

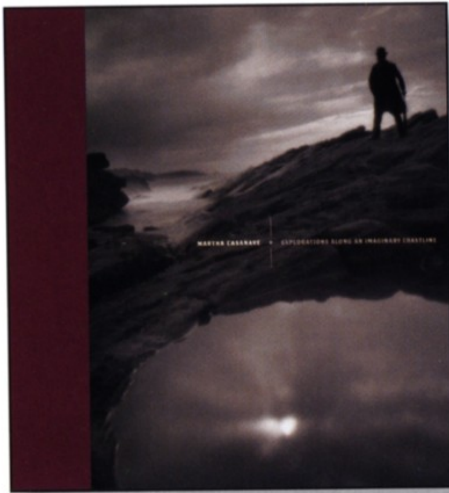
Hudson Hills Press

*Explorations Along An Imaginary Coastline*

Martha Casanave

11 x 12" hardcover; 64 duotones; 64 pages

\$40.00



**W**arning: Opening this book may lead to bouts of daydreaming, or the decided feeling that one has taken a step through the looking glass. Using a pinhole camera to its best advantage, Martha Casanave creates a world of mystery and imagining. The viewer is led, ever so gently, along the rugged coastline of central California, where waves transform into clouds, islands rise and sink in a sea of infinite possibilities and a man in a bowler hat carefully observes everything and nothing.

The role of an artist throughout history has been to both record and comment on society, history and life. In a land where people consider a nanosecond slow, perhaps the best observation can only be achieved by taking time and creating a world in which the infinite is viewable. The very nature of a pinhole camera is anathema to our modern world. There is no lens, no shutter, no meter; there is only a void within which something is created. The resulting images in this book present the viewer with the opportunity to rest awhile and reflect upon a world created slowly. Waves do not crash into the rocky shore, but rather flow gently, blanketing the stone in gossamer. A pocket watch marks an unchanging hour. And the man in a bowler hat ponders the intricacies of life along an imaginary coastline.

Casanave has created a tale with no beginning and no ending—a vague tale that encourages the viewer to return often and linger long. The flow of images allows the viewers to create unique tales of their own, to ask questions and to be willing to wait for answers that very well may change with each viewing. It is a testament to the artist's craft that each image is delicate and exquisite. The full frame format shows a refined skill of composition, especially considering that the image cannot be viewed through the camera and so must be "seen" by the photographer in a conceptual manner, a feat well accomplished in this body of work.

*Explorations Along an Imaginary Coast* is a fine offering as both a work of art and an exemplary presentation of pinhole photography. I would recommend repeated viewings of the book with an open mind and an imagination willing to be prodded into action. See where the man in the bowler hat leads you and what discoveries await.