

FORMAT 2024

FORMAT International Photography Festival happens every other year in Derby. As a part of FORMAT's off year programme the festival has partnered with LCB Depot to celebrate its 20th anniversary, bringing amazing international photography to Leicester!

Venues across the city are hosting exhibitions from **25th March - 26th April 2024**. Find out more about the exhibition venues and artists involved at <https://lcbdepot.co.uk/event/format24/> or @lcbdepot



As the Seas Rise

Gabriella Demczuk

Photography - Salt Prints

Up and down the eastern seaboard of the United States, sea levels are rising rapidly, creating large swathes of bleached and blackened stand of trees known as ghost forests. Powerful storms, droughts, and fires have increased due to climate change, pushing more seawater inland. As salt settles into the soil, trees and much plant life are killed from the roots up, slowly disappearing with the rising tide.

The Eastern Shore of Maryland is seeing one of the highest rates of sea level rise due in large part to land subsidence. As the land naturally sinks, water rises 5mm/year, faster than the global average of 3mm/year. In the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, 3,000 acres of forest and agricultural

land has been lost between 1938 and 2006, with more than 5,000 acres of marshland transformed into open water. Nearby communities are seeing their crops drowned, their cemeteries submerged, and their roads blocked, pressuring families to leave their homes all together. The childhood home of famed abolitionist leader Harriet Tubman, who led slaves to freedom through the Underground Railroad, was recently discovered in these ghost forests but archaeologists are worried they will soon lose it to the rising waters, an important site of American history and its legacy of slavery.

These ghost forests are the first warning signs of our changing environment, offering a glimpse into a future where communities will no longer be habitable, where land can no longer grow food, and where histories and memories of place will be lost to the water's depth.

Saltwater was collected at each location to create salt prints, a 19th century photographic process to create light sensitive paper. The varying concentrations of salt affect the aesthetic quality of the image, mimicking its stripping and bleaching effect on trees.

Not for sale

Artist Bio

Gabriella Demczuk (b.1991) is a Lebanese-American photographer focused on the issues of political ecology, the proprietary modes of abstraction, and colonial/capitalist land practices. Over the last ten years she worked as a member of the White House press, photographing three presidential administrations, Washington politics, and stories across the U.S. related to immigration and environmental policy for The New York Times, TIME, National Geographic, and various other publications. Recently, her political work has been exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery in London as part of 'America in Crisis' (2022) and her salt prints of ghost forests were presented at Fotografiska in New York City as part of Maya Lin's 'Ghost Forest' installation at Madison Square Park (2021). Gabriella is an Associate Lecturer of Media Studies in the School of Architecture at the Royal College of Art and is a graduate of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Instagram: [@gdemczuk](https://www.instagram.com/gdemczuk)