

LOWELL SHAVER

PROCESS

I was born and raised on Vancouver island, where I am now raising my own children. The photographs I make often feel like some of my first memories growing up here - gestural fragments and impressions of sometimes forgotten places and objects.

My main format is silver gelatin print from medium format 120 negatives taken with a Mamiya RB67 camera. My process for my black & white prints is entirely in house, from the first snap to making the print. However, one of my most treasured possessions, and a camera in my usual rotation is my ancient Canon TL 35mm camera and lens, which I found in a drawer in the basement of my first house as a young Father - left there by the previous owner. It is nothing special - a student camera: dented, scratched, and the kit lens hazy. However, as I started my journey with it - the process - I was drawn in by the fleeting nature of the act of taking and making photographs. I became keenly aware of the physicality of the medium: the presence of the sometimes scratched and water-marked negative, the chemicals, the filters through which the light hits the photographic paper, the alchemy and mercurial nature of the printing process, the way that the photograph curls as it dries, and stains and degrades over time.

Does this process - this physicality - impact the way that we remember the reality of the moments captured? Does a different iteration of the same negative produce a different story, a different feeling, a different reality? Does the story continue to change as the photograph ages? Photographs are representations which we can touch, feel, and hold in our hand. They are tactile. They show us a time and place that was real. At the same time, they obscure as much as they reveal. This creates a fundamental paradox within the viewer - at once ecstatic and melancholy.

The work - presented simply on fir boards, clips and frames - while intensely personal, explores these overarching themes.