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donde habite el olvido (reflected in the photograph)

Michaela McCaughey

University of Rhode Island, michaela4484@yahoo.com

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email contact: michaela4484@yahoo.com

This project, at the heart of it, is about intersection. It is the intersection of philosophy and photography, of verbal expression and visual, of Spanish and English, of my two worlds. And through all of my work in this topic, I have come to the realization it may be that place is found at the intersection, in the space between.

I chose to use an artistic medium, as place, in its inexplicable and indefinable nature, can only be properly expressed and understood through art. In the mixed-media form that I used for this project, the intersections between many things and the spaces between them play an interesting role, subtly underneath it all.

It should be noted that there is also a strong connection between place and art as themes. A painting or a photograph creates its own place within the work. To make art, which is also to think about it, is to make place. Philosopher Jean Baudrillard writes: "The peculiar role of the photograph is not to illustrate the event but to constitute an event in itself," (intelligence of evil and the lucidity pact, 100). There is also the distortion of reality within the work, as a city of films and photographs is a place that may never have existed. Marjorie Grene writes, "The painting, once achieved, haunts us as the world does when we have shaped it into a world. The painting is not on the canvas, nor at the place, if there is one, represented by it. It is ambiguously and embracingly here, nowhere and everywhere," (222).

Though we tend to rely on what can be seen, there is a profound limitation of the visible. Photography in particular is able to capture both presence and absence simultaneously, an important facet of place. In Italo Calvino's short story "The Adventure of the Photographer," Antonino, left alone and depressed, captures his

former lover's being by virtue of her non-being in the photograph. "With the camera slung around his neck, shut up in the house, slumped in an armchair, he compulsively snapped pictures as he stared into the void. He was photographing [her absence]," (233).

Any place is a layering of other places, the place at different points in history. Just as time folds over and selves build on themselves, place too is a layering. "All these places have stories," as said by a Western Apache storyteller (Nick Thompson). Places are, in fact, haunted by a deluge of memories. We are enmarañado in place. (tangled). It affects your state of mind, who you are and who you become. We think spatially.

Though we are obsessed with time, we continually resist place. However, despite all our attempts to escape the gravity of our connection to it, "we are tied to place undetachably and without reprieve," (Getting Back into Place xiii). We so nonchalantly inquire of strangers, "Where are you from?" I cannot begin to count how many times I was asked, "¿De dónde sos?" while in Argentina. Aside from so clearly being a foreigner, I was asked this carelessly, with the person seemingly unaware of the importance of such a question. We ask this upon first meetings and our answers place and identity us to the world. We cannot deny the pervasiveness of place.

Beyond this, we experience such anxiety in truly contemplating the idea of no-place-at-all, of placelessness, that we avoid the thought. And in the times we are forced to acknowledge it, in the times we are lost, we feel not displaced but rather without place. We are more attached to place than we allow ourselves to consider. Philosopher Ed Casey writes of place-panic: "Our lives are so place-oriented and place-saturated that we cannot begin to comprehend, much less face up to, what sheer placelessness would be like," (ix). Even the casual expression, "I have no place to

go," betrays a desperation beneath it. For all our pretensions, all our attempts to control, to understand the world we live in ... we are lost.

We may then wonder, is a stable sense of dwelling possible? We are fixated on finding our home, of embedding ourselves somewhere and finding ourselves there. Are we then devoid of this sense of self when traveling? I believe that dwelling is possible even in motion. As Casey writes, "...If identity itself is fluid, the identity of place as much as that of ourselves, is it not natural to be in a constant state of movement rather than standing still? In a world of global exchange, perhaps we are all of us always moving," (Getting Back into Place 149).

In this global world, our relationships with place are inevitably becoming fractured by the hyper-real. The ever increasing in frequency and power hyper-real: the TV screen, the hypnotic nature of the every-screen, the televised war. The abuse of the image leading to the simulacrum removes us from the sense of the authentic place. These panels are a conscious attempt to bring us back to the things themselves.

We are drawn to certain places, averse to others. The panels are composed of a collection of photographs taken in Argentina, a foreign place *I* was inexplicably drawn to. For me, the sense of place within them is heightened. Can this sense be conveyed and shared? Each of us has our own places or works of art with an elevated place-ness. Here is a glimpse into mine.