

Solitude

Carla Kimball, Photographer
AVA Gallery, March 13 – April 10

I have been guided by two themes for this exhibit: The theme of **Movement and Stillness** reflects the process of creating this art installation, and the theme of **Solitude** reflects the subject matter. And as in the Yin/Yang symbol, each theme contains an element of the other.

Movement and Stillness

Photography, by its very nature, captures moments of stillness. This exhibit reflects the journey I've made moving from still photographic prints to still prints moving to movement captured through video.

My initial inspiration came in 2016 when I was invited to participate in that year's SculptureFest at King Farm in Woodstock, Vermont (now called LandArt Lab). The challenge for me was how to create an installation in which still photos became sculptural. My response to that was to print still images on fabric and cut them into strips so that they moved and danced in the wind.

I've been a life-long dancer, and am most interested in post-modern dance in which simple pedestrian movements can be visually interesting and evoke emotional responses. For the last 10 years I've studied with Upper Valley movement teacher and choreographer, Marie Fourcaut.

When Marie first encountered my installation at the 2016 SculptureFest, she was inspired to create multiple movement pieces which ultimately resulted in two public performances, three videos and a several journeys into the woods with other movers/dancers. This exhibit reflects that process.

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Recently, I revisited a journal entry from 15 years ago when I first became intrigued by the image of the empty chair. As I reflected on what I had written, I realized that empty chairs have appeared frequently in my images over many years. In this early journal entry, I described the chair as capturing a sense of solitude.

My interest in the empty chair was re-ignited as I was searching for a visual focus for the 2016 SculptureFest. As I explored King Farm, I came across a red chair leaning against the side of a barn. The next time I visited the farm I found the same red chair at the entry of a barn. I began to move the chair around the property, discovering how it could convey that quality of solitude in so many different environments. With that, the Red Chair became the focal point for my first SculptureFest installation.

Since that time, the Red Chair has moved around, becoming the center piece for performances as well as vacation trips, journeys into the woods and top of mountain adventures. Dancers/movers have followed it. In the end, we left the chair behind, and found solitude as a group moving through and responding to an ancient forest.

My deepest gratitude to Marie Fourcaut and the other movers/dancers who have accompanied me on this journey: Eric Gordon, Katherine Moore, David Peart, Anita Rogerson, and Bill Keegan. I am also so grateful to the Byrne Foundation and to Pentangle for their funding support for a panel installation included in this exhibit and originally featured in the 2019 LandArt Lab in Woodstock.

Carla Kimball
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