

On the *Nature Morte* Photographs

A few years ago, I moved from the East Coast of the United States to Colorado. As a newcomer to the west, I became fascinated by the ruins and rock art left behind by ancient native peoples. I began to travel the mountain and desert west to photograph these haunting places. As I began off trail hiking and scrambling in search of undocumented sites, I discovered the bones of many wild animals. I wondered if they were evidence of a healthy predator-prey relationship, or of climate change and environmental degradation.

These bones exerted a strange power over me. They called out to me to be seen, noticed, honored, made special in their moment of entropy. I began to photograph them on-site, but was disappointed with the result. They felt lost within a tangle of dead leaves and pine needles, or a welter of stones and sand. One particular find of three adjacent bones alerted me to the deeper poetic possibilities they offered. I began to take them to my studio where I could have complete control of composition and lighting. Afterward, I return them to their place in the wilderness. From this beginning came the *Nature Morte* series.

References to art forms as varied as architecture, music and mythology are encoded in their arrangements. Time's passage – the weathering and decomposition of solid bone, the staining by organic matter, the bleaching by the sun – is illuminated in these surviving fragments of a life. The *Nature Morte* photographs capture an isolated instant in the cycle of life, change within the circle of time and a reminder of our own mortality. Order found within chaos.

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