

War is a malignant disease, an idiocy, a prison, and the pain it causes is beyond telling or meaning; but war was our condition and our history, the place we had to live in.-- Martha Gellhorn

The photographic exploration of past wars is one way I observe contemporary landscapes, but not just any landscapes. Places marking historical atrocities dating back to World War I in the trenches of the Somme region and the bunkers and forts in Verdun, France to World War II and the Allied invasion of Normandy are of particular interest to me. Those epic battles that occurred in the 20th century changed the course of human history, and today, we live with the consequences. The worst in human nature is still highlighted by those very places where many thousands and even millions of people perished due to war. This results in what I call an atrocity landscape. In the absence of the people who suffered in these places, the enduring architecture of war machines, bunkers, and disfigured infrastructure creates a message that easily transcends time.

My interest as a photographer is to notice those places and connect the past atrocity with what remains in the present day landscape. In some instances, the landscape has changed, mostly as a consequence of Mother Nature, but remains forever scarred by the human conflict. Tangibly speaking, little remains of war in these places except for concrete bunkers, barrack foundations, and bombardment craters. The immediate horrors of the battle are covered by time, leaving memorial ground from which we are asked to remember those who sacrificed. In my photographic investigations, I ask the viewer to not simply remember, but to explore our collective historical memory of atrocity as it inhabits the landscape today.

Furthermore, I photograph these places to release my own profound sense of loss experienced as a student of human history. It is my intention that these photographs bridge the gap between the past and the present through a reinterpretation of how landscapes serve as witness to humanity's worst conflicts. The images I create are merely a trace of the past in the present.

This body of work was produced using vintage cameras, most notably the Brownie Hawkeye manufactured by Kodak from 1940s to the early 1960s.

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