

Press Release

A Hidden Island World in Plain Sight
The discovery of the Archipelago New York

“Magical moments don’t happen all the time, but when they happen you have to catch them”, says filmmaker and photographer Thomas Halaczinsky, whose book *Archipelago New York* will be published by Schiffer Books in the spring of 2018 and is now available for pre-order.

Archipelago New York is the literary and photographic logbook of a modern day exploration by sailboat into the vast island world of New York.

[“Archipelago New York”](#), Schiffer Books, **ISBN13:** 9780764355073

Binding: hard cover, \$ 29.95, available in book stores May, 2018.

“The utter originality and understated beauties of Thomas Halaczinsky’s brilliant book Archipelago make this a livre d’artiste with a difference. Halaczinsky’s cinematic vision and extraordinarily attuned sensibility miraculously weds art and science in one significant journey.”

*Charles A. Riley II, PhD the Director,
Nassau County Museum of Art*

More than 70 islands are dotting the sea from the North River Delta of the New York City Harbor to Fishers Island Sound bordering Long Island, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Following Adriaen Block, the first European who in 1614 sailed and mapped this magical and mysterious island world, the book’s 15 chapters unravel the mysteries and secrets of these hidden places in plain sight. From 2011 to 2016 Thomas Halaczinsky captured the tales and images for his book during several voyages totaling more than 3000 nautical miles on his own sailing vessel out of Brooklyn and Greenport New York.

Mesmerized by curiosity sparking names on old marine charts, like Money Island, Pot Island, Cholera and West Bank Halaczinsky took off to explore an Archipelago that rivals in size and beauty those of Venice, Istanbul or Hong Kong and that the early explorers of the American East regarded as one of the most beautiful coast lines of the newly discovered continent.

“The way nature and the urban environment coexist in New York’s Archipelago inspired my photography”, says Halaczinsky. Images such as the city glimmering like a fata morgana over the marsh in Jamaica Bay tell their own story. The sea is like an empty canvas on which the reflection of the sky, the changing light, the mist and fog paint their pictures. Time is reflected in each image of the space around me.“

The pace of sailing toward New York City from Long Island’s Atlantic coast and the Long Island Sound is setting the book’s narrative rhythm. Rooted in history the entertaining local tales are woven together with current themes like climate change, rising sea levels and the exploitation of the worldwide oceans - all wrapped in the narrative of sailing in quest of a sense of place.

Originally from Europe the author was fascinated by the water world of New York ever since he arrived there in the early 1990s. Different from Europe where waterfront properties are always the most valuable and people enjoy promenades and beaches, the waterfront in New York was neglected and hardly accessible. The docks of the old maritime New York were dilapidating and highways on the east- and west side were cutting off access to the water, Halaczinsky noted that many people living in Manhattan were not aware about the fact that they lived on an island, but at the same time showed typical islander behavior. Many people rarely left Manhattan, and not living in Manhattan was unimaginable for them.

“Like the water gazers in Hermann Melville’s Moby Dick,” Halaczinsky explains, “I was standing at the Battery, looking out onto the North River and to the Atlantic Ocean, looking out onto the water filled me with a sentiment hard to describe. It wasn’t the longing for home or “Heimweh” as it might be called in my native German, but much more the desire to connect with the place I had arrived at.”

Throughout 2018 Halaczinsky will tour the New York metro area with lectures about his journey and fine art photography exhibitions.

Thomas Halaczinsky is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, photographer and writer who divides his time between Brooklyn and Greenport on Long Island’s North Fork, where he keeps his 30 foot sailboat “Sojourn”.

His work focuses on the relationship between people and places. In documentary films like „Coney Island – A last Summer“ (for German/French broadcaster ARTE in 2008) or „Don’t call it Heimweh“- the opening film of the 2005 Berlin Jewish Film Festival - he explored the importance of place for the identity of the protagonists. In 1996 he won an ACE award for his contribution to the EMMY awarded film “Calling the Ghost”. In 2016 his photographic series "Archipelago New York", featured in this book, received an honorable mention at the Tokyo International Photo Award.

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