



THE SHAMAN 2003 Gelatin Silver Print

RIPPLES IN THE NARCISSISTIC POOL

Toby Berthold

This work is meant as a reflection on Man's philosophical and sociological constructions to define himself in life, his identity and his place in, "The Natural Order of the Universe". Of the alternative titles that could apply to this body of work such as; "A Separate Reality", "A Room Full of Mirrors" or "Peeking Behind the Curtain of the Universe" the story of Narcissus serves to comment with a certain clarity of the irony in the work.

Narcissus probably had a clear calm pool to gaze at his reflection. We do not ;...And so... the ripples. Using elements of theater to speak in metaphors of the explorations of man's self perception and perceptions of reality, I create images to witness the complications and contradictions of the popular concepts of the times. The images are meant to encourage reflection and meditation of the actual events and consequences of the past leading to where we find ourselves today. To engage the mind and stir the soul. With the future in mind, along with our increasing power to affect the planet and all life on this planet, I feel that reflection of the view points of the past should be examined in order to temper our actions and beliefs in motion as we continue to progress through our development into what we may become.

Toby Berthold holds a BFA in Photography.

He also works with Video, CGI Animation and Electronic music. "The interest in photography comes from the idea of an almost instantaneous transference of thought and communication."

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The Blue Angel, 2007, C Print
In the beginning...But then...The ripples

The Shaman, 2004, Gelatin Silver Print

This character represents the the first concept of the metaphysical for man. The Shaman is the explorer and often the tribal leader or head consul. He seeks to explain the unexplainable and is often the healer of the tribe. The headpiece metaphorically depicts the complexity of this man by using the geometric form to express modernity and a radiant energy as a halo is used to depict the divine. The companion might depict a spiritual entity or familiar.

The Musician, 2004, Gelatin Silver Print

This character represents the first spark of human development beyond the immediate aspect of survival. The instrument is modeled after a collection of African stringed musical instruments seen in the Museum of Natural History in NYC. The functional bow has change into a musical instrument for artistic and non tangible purposes and abstract thought. The gourds act as a resonance chamber so the instrument can be heard by others. I have taken liberties with the design.





Allegory of the Cave II, Revisited, Diptych. C Print

A contemporary perspective of the cave here but we see the many devices used to condition and create self image. This piece was inspired in part by Professor Naom Chomsky, MIT and his ideas regarding the dumbing down and social conditioning of America through mass media.



The Philosopher, August 2004, Gelatin Silver Print

This character was inspired by the the works of Emmanuel Kant stating the observation that, We can never be objective enough to be truly objective in defining our place in the natural order of the universe.



The Modern Man \ 2003, Gelitan Silver Print

Inspired by the work of the painter Piet Mondrian and the philosophy of De Stijl, the modern man is a form of planes and completely in- organic. Another movement to redefine mans self identity and separate himself from nature.



Allegory of the Cave I, Plato's Republic Diptych, C Print

The portrayal of man, shackled with head constraints to limit his view to his own shadow on the wall and the acceptance of that as his reality verse to struggle to break free of his constraints to explore and discover truth.



The Artist, February 2004, Gelitan Silver Print

The Artist was inspired by William Blake's poetry during the Romantic Period regarding themes of spiritual crisis and redemption. Of the main characters in his work. Los, the artist, held the responsibility to create order out of chaos.



The Asylum, April, 2005. Gelitan Silver Print

This piece speaks both of the idea of heresies during the Middle Ages, the Inquisitions and the new thoughts of the Age of Enlightenment. The image remarks on the idea that heretics or the insane can be cured by torture instead of death to drive out the evil spirits.