

ARTS ON DOUGLAS
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ACA



Forrest MacDonald

Recipe for Disaster

May 3- June 14, 2014

ARTIST STATEMENT

I create and photograph miniaturized landscapes of deconstructed or destroyed domestic environments. Displaying the fragile and transitory nature of existence, they are insidiously elegant tempests of transformation, violent, instantaneous metamorphoses of discernible elements into chaos that invite the viewer to participate in the fantasy of living through their own death and more, the death of an entire neighborhood or perhaps the destruction of humanity itself.

The work is not only a reflection of my fascination with natural and man-made disasters but also a recognition that through telecommunications we are a world audience that is bound by our collective viewing of images of death and destruction from across the globe. Detached from the outside world and in the comfort of our own homes, we view the tragedies of others. Tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunami's, floods, terrorist attacks, war, nuclear melt downs, famine are all now brought to us in high definition in ever more dramatic footage. The attempt in my work is to respond to this phenomenon with the creation of grand, almost sublime fictionalized photographs of active and violent destruction to instill wonder and perhaps a touch of fear.



Utilizing double and triple photographic exposures, I'm able to create conflicting perspectives and form a sense of movement or the appearance of chaos. Using a mixture of other photographic techniques such as long exposures, shifts in scale, varying alterations of the depth of field, combination lighting sources such as strobe lights and flash lights, I am able to significantly alter the appearance of my materials and the interpretation of the set.

In my larger works, I use Photoshop to digitally combine over 100 of my photographs into eerie surreal landscapes that transition from a dense tracery of abstract debris into distinguishable elements. I use repetition or patterning in contrast to the static forms to create a sense of order and confusion. I'm also interested in the juxtaposition of irreconcilable elements in terms of scale to challenge the viewer's perception of what they are seeing. I like to complicate the boundaries between artificiality and believability or sincerity with the representations in the work, which I believe speaks to the complexity of the experiences of photographic images in the 21st century.

Envisioning the wretched as beautiful, these works suggest a play of opposites: repulsion/desire, fear/courage, and order/chaos. Perhaps they are an attempt to relinquish my fear of natural and man-made disasters. Although these created sets are from my imagination, the nightmare these photographs represent is not that far from the images I see on the nightly news.

—Forrest MacDonald