

Wendy Roussin, Artist Statement

My artwork concerns the exploration of my surroundings and of the ideas of time, spatial awareness and implied movement/motion within the photographic medium.

My consistency is generally thematic, and is not specific to a single camera style or 'medium' within photography. Over the course of my photographic career I have utilized many different formats ranging from medium to large format film, Polaroid and alternative processes, pinhole, dSLR capture, and digitally manipulated imagery. While technological changes have certainly influenced my work, my choice of camera style is primarily determined by the intended mood of the imagery to be created. Being conversant with many different 'styles' of photography allows me to fit the equipment to the task, rather than the task to the equipment.

In loose terms, I could be described as a 'landscape' photographer but I tend to reject that label because I am concerned with quiet moments and forgotten steps, not with sweeping vistas. Common components in my photographic work include the elements of water and movement. I enjoy exploring these elements and how their quiet interactions suggest a solitary introspection of the details contained in the natural world and the passage of time. I avoid including both people and recognizable geographic features that might identify the location too specifically – it is the feeling evoked by the locale – not its location that is important.

Many times my non-pinhole based compositions are fragments; isolated areas of rocks and sticks, a moment in a small stream - they could almost be anywhere along my expeditions. In each of us they elicit a memory of a quiet place - what is seen and almost forgotten. These remnants of the forests, hills, and streams are little monuments - an interaction of object, location, and environment. The desert landscapes are both vast and without scale or identifiable depth. Flatness often reigns across the imagery. The compositions are found, not altered; they are a response to the accidental construction of space formed by time. They are like the ruins of an ancient civilization, awaiting discovery and interpretation.

The wide-angle 4x5 pinhole is quite different than the other cameras I use. The space captured by the camera is flat, expansive, and eerie all at the same time. Objects are both distant and intimate without a true sense of scale or distance. With the longer exposures, wind and water, movement and time all become part of the journey of the photograph. The pinhole images explore both the passage of time and alteration of space, creating a sometimes alien landscape, both familiar and disquieting. This allows the viewer to cross a boundary to an alternative existence – one of our dreams, imaginations and even nightmares. It is neither known nor understood. The lack of the sense of time, scale and space adds to the subtle shift away from the natural world – a world in which we think we comprehend but merely inhabit. These images allow the viewer to transcend their familiar notions of place and focus on the space itself.

The spaces captured by the pinhole and by the more traditional cameras influence each other. Whether abstract or more concrete, they capture a feeling of a fleeting moment, quiet isolation, introspection and awareness.

The *Mountainside* series is comprised of images taken with a wide-angle 4x5" Zero2000 wooden pinhole camera and exposed onto expired Polaroid type 55 film. Images from this ongoing series are photographed along forest service roads and hiking trails in the central Rocky Mountains of Colorado. The resulting Polaroid negatives are contact printed as lumen prints, then scanned into the computer and edited and output as large archival images.

The wide angle of the pinhole camera affords the viewer with both an attention to detail and an eerie flatness- where objects are both distant and intimate. Depth and scale are harder to discern. The fragile inconsistencies of the large format pinhole negatives captured on Polaroid film help with the translation of a 'place' to a 'space'. By this I mean that I am not concerned with creating a faithful representation of an identifiable location but with creating a sense of spatial awareness and solitude. The images elicit a memory of a quiet place - what is seen and almost forgotten. They are devoid of both people and (when possible) evidence of humanity. Images in the series also explore the grandeur of the mountain landscapes

The lumen printing process allows the iconic characteristics of the Polaroid Type 55 film to shine while the coloration of the image evokes a time past, combining to create a 'look' both similar and unexpected to the viewer and help transport them into the created space and away from the physical sense of place.

The *Coastline* (Shoreline and Riverside) series is photographed along the Treasure Coast in southeastern Florida. Shoreline is photographed along quiet areas of coastline with features such as worm reefs and Anastasia limestone outcroppings, facing both the ocean and the dune line. Riverside is photographed along the brackish lagoon habitats that separate the mainland from the barrier islands.

Both of these series also explore the passage of time and alteration of space achieved through the photographic image.

The space captured by the wide-angle 4x5 pinhole camera is flat, expansive, and eerie all at the same time. Objects are both distant and intimate without a true sense of scale or distance. With the long exposures, wind and water, movement and time all become part of the journey of the photograph. These images function as an allusion to an alien landscape that is both familiar and disquieting. The lack of the sense of time, scale and space adds to the subtle shift away from the natural world – a world in which we think we comprehend but merely inhabit. These images allow the viewer to transcend their familiar notions of an image of the seashore and focus on the space itself.