

cynthia byrnes
contemporary art

Susan Wides
Artist Statement

The Perception of Place

My photographs explore the experience of being in a place, and connecting to that place on many levels of consciousness. I seek to create a unique visualization of a site utilizing a *language of the lens* both with in my approach to my subjects and the methods of selective focus I have evolved since the 1980s. I construct a visual memory by weaving my perception in and out of our socio-cultural memory. My photographs rely deeply on light and time in order to dissolve, heighten and immerse us in an imagination of a place.

At a time when the virtual seems to rival the real, I locate the poignancy of human desire to *be* in our environment, where we feel "in the heart of the multitude...in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite," as Baudelaire said of the flâneur. I adopt a transformative vision of our natural and urban environments, expressing conceptual and intuitive responses to our relationship with a site. My lens blends my subjects with their surroundings to express the interconnectivity of subject, subjectivity and space.

Merleau-Ponty writes of Cézanne's struggle to paint "an object in the act of appearing, organizing itself before our eyes." Cézanne "did not think he had to choose between feeling and thought, as if he were deciding between chaos and order." The subtle complexity of my images fuse feeling and thought, requiring us to slow down and contemplate where we are, and thus the very "why" and "how" of our being.

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