

## ABOUT MY ARTISTIC PRACTICE

For the past twenty years, I have created site-responsive portraits of communities and examined contemporary American identity by deeply investigating our interactions between digital and physical spaces, probing the influence of cultural history on current events, dissecting societal use of surveillance technologies, repurposing big data for new uses, gleaning insights through oral history storytelling, and recording observations in the contemporary landscape. My work as an artist strives to illuminate the peculiarities of contemporary culture and to create a context for the historical complexities of the times in which we live.

My current long-term project, *Centroid Towns* (2014 - present), is an anthology documentary project studying the twenty-five cities that have been the mean center of population of the United States using photography, oral history interviews, and local archive research. The project puts a face to statistical data, chronicling these towns and their inhabitants to illuminate the ongoing social and political transformation of America. The chapters in the project completed to date examine the environmental impact of overdevelopment, historical legacies of colonial settlers, the changing face of industrial manufacturing, the evolution of American Christianity, economic pressures created by multinational corporations on small business, and civic engagement in small towns. Selections from this project have been exhibited at the Baltimore Museum of Art in Maryland, Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art in Virginia, the Mason-Scharfenstein Museum of Art in Georgia, and the VHS-Stuttgart Photogallery in Germany.

In my previous long-term project, *Geolocation* (2009 - 2019), I work with collaborator Marni Shindelman to repurpose publicly available embedded GPS information in Twitter updates to track the locations of user posts and make photographs to mark the location in the real world. Our act of making a photograph anchors and memorializes the ephemeral online data in the real world and also probes the expectations of privacy surrounding social networks. The project also investigates the way that social media has upended the flow of information in contemporary life, from social justice activism to disinformation political campaigns. The project has manifested over 17 site-responsive portraits of communities across the United States, and internationally in England, Canada, Russia, and Qatar. Selections from the larger project have been recently exhibited at the George Eastman Museum in New York, Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art in South Carolina, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Arkansas, the Denver Art Museum in Colorado, and numerous others. Our first monograph *Geolocation: Tributes to the Data Stream* was published in 2016 by Flash Powder Press and our second monograph *#Gratitude* is currently in the design phase.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

I am a Baltimore-based contemporary artist and documentarian working with photographic media, artist books, site-responsive installations, and time-based media. My projects have been widely exhibited across the US and internationally as well as featured in numerous publications and media outlets, including Wired, The Guardian, The Picture Show from NPR, Slate, CNN, Hyperallergic, Gizmodo, BuzzFeed News, Vice Magazine, the New York Times, Utne Reader, Hotshoe Magazine, Flavorwire, the BBC News Viewfinder, Frieze Magazine, the British Journal of Photography, APM's Marketplace Tech Report, The Washington Post, and Art Papers.

In addition to my artistic practice, I am a Professor in the Photography Department at MICA / Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, serving as department chair from 2018-2022. I was the 2015 Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel Fellow at Duke University, a 2015 Rubys Artist Fellow with the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, and a 2013 artist in residence with the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation in Florida.

My artwork is held in the permanent collections of the George Eastman Museum, High Museum Atlanta, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the Orlando Museum of Art, Portland Art Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography Chicago, among others.

**CENTROID TOWNS**

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*Installation at Salisbury University Art Galleries, Maryland, 2021*

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## FIELD NOTES

In 2003, the Phillips Farm, one of the original farms on 144 acres of farmland southwest of the village, was slated to be subdivided into multiple lots. Had that development occurred, Waterford's National Historic Landmark status would have been jeopardized. The Waterford Foundation secured \$4 million to purchase the farm, now preserved as open space in agricultural use.

Using my drone, I programmed a flight path that created a grid pattern across the 144 acres. The drone flew this pattern, shooting 544 individual images over the span of about 40 minutes, then stitched together with a special software package to create this ultra-high resolution orthomosaic.

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*Orthomosaic of the Phillip's Farm, Waterford, Virginia, 2019*  
Archival Inkjet Print on Adhesive Fabric, Dimensions Variable

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*Linda on the Sheep Farm, Waterford, Virginia, 2019*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 18" x 24", Edition of 6

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*Pastor David, Waterford, Virginia, 2019*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 18" x 24", Edition of 6

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*Empire Quarry, Site of the Empire State Building Extraction, near Bloomington, Indiana, 2018*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 40" x 30", Edition of 3

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*Mill Worker, Empire Quarry, near Bloomington, Indiana, 2018*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 18" x 24", Edition of 6

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*Patriotic Dollar General, Olney, Illinois, 2017*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 40" x 26", Edition of 3



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*Rachelle after Incarceration, with daughter Mya, Bloomington, Indiana, 2019*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 30" x 40", Edition of 3

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*Site of the Former Shoe Company, De Soto, Missouri, 2017*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 40" x 26", Edition of 3

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*Juanita at the Frozen Foods Shop, De Soto, Missouri, 2017*  
 Archival Inkjet Print, 16" x 24", Edition of 6

GEOLOCATION

We use publicly available embedded GPS information in Twitter updates to track the locations of user posts and make photographs to mark the location in the real world. Our act of making a photograph anchors and memorializes the ephemeral online data in the real world and also probes the expectations of privacy surrounding social networks. Twitter estimates there are over 500 million tweets daily worldwide, creating a new level of digital noise. Our collaborative work is a means for situating this virtual communication in the physical realm. We imagine ourselves as virtual flâneurs, ethnographers of the Internet, exploring cities 140 characters at a time through the lives of others.



These tweets have my location?

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Larson Shindelman [Nate Larson and Marni Shindelman]  
*Geolocation: Have My Location?, Indigo, California, 2011*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 24" x 20", Edition of 6

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Tell me I'm not making a mistake. Tell me you're worth the wait. #fb

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Larson Shindelman [Nate Larson and Marni Shindelman]  
*Geolocation: Worth the Wait, Saint John, New Brunswick, 2011*  
Archival Inkjet Print, 24" x 20", Edition of 6

## GEOLOCATION: #GRATITUDE

On October 7th, 2011, the blogger and United Russia Party member Vladimir Burmatov posted a rhyming couplet on Twitter - "Moscow is warm and sunny. Summer! #ThanksToPutinForThat" (VMoskve teplo i solntse. Leto! #spasiboputinuzaeto) - and encouraged others to follow with their own tweets using the hashtag. The invitation was quickly accepted with more than 10,000 tweets that day and becoming the first globally trending Cyrillic hashtag. The resulting Tweets were frequently sarcastic or critical of Putin's political agenda. In June 2016, we photographed sites linked to tweets containing #ThanksToPutinForThat in St. Petersburg and Moscow during an artist residency with CEC Artslink.



"Платежка за ЖКХ убила пенсионерку - #спасибопутинузаэто <http://t.co/tAFIMHEq>" #стабильность

"Retiree was killed by utilities fees - #thankspuinfthis <http://t.co/tAFIMHEq>" #stability

Larson Shindelman [Nate Larson and Marni Shindelman]  
 Geolocation: #Gratitude: Utility Fees, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2016  
 Archival Inkjet Print, 24" x 20", Edition of 6

**GEOLOCATION: #MOBILIZE**

At the invitation of the George Eastman Museum, we created a body of work specific to Rochester, New York. Drawing from trending hashtags in Rochester to identify themes relevant to the community, furthering our examination of how smartphones have contributed to a new era of social justice, including citizen journalism, information sharing, and community protest by exploring themes of racial discrimination, violence, right to protest, gun violence, police relations, political activism, and other social concerns.



#alllivesmatter But it's not all lives that still live in a haunting shadow of history's recent social transgressions so #blacklivesmatter

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Larson Shindelman [Nate Larson and Marni Shindelman]

*Geolocation: #Mobilize: Haunting Shadow*, 2018

Archival Inkjet Print, 40" x 30", Edition of 3