

Amanda Jean Sauer

Artist Statement

The landscape is a space for the imagination.

Through careful sequencing and installation, my large format color photographs of controlled natural environments suggest imagined narratives that confuse the boundaries between “natural” and human, reality and fantasy, truth and manipulation. Each photograph is saturated with subtle cues that explore the psychological and emotional complexities between humans and nature.

My work investigates our deep connections to nature in the context of our ecologically changed world. The towering forests, pristine mountains, teeming rivers, and endless prairies of our cultural lore no longer exist. Today’s wilderness is a network of suburban parks, vacant lots, zoos, hiking trails, tourist destinations, and roof gardens. Yet there is much wildness in this contemporary wilderness, with nature’s power to captivate and inspire alive amidst the pollution, altered landscapes, and inescapable human influence of today.

I am on a photographic odyssey in this overwhelmingly human natural world, a search for magic amidst a consciousness of degradation and extinction. Many of my images use simple tricks of color, light, and reflections that can be deciphered under close observation. Over and over, I am drawn to elements in the landscape that hint at fantasy and mystery, an impossible escape. My work thrives on tension between the desire for magic and beauty and the apprehension underlying these contrived natural spaces.