1 Introduction

Cluttered spaces communicate both new beginnings and forgotten endings. These laser painted images enhance the feeling of a slipping memory or active imagination. When the spaces are being captured by the camera in the darkness, they can exist as both. There exists a duality that can not be seen.

When brought into the anaglyphic format, the images leap out of the two-dimensional plane. Without the three-dimensional glasses, the images are a complex jumble of red and cyan lines on an abstracted surface. With the three-dimensional glasses, the scenes spring into an enveloping experience of vibratory depth. Small differences in the laser tracing process that are perceived by left and right eyes cause the images to shimmer and feel alive.

Encapsulated by the dimensionality, we negotiate our own memories and imagination within the spaces. Who lived here? Who will live here? The space becomes a transition between ending and beginning, old and new. There is an uneasy stillness present within these long exposure images, yet it is only revealed as the viewer comes to terms with the subject’s state of limbo.

Figure 1: Ray Tracings of the In Between: Tracker Space.

2 Exposition

2.1 Background

This series was a result of an evening power outage. The restlessness caused by the darkness led to an exploration of available activities. Thankfully, a fully changed camera battery and the long exposure photography process provided some entertainment. The original images were reminiscent of flashlight drawings from Pablo Picasso, although, they evolved more linearly and structurally. The anaglyph format was attempted during a conversation of the images, and that format has stayed to the conclusion of this series.

2.2 Process

Using a tripod, align a camera with the subject. Manually focus the camera with the lights on. Set the camera’s shutter speed to bulb, and set the aperture to the desired size. Higher numbered f-stops will produce images with more depth of field. Darken the subject matter. Open the shutter with a locking remote to prevent camera vibration from holding the button down. Shine laser over subject matter until evenly covered. Close the camera shutter. Move camera absolutely parallel to the subject matter. Longer distances create more depth but tend to flatten the volume of the subject. Flatter volume causes the paper cut-out appearance. Shorter distances create less perceptual depth but more volume to subject. The distance from camera to subject effects the distance of the parallel movement. Close subject matter or macro images require a parallel movement of only 1/4 inch. In comparison, larger subject matter can have a parallel camera movement of several inches. Purists will stick to 2 and 1/2 inches, which is a close approximation of the distance between a human’s left and right eyes. After the camera has been moved, repeat the process of remotely opening the shutter and illuminate the subject matter a second time with the laser. Close shutter.

Open both images in an image manipulation software package. Take the red channel of the right eye image and duplicate it into the green and blue channels of the left eye image. Close the right eye image. Adjust the horizontal position of the red channel to that of the green and blue. For the subject to recede into the image, align the foreground. For the subject to pop-out of the image, align the background. Some rotation and shearing operations may be required for more accurate results. Adjust the brightness or contrast. Crop. Save.

3 Conclusion

I realize that making anaglyphs with the laser pointer can be time consuming. Shooting the content in normal light settings and making a test anaglyph saves time arranging the set and picking the camera angle.

During the creation of this series, I found two areas for continued exploration. First, create a mechanical device for laser movement. The device will save on physical exertion, and more evenly illuminate the subject matter. Second, create color images using red, blue, and green lasers. The process would leave a camera shutter open for three laser passes, one red, one green, and one blue.