margin walker

a theatre of disembodied poetics

by

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If you would be a real seeker after truth, you must at least once in your life doubt, as far as possible, all things. – René Descartes
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(signed)
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A Theatre of Disembodied Poetics


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Abstract - Reconstruction of the Fables

This exegesis, which is essentially an auto-ethnographic account, examines the particularities of my photographic practice, which has been forged and elaborated over a period of years, and which will now coalesce into an exhibition titled Margin Walker: A Theatre of Disembodied Poetics. The questions and concepts that are inevitably and tangentially raised by its singular style are interrogated.

Margin Walker invites investigations into the nature of photographic truth, which are approached through applying pataphysical and surrealist constructions in the directorial mode, using analogue large-format photography. Time and space are distorted and elevated to unfamiliar dimensions by what I call the process-exposure, an ever-evolving method whereby a dense temporal layering on the negative occurs. This enables me to create an unfamiliar, or even recondite, vision of the liminal landscape. It is one which, given that I do not apply post-production manipulations to the images, I argue is a literal recording of time and light, and thus, even impossible photographs are available for the interpretation of being truthful.

An overview of the nature and style of Margin Walker is given in the first chapter, A Theatre of Disembodied Poetics. Here, the notion of a fundamental paradox upon which my photographs hinge, which structures and enables the work, is introduced.

In the following chapter, Estrangement, Displacement, Belonging, I explore the primary motivations of the work, which derive from personal psychology. That very private realm is not just motivation, but it shapes the work in conceptual and practical terms as well.

Nothing and Beingness, and Periphery and Centre, ponder, respectively, the qualitative temperament of the photograph, and of the landscape, especially as they exist in the peculiar milieu of Margin Walker. I then, in Thinking Sideways, Building Backwards, use a number of ‘case studies’ of individual photographs as a matrix in which to explore not only their particular idiosyncrasies, but also the ways in which they serve more generally to illustrate and illuminate themes and motifs which occur throughout the larger body of work.

Lastly, I consider the work of some contemporary photographic artists whose work I find of special interest; and I then review how my work has, over the years, been received in the wider world, and how it will be shown in a culminating exhibition, in December, 2013.
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