

THEORIES OF ENTANGLEMENT: THE ART OF DAN HUDSON

MAIN GALLERY

Theories of Entanglement: the Art of Dan Hudson demonstrates the artist's intelligent and innovative handling of multiple mediums. Time lapse videos, lenticular photography, mixed media constructions and paintings are the ingredients of this multifarious survey exhibition.

A mid-career artist, Hudson has maintained an active studio for thirty years. For many of those years his art practice was financially supported by his career as a photojournalist; a vocation that has garnered more than sixty international cover shots, thousands of photos in world-wide publications. Photography assignments involving extreme mountain sports took Hudson to some of the wildest places on the planet. These experiences, along with a lifelong relationship with nature through wilderness adventures, have helped to shape Hudson's world view and as a consequence his approach to artistic subject matter. The technical skills Hudson learned as a professional photographer can also be detected crossing over into his art projects.

Seven years ago Hudson made a conscious decision to move away from professional photography in order to concentrate full time on his art practice. This has resulted in six international awards, seven peer-assessed visual arts project grants and participation in numerous international solo and group exhibitions. His success is further acknowledged by the institutions and individuals collecting his work throughout North America and Europe as well as a public art commission of lenticular photographs for the new Taylor Digital Library and Nickle Galleries at the University of Calgary in 2013. Currently, Hudson divides his studio practice between Berlin, Germany and Canmore, Canada.

Of his work Hudson explains his methodology:

"I create process intensive projects that investigate concepts of time and the nature of existence within the socio-political context of everyday life. My research is distilled into various forms including video, painting, photography and sculpture."

Where quantum entanglement relates to the interconnectivity of particles, Hudson's work is interdependent upon his personal experiences, areas of fascination and inquisitiveness. A constant student of physics, anthropology, natural science and history, Hudson purposefully and intuitively examines the world from these perspectives while also alluding to universal phenomenon in his work.

The Seasons, 2007 – 2009 are multi-media assemblages that combine painting, found objects, mechanical devices, wood working and video to create fairytale visions of a Canadian wilderness. Spiked with whimsy and wry wit, these detailed scenes astonish and surprise. A reference to an era of curiosity cabinets is established through Hudson's use of old frames purchased from the Banff Springs Hotel. Each of the four cabinets narrates a seasonal cycle.



Dan Hudson, *Raven*,
1990, oil on canvas,
82 x 98"

The *Apparition* paintings, composed between 2008 and 2010, explore the intersection of multiple merging worlds. In *Subway*, 2008 for instance, commuters existing in one reality are merged with images of aquarium gold fish suggesting an alternate parallel coexistence. Like graffiti or mass media signage, Hudson superimposes one message onto another creating social commentaries and alternative ways to see the world.

The Nocturnes, 2004, capture the majesty and beauty of mountain landscapes beneath clear, brilliant starry, moonlit nights. Punctuated by darkness a raw, breathtaking magnificence is conjured up in *Ursa over Cascade Mountain* and *Orion over the Trans Canada Hwy at night*.

Early in Hudson's art career, he salvaged thousands of snapshots, from a dumpster behind a photo lab near his former Toronto studio. These photographs form an anthropological, yet intimate study of suburban life as seen by those posing and those snapping the shot. Three groups of paintings (1983-1986) emerged from the dumpster collection, each with a common connection to suburban life, the natural world and often-cited Canadian clichés. For example, the imagery for *Holiday in the Sun*, 1984 is directly derived from one of the found photos. At first glance this piece seems to have a thick impasto painted surface but with greater scrutiny another dimension appears. Pig bones are strategically placed to recall the time of day the artist consumed the animal and to intimate our detached relationship toward our food sources in contemporary society. For *Pump*, 1984, Hudson again used dumpster. photos. Here he collaged hundreds of suburban images of men onto a

wood panel then painted a moose in the Canadian wilds to metaphorically reveal the underbelly that belies the romance and symbolism of wilderness.

The 1989 - 1991 *Shaped Paintings* evoke the notion of television by the use of contours, colour, space and imagery on the canvas. Satellites continuously beam multiple channels of television signals toward the earth's surface establishing co-existing universes that are decoded into our reality only when we tune into a specific channel. Hudson developed this concept into multi layered paintings akin to viewing multiple TV channels at the same time. *Duality*, 1990, addresses the loss of the natural environment in urban consciousness and explores the environmental implications of mass culture and its residual effects on the human spirit.

Hudson's video projects explore concepts and perceptions of time. The methodical and ritual approach in the making of these videos is conceptually inseparable from the end result. Hudson created some of his video projects by returning once a week to film the exact same scene as it changed over the course of an entire year. He then spent as long obsessively editing the clips into perfectly looping images. These non-narrative works are best understood as moving photographs rather than videos.

Time Traveller, 2011, was filmed on Main Street in Canmore and records pedestrians going about their daily routines as the climatic conditions and seasons change. Using various strategies to obscure the filming process while on location, Hudson has created a disconcerting viewpoint. The viewer becomes an invisible observer standing in the middle of the sidewalk witnessing the slow-motion actions of passersby and at the same time the fast motion of a year elapsing in minutes. While gathering footage for *Time Traveller*, Hudson also recorded samples of international news bites and combined them with original music compositions to create larger socio-political context to daily life in a small mountain town. One does not exist in isolation of the other.

Winter Hof, 2012, differs in that it was filmed over the course of a 24-hour cycle. Looking across the courtyard from the artist's Berlin apartment, the various neighbors' living quarters are illuminated during the short days of winter. It is both a voyeuristic intrusion and an anthropological observation into their daily rituals and private lives. On a separate level, the video references the lateral surveillance techniques used by various totalitarian regimes of neighbors being coerced into spying on neighbors. These practices are creeping into our own culture in the guise of a defense against terrorism.

From the *Cemetery Triptych* series, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 2014, explores the unnoticed passage of time in day-to-day existence. The centre panel of this vertical triptych consists of a yearlong time-lapse shot in a Berlin cemetery. Above, a swirling flock of crows circle in the sky. Hudson's deliberate inclusion of crows is symbolic of their scavenging qualities and metaphoric of the death that lies below. In the lower panel, ants swarm industriously tending to responsibilities at both ground level and the sub-terrain.

Hudson's lenticular pieces are created with the same dedication to detail as his videos. *Statue and Pond*, 2013, captures four seasons viewed from the same spot on one frame of landscape. As the viewer moves, each of the four seasons is revealed in animation similar to traditional flip books.

Even though Hudson's art employs of a wide variety of approaches and materials we can decipher a distinctive way of thinking as well as the resourcefulness and ingenuity that connects his various art projects.



Dan Hudson, *Subway*, 2008, oil on canvas, 36 x 48"



Pat Morrow, *Ladakhi nomad prepares food and tea, Changtang Plateau, near the border of Tibet*, 1992

HEART OF THE HIMALAYA:
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAT & BAIBA MORROW

MAIN GALLERY

Passionate advocates for wilderness preservation and mountain cultures, Pat and Baiba Morrow have enjoyed a career and lifestyle that defines adventure journalism. Their love for indigenous cultures and the mountain world propels them on explorations in the physical, cultural and spiritual realm.



Crag & Canyon newspaper, February 6, 1915, No. 50, Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

PATRIOTISM, FIELD COMFORTS AND A CANVAS CITY:
REMEMBERING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

RUMMEL ROOM

Featuring the Museum's archival, art and heritage collections, this exhibit commemorates the First World War, 1914-1918, through the personal experiences of Bow Valley residents who served overseas and those who remained on the home front including "enemy aliens" imprisoned in Canada's first national internment operations.

The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies gratefully acknowledges the support of the



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Dan Hudson, *Golden Stag*, 2012, oil on canvas, 35 x 59"

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