



MARK
PURDOM



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F/C Untitled from the series *Under*
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Mark Purdom

Under

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Biography

Mark Purdom's photographic work, while a commentary on people's influence on the environment, also plays with our concept or arguably our preconceptions of the picturesque.

Mark is originally from England and since moving to New Zealand in 2003 he has participated in various group shows at home and overseas. Several of his photographic projects, namely *In Such Multiples As Is Almost Incredible*, *Untitled - Launderette Series*, *Coverup 2001-2006* and *Mr Whittaker* were finalists in the New Zealand National Contemporary Art Award.

He lectures in photography at the School of Media Arts, Waikato Institute of Technology, New Zealand.

Under is located in suburbia's marginal space, defined as the open territories between the city boundary and the countryside: these are spaces that are generated as inevitable by-products of urban spatial development. The site and the BMX trails pictured exist in this sort of 'non-place', outside of cultural classification. The county council theoretically owns the land but they do not enforce any regulations or safety legislation here; the trails are not signposted locally or marked on maps and the exact location is not clearly defined on websites. Therefore to all intents and purposes it is a space that does not officially exist - this adds to the mystery of the site.

I have presented the mud constructions on the 'trails' as enigmatic structures: their physical presence mirroring the ambiguous landscape around them. The images can be viewed as evidence of other unseen things but implicit within the objects pictured are ideas about land-use, settlement, earth building methodology, arguably encoded in a kind of primitivist nostalgia. There is a continual tension between what the photographs describe and what they reveal. I am exploiting the potential of photography's indexicality - when it is at its most factual is often when it is most obscure.