates by the photographer on versos of most prints.
The bulk of the collection purchased from Laura McPhee in 2014 except where noted in this guide.

Arrangement
### Collection Contents

**Series I. Photographs of Arizona**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b. 1 (Oversize), f.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Former Copper and Turquoise Mine, Lavender Pit, Bisbee, Arizona (Negative number 94829)</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lavender Pit, Closed Copper and Turquoise Mine, Bisbee, Arizona (Negative number 94826)</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tailings from the Ray Cooper Mine in the Sonoran Desert near Florence, Arizona (Negative number 94824)</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series II. Photographs of Idaho

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 4. Big Wood River, Blaine County, Idaho (Negative number 94853) 2012

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 5. East Fork, Salmon River, Custer County, Idaho (Negative number 94699) 2011

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 22. Late Summer (Drifting Fireweed) (Unidentified negative number) 2007
1 photographic print, 51 x 61 cm.
Purchased from Laura McPhee on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2017.

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 6. Meadow Creek Wind Farm, Ririe, Idaho (Negative number 95049) 2013

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 7. Salmon River, Clayton, Idaho (Negative number 94734) 2011

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 8. Silver City, Owyhee County, Idaho (Negative number 94785) 2011

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 9. Untitled (Unidentified negative number) circa 2007
Image documents a meadow with automobile tracks made in the foliage.
Purchased from Laura McPhee on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2017.

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 10. Untitled (Unidentified negative number) 2008
View of a snow-covered Washington Peak through a fire-scarred forest at the White Cloud Peaks.
Purchased from Laura McPhee on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2017.
Series III. Photographs of Nevada

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 11
   Isobel (Unidentified negative number) 2012
   Gift of Laura McPhee, 2018.

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 12
   Smoke Creek Desert and the Southern Pacific Rail Lines, Nevada (Negative number 94839 and 94846) 2012
   Diptych of 2 photographic prints, each measuring 44 x 56 cm
   Gift of Laura McPhee, 2014.
### Series IV. Photographs of Utah

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 (Oversize), f. 13</td>
<td><em>Cottonwoods, Lime Creek, Valley of the Gods, Utah</em> (Negative number 94638)</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| b. 1 (Oversize), f. 14 | *High Voltage Transmission Lines by the Book Cliffs, near Green River, Utah* (Negative number 94664)  
Gift of Laura McPhee, 2014. | 2010 |
| b. 1 (Oversize), f. 15 | *Long Canyon and Burr Creek, Escalante, Utah* (Negative numbers 94554 and 94537)  
Diptych of 2 photographic prints, each measuring 44 x 56 cm, that forms a panoramic view. | 2010 |
| b. 1 (Oversize), f. 16 | *Mutual Store, Spring Canyon Road, Near Helper, Utah* (Negative number 94643) | 2011 |
| b. 1 (Oversize), f. 17 | *Tanker Train, Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Disposal Site, Crescent Junction, Utah* (Negative number 94684) | 2011 |
### Series V. Photographs of Wyoming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 (Oversize), f. 18</td>
<td><em>The Mesa, Natural Gas Wells near the Wind River Range, Wyoming</em> (Negative number 95040)</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 (Oversize), f. 19</td>
<td><em>Old Highway 80, Green River, Wyoming</em> (Negative number 95007)</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 (Oversize), f. 20</td>
<td><em>Open Pit Coal Mine, Kemmerer, Wyoming</em> (Negative number 95014)</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 (Oversize), f. 21</td>
<td><em>Rain, Worthen Meadow Reservoir, Wind River Range, Wyoming</em> (Negative number 95034)</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 (Oversize), f. 22</td>
<td><em>Scolty Lake, Sweetwater County, Wyoming</em> (Negative number 95026)</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gift of Laura McPhee, 2014.
**Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library’s online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

**Subjects**
- Coal mines and mining -- Arizona -- Pinal County -- Pictorial works.
- Copper mines and mining -- Arizona -- Bisbee -- Pictorial works.
- Electric lines -- Utah -- Pictorial works.
- Gas wells -- Wyoming -- Wind River Basin -- Pictorial works.
- Service stations -- Wyoming -- Green River -- Pictorial works.
- Strip mining -- Arizona -- Bisbee -- Pictorial works.
- Strip mining -- Wyoming -- Lincoln County -- Pictorial works.
- Turquoise mines and mining -- Arizona -- Bisbee -- Pictorial works.

**Geographic Names**
- Arizona -- Pictorial works.
- Big Wood River (Idaho) -- Pictorial works.
- Bisbee (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works.
- Book Cliffs (Utah and Colo.) -- Pictorial works.
- Burr Creek (Utah) -- Pictorial works.
- Crescent Junction (Utah) -- Pictorial works.
- Green River (Wyo.) -- Pictorial works.
- Idaho -- Pictorial works.
- Lavender Open Pit Mine (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works.
- Lime Creek (Utah) -- Pictorial works.
- Lincoln County (Wyo.) -- Pictorial works.
- Long Canyon (Utah) -- Pictorial works.
- Mutual (Utah) -- Pictorial works.
- Nevada -- Pictorial works.
- Pinal County (Ariz.) -- Pictorial works.
- Ririe (Idaho) -- Pictorial works.
- Salmon River (Idaho) -- Pictorial works.
- Scotty Lake (Wyo.) -- Pictorial works.
- Shoshone National Forest (Wyo.) -- Pictorial works.
- Silver City (Idaho) -- Pictorial works.
- Smoke Creek Desert (Nev.) -- Pictorial works.
- Sweetwater County (Wyo.) -- Pictorial works.
- Utah -- Pictorial works.
- Valley of the Gods (Utah) -- Pictorial works.
- West (U.S.) -- Pictorial works.
- White Cloud Peaks (Idaho) -- Pictorial works.

**Genres / Formats**
- Chromogenic color prints
- Diptychs
- Photographs.

**Names**
- McPhee, Isobel Portraits.
- McPhee, Laura
- McPhee, Laura

**Corporate Bodies**
- Phelps Dodge Corporation (Pictorial works..)
- Ray Mine Project (Pictorial works..)
- Southern Pacific Railroad Company (Pictorial works..)