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A Piece of Dust Starts to Crawl

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APiece of Dust Starts To Crawl

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Senior Thesis in Photography by Evan John

Photography is a desperate attempt to make sense of a world that refuses to be made sensible. The approach to imagemaking which treats photographs as facsimiles of their subject matter invokes in commanding photographers a desire to project a notion of discovery upon that which they encounter. Undoubtedly photography and notions of empiricism are inherently linked. This is proven not only by the medium’s so-called “truth,” but also by the historical deployment of photography by colonial governments as a tool of surveillance and categorization with the goal of reinforcing hegemonic ideals. Although I must recognize my own authorial intent in being a photographer, I do not lay claim to my subject matter or claim any notion of empiricism in the production or reading of my work.

For my own practice, I aspire to adopt this medium which fervently purports to describe reality as it is and use it to display moments from a world, my world, which are mostly unmoored from rationality and certainty. My world is not fixed, it is not stable. I wander through my surroundings, waiting for a moment that reflects a feeling of a lack of permanence. A photograph of tire tracks on a hilly road captures only the remnants of an event, not the event itself. The event of the taking of the photograph is all the viewer is left with. The image is neither journalistic nor fictional. In an image like this meaning must be constructed; as such your meaning may differ from mine.

This ambiguous space between reality and surreality is where I thrive. It is a space that has a certain friendship with the dream world, but cannot be a dream. I rarely remember my dreams, but I remember what I see. I use my camera to capture what is in front of me so that I might imagine what is behind me.

I sit at my kitchen table. I take off my glasses and watch television. A piece of dust is to my left. The episode plays, the dust is on my keyboard. The episode nears its end, now the dust is on the screen. The dust was always a spider.