



SLOW DOCUMENTS

James Farley

Cameraless Photography for Ecological Thinking | James Farley



Slow Documents presents a series of new work exploring cameraless photography as a tool for ecological thinking. Using outdated or discarded photographic materials, I arrange a set of conditions in which the subject, medium and environment are free to express their agency towards the creation of their own image. These photographs evoke the most elemental qualities of natural process to establish a landscape aesthetic built on the values of reciprocity, engagement and collaboration.

This work is motivated by the rising ecological crisis of anthropocentric climate change and the driving forces of unchecked exploitation from western capitalist cultures. Landscape photography is implicated in this culture of exploration through its long traditions of classifying, conquering and commodifying the land. Through the enduring aesthetic traditions of the beautiful, the picturesque and the sublime, landscape photography has reaffirmed the myth that land is a passive environment animated by human beings.

Western cultures have long operated under the assumption that they are separate from, above and thus entitled to exploit all the earth's natural resources and ecological systems. However, climate science confirms that collective human activities are impacting the wider geophysical and biophysical systems that regulate and support life on earth. Anthropocentric climate change therefore reveals the belief that human beings are in any way separate, as a dangerous and destructive myth. If we are to respond to the challenges of this realization, ecological thinking may be our best hope.

Ecological thinking explores new ways of understanding and living within the earth's systems. It accepts that human beings are intricately connected to every other system in a complex web of codependent and interrelated processes that combine to regulate life on earth. Ecological thinking is committed to exploring and celebrating these connections.

As a recovering landscape photographer, my approach to ecological thinking is grounded in a photographic practice that does not impose a view of mastery over the land. Instead, I have employed the lumen printing process as a means of engaging with the environment, collaborating through a haptic process of exchange and chance to create images that reveal the agency, vibrancy and value of the ecological community. Put most simply, I make photographs with the environment, rather than take photographs of the environment. This is a model that can hopefully be expanded beyond the aesthetic dimension, to re-imagine the world in more ethical and inclusive terms and work towards a positive future of coexistence for all.

Lumen Print Process

Lumen printing is reminiscent of the earliest forms of photography. These prints are created outdoors, not in a darkroom, using extended exposure to sunlight and the natural elements to create one-of-a-kind photographic objects.

The photographic paper is immersed in an environment and left to develop for a 24-hour period. During these long exposures, the materials are often affected by rain, wind, or any number of other possibilities. At the end of the exposure, the prints are collected, chemically fixed and washed.

Lumen prints can be interpreted in many ways; from melancholic meditations on the passing of time or reflections on the beauty of primordial nature. Regardless of their interpretation, each image bares the material and photographic trace of an intimate engagement and exchange with the natural forces that animate and govern all life. It is this engagement that is essential in fostering respect, understanding and care for the earth and its processes.

WORK FOR SALE

400 Parts Per Million | \$180 each (Inc GST)

Scanned lumen prints on film, archival digital print on rag. Edition of 5. (Framed)

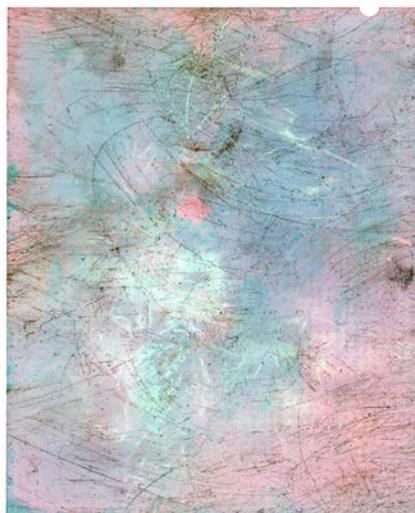
The Rambunctious Garden | \$1800 each (Inc GST)

Unique Lumen Print (Framed)

Reciprocity | \$1800 each (Inc GST)

Unique Lumen Print (Framed)

Unfortunately, due to the requirements of my Ph.D. assessment, all work from *The Rambunctious Garden* and *Reciprocity* series will not be available for purchase until after June, 2017. I am happy to collect the contact details of any interested parties and will be able to discuss options for sale upon the completion of my Ph.D. Sorry for this inconvenience.



James Farley is an artist, gallery technician, teacher and research student based in Wagga Wagga, NSW. James' practice has slowly shifted away from a traditional understanding of landscape photography to embrace and explore a more open, experimental and collaborative approach informed by ecological thinking.

James has studied photography at university in Australia and the United States of America, and is currently working towards a Ph.D at Charles Sturt University, where his research explores post-photography and the practice of ecological stewardship.

James has exhibited extensively in Australia and in the United States of America. In 2014, James represented Australia at the Sony World Photography Awards in London. In 2015, he was an inaugural recipient of a Young Regional Artist Grant from Arts NSW. In 2016, James was named the NSW/ACT Young Achiever of the Year (Arts).

For more information visit James' website
WWW.JAMESTFARLEY.COM



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