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# THESE THINGS HAPPEN: NEW AMERICAN LANDSCAPES

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## These Things Happen

This body of work consists of images I collected between the months of June and August 2012 while travelling across the contiguous United States by car.

The initial imperative of this project was to travel to personal destinations while casting a dragnet on everything that I saw. These photographs were made in transit, at highway speeds or while walking. Rarely composed and minimally processed, these images are very nearly objective encounters with what's transpired. This method of shooting was a kind of acknowledgement of the absurdity of attempting to image an entire country, a way of limiting or neutralizing my automatic impulses to frame and compose (thereby sharing some authorship with the camera itself), and finally it was a way to embrace an element of chance.

I am particularly inspired by the work of John Cage, Deleuze and Guattari, Jorge Luis Borges, Foucault and Derrida and the continental theorists, Marx, and Trinh T. Minh-Ha. I am further influenced by Susan Sontag, Judy Butler, Patricia Vettel-Becker, These artists, writers, and thinkers deal with recognition, contentious hierarchies, positivizing the negative, intervals, possibilities, and the infinite.

I intend to model my career after Tod Seelie. And Lee Friedlander.

I intend for these images to be installed in such a way that the linear experience of travelling is neutralized; that the country through which I cut a single swath might be telescoped into itself and recomposed using more discreet logical and aesthetical systems. Images group up based on notions of content, (word)play, humor, lyricism, and form. I think of the intercommunication between images as posed questions rather than posed answers, examples of my own arbitrary logic that implicates a possibility of any number of experiences and perspectives.

It is very important to me in my larger practice that all of my work be non-violent in terms of subject-object relations, privileged viewership, gendered power dynamics, and the problems inherent in composition, treatment and presentation wherein an imaged human condition might be aestheticized toward the tokenization/exoticization/fetishization of said condition. I have made every effort to seek out, **confront** and neutralize these potential (and very real) biases at every juncture. I do not self-efface in my work. My camera is neither a phallus nor a weapon.

I have this idea that rather than conceptualizing everything within each frame about the contents of these happenstance images, I might arrange them in very simplistic ways to establish a singular (perhaps banal) armature upon which I might hang these micro-concepts, and then the rest of the content in the frame needs to be dealt with outside of any (didactic?) framework that I (the 'author') might have proposed to the viewer.

I look at these photographs as if I'm looking at another's work; often the first time I saw (or remembered taking) these pictures was months after capture in the editing process.

Images on these walls might be grouped based on color, humor, geek code, visual patterning, or form, and it is accessible in every one of these contexts. The invitation is there: the content demands deeper scrutiny, or pondering, or an invitation to play and connect, and consider the mechanisms of meaningmaking.

These are in the end relatively candid images, and are (unfortunately?) irreducibly representative. Ideally the final composition - this show viewed as an installation - will describe an oblique-d reality, a transgress-ed reality, one that is experienced first aesthetically and only second culturally or politically.

These are landscapes with a silly, youthful childlike (asinine?) sensibility. They participate willingly in the necessary business of making order out of the everydaynessgoo; they understand their complicity in the arbitrariness of ordering schemata.

Herein is an overall and unwavering emphasis on capaciousness, possibility, concurrency, and multiplicity, especially in terms of the work's face toward its viewership. This is a demonstration of pluralism.

This might be a model for freedom.