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The artists retreat at Montello was in a word, intense, for me. I know that this word is used often in our contemporary life but for this experience the use is accurate. The highs of having the time to think clearly without interruption and to follow those ideas deeper than a normal day affords is intense – and a fantastic luxury. The process of getting to the site and traveling around was also intense in that the vastness of sky and desert landscape are a shock to city dwellers.

The variation of the skies along with wind, very brief rains, peak saturation sunsets and many smallish creatures made up the distinguishing factors of each day. The more you

Pink Bends, 2016



Hairs on Fire, 2016

paid attention it seemed that no two days were alike. Personally, this allowed me to go into a questioning period that was so deep and long overdue where I could piece together work that seemed to be different and whose trajectories were confusing to me, into one whole cloth. My work was asking for this connection and the answers became apparent in the quiet that was my time at Montello.

The botanical world offers a complex assemblage of color, line and geometry to artists as source material. Like the 70's/80's painters in Pattern and Decoration movement, this natural world appeals to me for the order and balance as well as the ethereal combinations that are pure inspiration. As a photographer treading into this subject area, I am conscious of the historic aspects of representational works derived from nature and make a dedicated effort to unbalance my work. I am interested in sliding more towards abstraction in nature with my direction and using motion, blurs and silhouettes are a few of the camera's tools that I employ with this work while still keeping it recognizable as a photograph.

When the last clues are in place you can feel elated about the process. It was like that for me at Montello. What was going to happen there? No idea. And that is why it was a powerful experience in that there were no obligations to fulfill. Complete freedom to spend your time as you desired. And if that was a creative jolt which is has turned out to be for me, great. And intense.