

Crushed/Optimistic: Photography, Poetry, & Brandon Forrest Frederick

Brandon Forrest Frederick is an artist / organizer / educator / person that I happen to know very well. We have worked side by side for four years as members of Archive Collective, and both pursued our photographic educations in the same institution (four years apart). This shared experience means that neither of us can navigate Brandon's work without first considering its relationship to the functions, the implicit qualities, and often, the inadequacies of photographs. Seeing these things as a driving force, rather than a limitation, enables Brandon to meet the viewer between playfulness and subversion in an exhibition like *Sensible Disobedience*.

The following writing was made in response to Brandon's practice and efforts to explore new modes for working through his ideas, as well as my own desire to bring this level of intuition and experimentation to art writing.



Image of Brandon Forrest Frederick's work courtesy of the artist.

Photographs like

an aphorism

a truth

of everyday objects

that we all know

aim to

seem

legible

transparent

but not without

a certain poetry

in reflection

that comes from empathy

not declarative

or assertive

but a clear question

of 'the everyday'

that feels elevating.

Faith placed

in observation

to share

to take with you

and consider
in daily interaction

a 'something out of nothing'
like that cliché
of vernacular photographs.

Beauty in and of the everyday.

Transforming like
through the lens
patterns
conditioned
decisions made
for photography

between us
the photograph
and the outside world.

Process like
an overly complicated means to an end
calling attention to what confounds
(see Rube Goldberg)
presented clearly
generously

posits

that perhaps art can be simple

but our ideas

and truths

are more often

somewhere in the mess.

Humor like

Science Fiction

a good way to talk about tough things

and tough times

with the ability

to stay light.

A rigid object

crushed

a signifier of culture

shared alien

collapsed space

stuffed soft

crumpled again

our combined laughs

are first ones of

Michelob Ultra

of consumption

and second of

extravagant photographic failures

and wit.

A flaccid pillow
a more obvious joke
not dumb
just
generous
evolving from
photographs
avoids only partially
some underlying sadness
of the still image.

New work
sewn
cut
lit from within
with the same punchline
louder

a new gift
an archeological dig
through American habits

not the American spaces
we learned about
in Photo History.

Teaching and making
as learning

a new education
and new ideas
or shared ideas
and new vehicles.

Growth

guided by the process

not by what we already know.

SENSIBLE DISOBEDIENCE: DISRUPTING CULTURAL SIGNIFIERS IN A NEOLIBERAL AGE was curated by Lynnette Miranda -Charlotte Street's Curator-in-Residence- and is up through April 22nd 2017 at La Esquina (1000 W. 25TH STREET KC, MO 64108)