

Tracy L Chandler

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I am a photographic artist based in Los Angeles, CA. Through portraiture, landscape, and narrative, I draw on my own personal story to contend more broadly with humanity. My photographs address themes of memory, time, and stages of life as well as notions of psychological projection and conceptual place. My photographic approach often involves revisiting locations of personal significance to create new works that blend past experiences with the present environment giving special consideration for the constancy of change within ourselves and with the land.

My residency experience at Montello was utterly magical and transformative. Growing up in the Mojave, I consider myself a desert dweller, and looked forward to photographically exploring this personal connection to the arid land. Montello is not just any desert though, this territory is vast and highly specific. Day in and day out, I was transfixed with watching the volatile weather roll across this “sagebrush ocean”. My plans of driving around the area to find photographs were completely thwarted



as I had no need, everything was already there at the cabin doorstep. Through the isolation and daily routine of walking, meditating, and sky gazing, my level of attention became exquisite. Every wisp of cloud that passed was important and infinite.

While at Montello, I felt utterly connected to the raw essence of nature and thought deeply about photography as a metaphor and tool for psychological perception. I experimented with photographing through acrylic filters, choosing color combinations based on my current mood and the conceptual meanings I was projecting on to the object before the camera.

With this internal shift came a shift in my practice. Instead of an outgoing energy of exploration there was a quiet internal focus. I worked in the studio and began to tinker with my tools. I hand carried my camera around the surrounding footpaths, making studies of light and color. There was no agenda to make a “piece” or tell any specific narrative. I was just there with the land and my tools, the rest took care of itself. I dared to explore new modes within my art making and new seeds were planted that I am still nurturing to this day.