

Project: The Moment Remains

Proposal for residency or exhibition

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Project Link: <http://www.majanoart.org/momentremains-baf.html>

Description

For the BAF Gallery, I would like to produce two bodies of work, using photography, sculptural elements, and Augmented Reality, to create a portrait of life in the city of Vancouver. In this project, I am interested in exploring the potential of 3D capture, and virtual media, to create immersive experiences that capture distinctive aspects of local settings.

I will produce a series of three-dimensional scenes created by using 3D scanning on location, capturing objects and places where people's activity has left a visible trace in the environment – visualizing the ways people negotiate personal life in the public realm. In a second related work, I propose to present one sculptural piece, recreating an element from a public park (a park bench, section of landscape, or park table). Using augmented reality, viewers will be able to see short video vignettes recreating moments from the history of that location.

In previous works, I have explored themes relating to the subjective experience of the individual as they navigate the built environment. The subjective, unpredictable nature of personal experience stands in contrast to the structured logic of the architectonic - the subjective impulse humanizes the built environment - sometimes in surprising ways. A central theme in my work is the balance between personal experience within the public realm, and I explore this idea in photographs and video works that document a location by recording the experience of living in it and navigating its structures. In past works, I have created photo series that function as a record of moving through a park, photographed locations over a period of time, and created videos altering a location with imagined elements. In this project, I continue investigating these themes, while introducing virtual elements that encourage the viewer to participate in an immersive experience.

Part 1

3D Photographs

I propose to create a series of three-dimensional scenes depicting actual locations in the city where traces of human activity - the intentional and unintentional traces of a person's interaction with the environment – can be seen. The locations are places that show people's desire to identify themselves, and intentionally express their presence in the public space in graffiti tagging, images, carving into park benches or tree trunks, or other ways.

Other areas of the city I will look at are places where the presence of people as they go about their everyday life has created, over time, some visible change: faded or

stained areas on walls or floors, and worn paths on the ground. Like a natural form of analytics, these traces on the environment record people's behavior through accumulation: as they find the shortest route between places, stand or sit to wait for the bus or skytrain, etc. These are the unofficial roadmaps and markers of life here as it is really lived, drawn on the land itself.

The Process:

I will capture imagery from these locations in two forms: as 3D scanning done on location, and as colour photos. I use a 3D scanner and software to scan elements of the urban landscape on location, creating an accurate 3D model of each element. Using software and programming, the 3D scanned elements, along with photo elements, are assembled into a 3D recreation of the entire scene, in effect capturing the particularities of the location in a frozen moment. Viewers can look into the scene in three dimensions by using a smartphone or ipad running an Augmented Reality App. The effect is similar to looking through a camera viewfinder, or a window; the viewer can reframe the virtual view, move the view closer to focus on a detail, or move side to side to look behind objects. (see [the Carved Tree](#) example)

About Augmented Reality (AR):

Augmented Reality is a technology that allows the overlay of digital content such as 3D graphics, images, sound, or video, over views of the world in real time. I use AR for mobile where viewers use a smartphone or tablet running an Augmented Reality App to see 3D content or video.

What viewers will see:

I will present framed photos on the gallery walls. To view the 3D scenes, viewers will use an ipad or smartphone running an Augmented Reality App and point the camera view to the photo, which acts as a recognizable marker used to reveal the virtual content.

My intent is to create an experience where viewers can virtually visit these locations, and step into the role of the photographer by having the ability to control the point of view through their movement around the photograph.

In the two examples shown here, the photographs show a somewhat awkward composition: elements too close to the edge, or partially hidden. The framing of the scene this way is intended to only partially reveal picture elements, and to encourage the viewer's participation by reframing the scene themselves, revealing characters or objects not initially visible, and completing the composition. (see The Party)

Part 2

Installation for object and life size Augmented Reality Video

Characters

A second element I propose is an installation of a full size piece of park furniture (park table, bench, or another element from an outdoor public space). In this installation, life size video characters move around the object and sit or stand on it, in a recreation of an event from the history of this park. Using an ipad or mobile device, visitors to the exhibition see a short scene, a vignette of a moment from life in the park, that plays directly on the object. Viewers become active participants – moving around the object to look into the scene, get close or change point of view while the scene plays out.

The main subject of the scene is the photographic moment, when the protagonists stop for an instant to pose for a snapshot, reenacting the common ritual of commemorating an event in an image. The video characters we see are ghostly images, suggesting a fading memory - the moment, frozen in the snapshot, nevertheless slowly fades away as life in the park continues. In this work, I am interested in exploring the juxtaposition of reality and the past; specifically, the history embedded in the object.

Movement as metaphor

The viewer's movement around the object is an important element in this work. The metaphors of movement, and displacement are already integral to our experience of the virtual; we "go" to websites or social sites, we "follow" hyperlinks to other locations, and our e-mail boxes exist @ a certain address. In this project, movement and displacement are no longer only metaphors for the virtual; instead, movement involves the body in the experience of the virtual in a physical way.

Set up

The exhibition will consist of framed photographs and one sculptural work. To see the virtual 3D scenes visitors to the show will be able to borrow an ipad in the gallery or download the AR App for free (IOS and Android) and view the scenes in their own devices.

To view the video scenes on the sculptural installation there will be will be a tall plynth (36" in height) with an iPad locked with a security cable - gallery visitors will be able to use it to see the Augmented Reality video play on the park furniture.

Installation components - Supplied by artist:

- 5 to 8 Framed photographs.
- Life size park furniture (60"x44"x26")
- shallow wood stand (75"L x64"Wx 12" H)
- 2 ipads
- 1 plynth (44"x12"x12") for the ipad
- 1 locking cables

Required: WIFI Internet connection for the ipads