

Vol. 3/No. 2
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Loupe

**Journal of the
Photographic
Resource Center
at Boston University**



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Contents

Emma Livingston: NOA	2
Both tranquil and dynamic, Livingston's richly textured abstractions of rocky and sandy terrain suggest the limitless bounds of the Argentine Northwest.	
William Miller: Ruined Polaroids	10
Creating abstract photographs in bright colors, Miller transforms the destructive tendencies of a broken Polaroid camera into one-of-a-kind works of art.	
Dan Borden: Eureka Moments	16
Using multiple in-camera exposures with his Polaroid, Borden creates new, complex, and evocative abstract photographs that recall photography's experimental past.	
The Allure of the Abstract: Francine Weiss.....	24
Center Weighted: Erin Wederbrook Yuskaitis.....	26

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Dan Borden, *My Mother's Vase*,
February 2012.

From the Publisher

This issue of *Loupe* is focused on abstraction in photography—a genre nearly as old as photography itself and a central theme in the history of the medium since Daguerre first created his lens-based capture of the human landscape 174 years ago. I will leave a further discussion of this topic to *Loupe* editor Francine Weiss in her fascinating essay on *The Allure of the Abstract* on page 24. What I would like to address in this letter is an appreciation for the community of photographers, artists, and art connoisseurs whom the PRC interfaces with through *Loupe* and all of our other programming.

One thing that I am truly proud of about the PRC is that for 37 years, we are one place in the Boston culturesphere that can embrace all the different genres of photography—fine art, documentary, commercial, portraiture, abstract, landscapes, etc.—and we can all agree that what matters most is our love and fascination for the both the art and craft of the photographic image. At the PRC, we can embrace the likes of Dominic Chavez, who travels the world documenting global health; Dan Borden, who makes multiple exposures using Polaroid film of abstract subject matter; Peter Vanderwarker, who has made a career as an architectural photographer; and so many other photographers working in diverse genres.

The question of whether photography is a fine art was definitively answered more than a generation ago with a resounding yes. There is less agreement on the genres within photography. Clearly the work we had in the *Global Health in Focus* exhibition last year was unambiguously documentary. But what about the work of Rania Matar and Nancy Grace Horton? Is this work documentary? In the end it does not matter because we all recognize that each photographer brings tremendous insight to both the medium of photography and significantly more interesting, insight into our understanding of the human psyche. What makes the PRC such a special place is that we suspend such formal judgment here, and as Rodney King so famously, said, "Can't we all just get along?" Here at the PRC we can and do, as is evidenced by the turnout at our lectures, exhibitions, workshops, and Nights at the PRC.

In closing, I hope while reading this issue of *Loupe*, you are all as taken by the beauty of these abstract images as I am. Dan Borden, William Miller, and Emma Livingston each in their own way show us an interpretation of our world using abstract forms that make us question, and cause us to marvel, at the rich visual world around us.

Glenn Ruga

PRC Executive Director and *Loupe* Publisher

Emma Livingston

NOA

**Livingston's images communicate a sense of "endlessness"—
an endlessness that she says is not a part of our daily lives.**

For British artist Emma Livingston, photographing the Argentine Northwest, referred to as the Noroeste Argentino, or simply NOA, comes naturally. With family roots in Argentina and following several visits to the country, she found herself captivated by the beauty of the Argentine Northwest, which she discovered during a trip in 2004. It was the region's deserted and seemingly infinite landscape that inspired Livingston to purchase and use a medium format camera. Although she initially printed on paper from slide film, she switched to printing digitally from her scanned slide film when her preferred slide film paper was discontinued. Focusing on a section of the NOA landscape using a telephoto lens, Livingston aims to deviate from a conventional landscape format. Lacking any references to a horizon, Livingston's images communicate a sense of "endlessness"—an endlessness that she says is not a part of our daily lives.

With their textures, colors, and depictions of space, Livingston's square format images of the Argentine Northwest are abstract ruminations of landscape that engage, intrigue, and sometimes disorient the viewer. Although drawn to the fragility and vulnerability of nature, Livingston does not intend to present a social commentary on the environment. Rather, she hopes to communicate and share her "visceral fascination with the natural world." Nevertheless, as empty and otherworldly as Livingston's NOA appears, there are inevitable traces of the increasing presence of mining companies in the region; the occasional discernible man-made track is evidence of this permutation of the landscape.



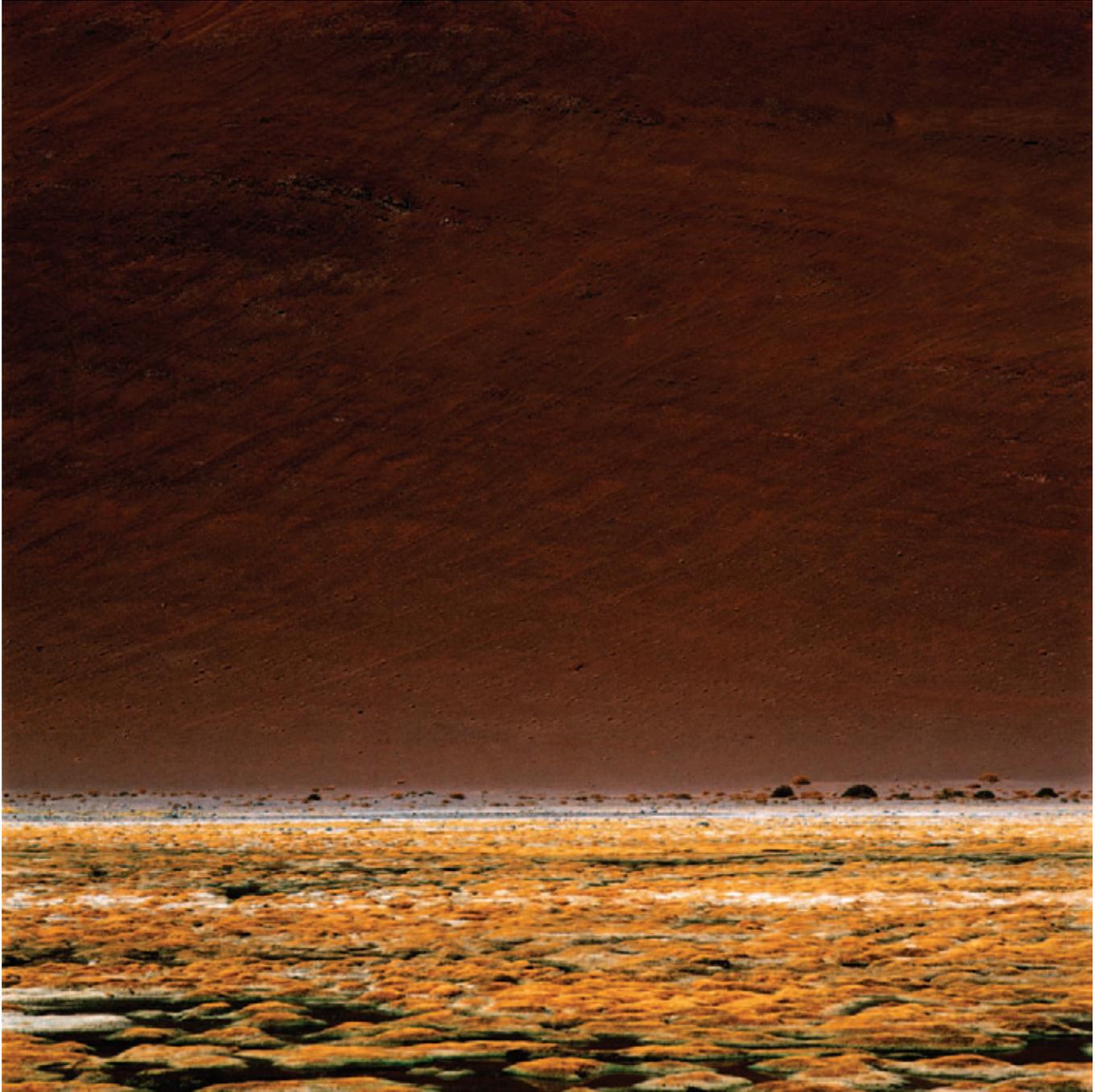
Livingston received her B.A. in art history from the University College London and lives in Buenos Aires, where her abiding interest in nature has inspired her to embark on two new photographic projects—a series focusing on the woodlands and another on the ocean. Her solo shows include exhibitions at the Ateliê da Imagem, Brazil, as well as RO Galería de Arte and Galería Riva Zucchelli, Argentina. She has also exhibited in *Discoveries of the Meeting Place* at FotoFest and at the Southeast Museum of Photography, Florida and has won awards from FotoFest, the London Photographic Association, and Px3 Prix de la Photographie in Paris. In 2008, Livingston was selected as one of the *PDN 30*. She has photographs in the permanent collection of FOLi, Lima, Peru. Livingston is represented by RO Galería de Arte in Buenos Aires and Klompching Gallery in New York.

— Francine Weiss



NOA1-5, 2006.

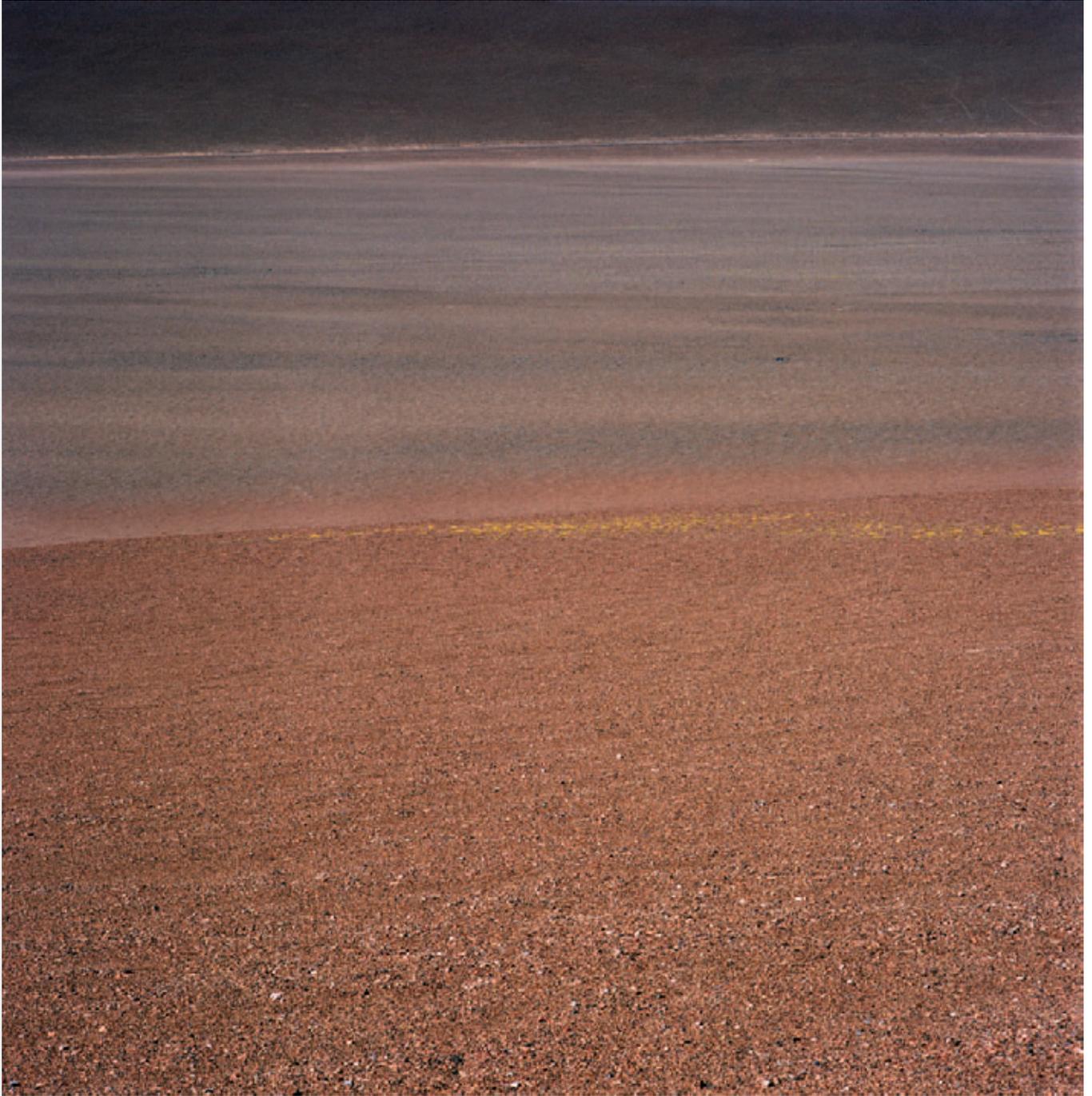
Adjacent page: **NOA31-6, 2007.**



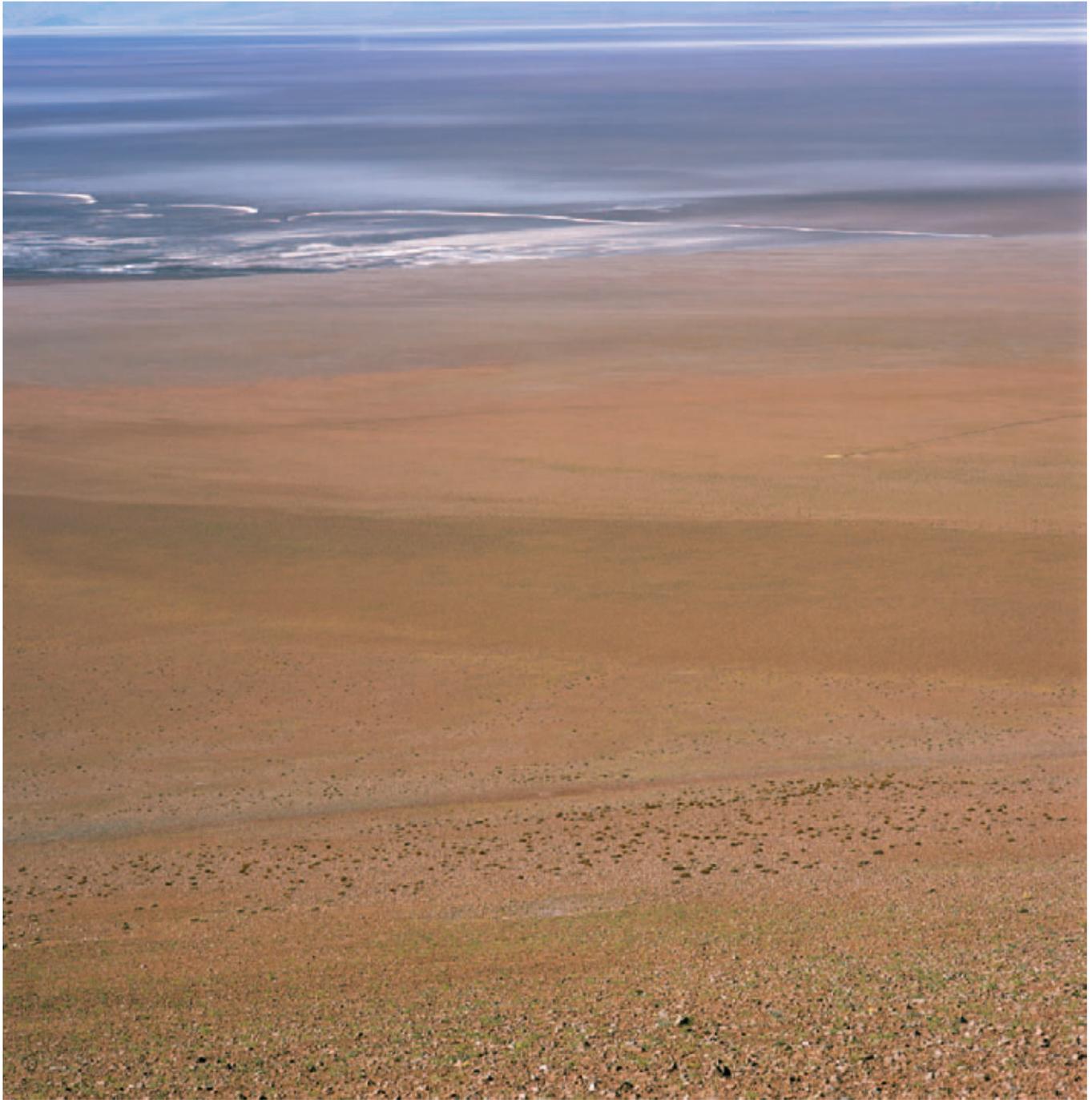
NOA21-7, 2005.



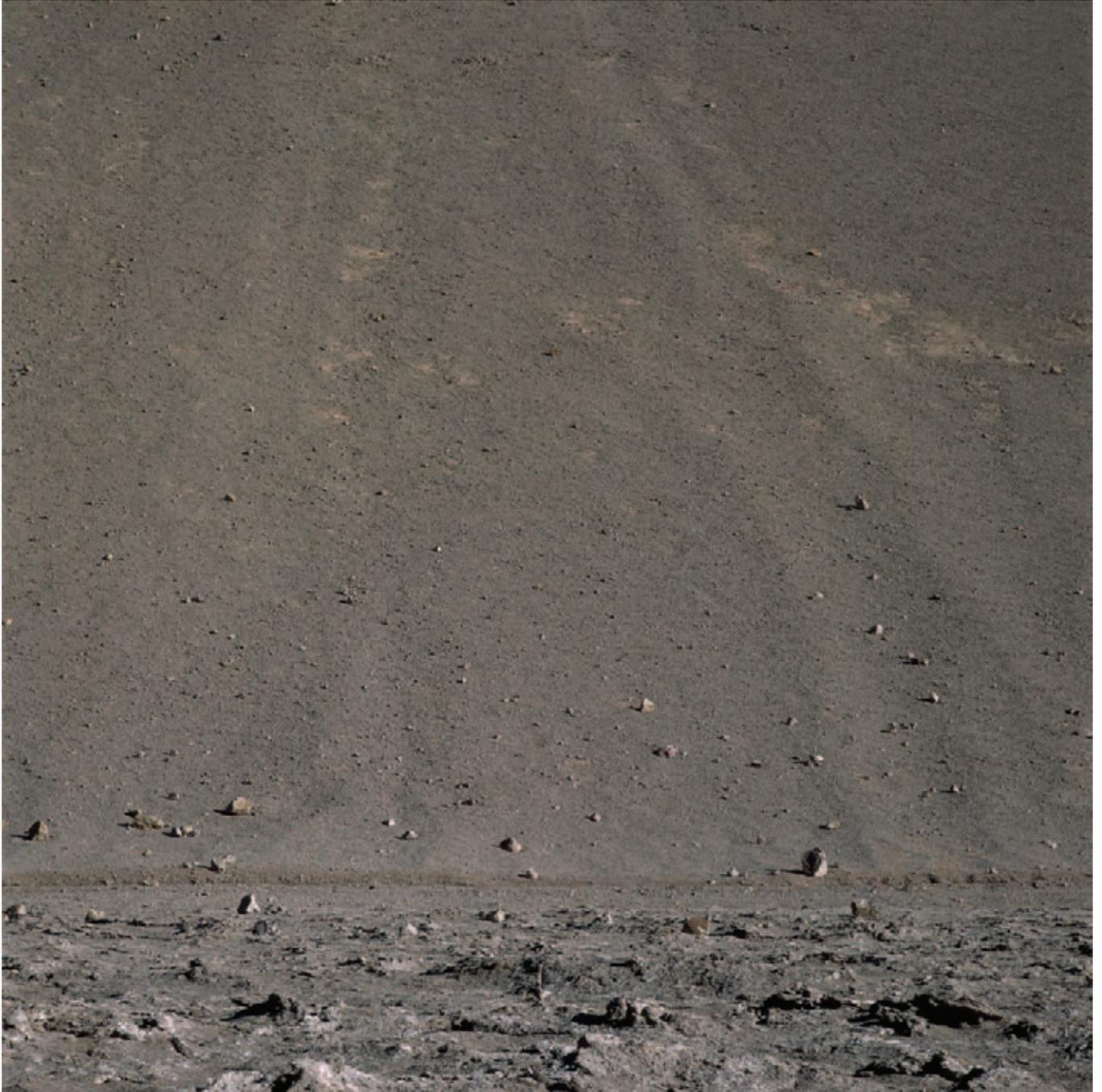
NOA17-6, 2007.



NOA17-8, 2006.



NOA18-5, 2006.



NOA15-5, 2007.



NOA14-5, 2007.