

JOHN BLADEN BENTLEY

Artist's Statement

I move on foot through an unknowable landscape attempting to make visible the aesthetic value hidden in the most unlikely of places. I seek out the obscure, the less obvious – the minor and the hidden, the tentative and the ephemeral – things so subtle and evanescent they are almost invisible at first glance. The photographs are about a kind of beauty that's imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete.

I'm romanced by the whole idea of film photography – working with a large format camera, unraveling the focusing cloth and sequestering myself underneath it, the tactileness of it – measuring and pouring out the chemicals, mixing the gelatin and pigments, getting my hands wet processing the film, watching it develop in the chemical baths, and hoping it will turn out the way I saw and imagined it.

My work is about exploration and discovery. I am open and receptive with a perspective that likens to childhood naivety. The photographs rely not only on seeing, but also on sensing the potential – of possibility. The psychogeographic space speaks to me and I listen. This sensing has me look deeper for a photograph that can be pulled from the chaos of disparate elements.

It is less what I see and more what I make others see that matters. That is really what the work is about.