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Small Beginnings

Recent photographs by Matt Eich
September 4 – October 31, 2020



This exhibition of new work by Matt Eich draws from a year and a half of prolific image-making in an ongoing visual journal series titled, *Seasonal Blues*. This string of work links moments together like a never-ending chain. A selection of the work exists as limited-edition prints and many more appear in small-run quarterly self-published books by the emerging artist (under the imprint Little Oak Press). Time- the fleeting baseline of life itself- is revealed in Eich's *Seasonal Blues*. As the Artist creates this image of the world, he seeks to locate himself within it.

Our lives unfold day by day; some we remember, most we forget, but for Eich photography has always been the antidote and guard against the loss of memory, the loss of time. His frames preserve them as a canner would jam. They are precious and fresh images that stir up the viewer's own memory and the emotions that come with them. Remembrance swells in frames that inspire longing and desire for yesterday- for the chance to live it again, perhaps the same way, or perhaps differently.

This work fluidly integrates portraits, still lives, interiors and landscapes. In this space, the line between personal and commissioned works is erased. Banal yet loaded symbols like apples, a snake, a bee, and a ghost thread through scenes that are enduring and temporal cultural backdrops to societal rites: baptisms, protests, sunsets, harvests, and holidays. We feel these places belong to us. We know these moments. We have been in these emotional spaces ourselves- pretend, childhood games, secret adventures, travel, days then seasons passing, embraces, sadness that moves us to tears, aging.

That our intimacy with the photographs becomes shared is made more resonant by the fact our visual narrator, Eich, increasingly contextualizes himself and his own family within the larger body of work. This choice is reflected in the exhibition's image selection. Having a protagonist grounds us. It is with knowing eyes that we see his world, our world. Eich's previous works include, *I Love You, I'm Leaving*, a series of black-and-white family work during a tumultuous period, and *The Invisible Yoke*, a study on the American condition. *The Invisible Yoke* employs color documentary photography to establish a four volume 15-plus year study on the slow unraveling of the American Dream. These projects touch on the personal and the universal too, but *Seasonal Blues* is evolving in a more loose, painterly, and poetic direction.

As we are left with emotions shaken loose by photographic memory-triggers, we wonder if perhaps it is the weight of time exposed that makes the work so palpable, and that time is naturally fleeting so we are not crushed by the gravity of our actions through it. Life is temporal and sacred. The rituals we subscribe to are not law by nature, rather designs of our own making. Through openness and compassion, we can share fears and desires. The web of intimacy surrounds us, belongs to us, and us to it.



About the Artist: Matt Eich (b. 1986) holds an MFA in Photography from Hartford Art School's International Program, and a BS from Ohio University. Eich's long-form projects touch on themes of memory, family, community, and the American condition. He has received grant support from sources such as the Aaron Siskind Fellowship, a VMFA Professional Fellowship, and two Getty Images Grants. His work is in the permanent collections of The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, The Portland Art Museum, Light Work, and The New York Public Library, among others. Eich teaches photography at Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and resides with his family in Charlottesville, Virginia.



Screening: Through the Glass

Mija by Bear Kirkparick

Bear Kirkpatrick's work questions the limits of perception and traces "traits of consciousness." His work seeks to give shape to the non-visible world. Kirkpatrick admits that being human is imperfect, incomplete, and ephemeral. What we are composed of, however, is eternal, and must carry inherent properties. While these qualities may not be visible in the realm of "normal" perception, they may be eluded to, questioned, imagined, and expressed. This video loop depicts an adorned mud-covered figure. Digital layers awaken and the visage obscures, fading to darkness and back as the audio of birds, rain and thunder play along with broken-notes of interrupted music.

Through the Glass: screenings of short videos by jdc Fine Art presented on continuous loop and are visible from outside the gallery. Films will be selected for their harmony with and ability to expound on themes in the featured exhibition.

About the Gallery jdc Fine Art: Gallery | Art Dealer (est. 2011) dedicated to content-driven contemporary art by established and emerging artists who specialize in photography. We champion those making art to serve a higher purpose

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