

Boomoon, *A sense of temporal delirium*

Time doesn't exactly stand still in Boomoon's photographs - not that it flies by either. Nor are his images set up to create narrative sequences in which events and actions unfold. Instead, over the body of work that he has built since the 1980s, they read as a steady accumulation of movement occurring in front of the camera. At times too slow, at times too fast, and always in the face of the infinity of nature, time's passing is largely imperceptible to the human eye. Yet Boomoon always strives to register its presence.

The two unrelated but connected series shown here amply illustrate this point. *Waterfall* and *Skogar* are each observations and responses to the energy of falling water, both absolutely majestic and terrifyingly sublime in their impression. While the generically titled *Waterfall* series presents colour photographs set on a vertical axis, *Skogar* is shot in black and white in the horizontal format, constituting part an ongoing investigation named after a tiny Icelandic village at the south of the Eyjafjallajökull glacier. Boomoon has been making repeated trips there since 2007, but divulges in interviews that he is only attracted to notions of place in regards to the visual qualities of mist and light as opposed to geography or even political behaviour based on geographical variables.

Amidst the ferocity of nature that is to be found in this location, what prevails in the photographs is the sense of a temporal delirium. Stephen Shore, in *The Nature of Photographs* (2007), has written about the manner in which 'the three dimensional world becomes flattened when it is projected on to a flat piece of film and so too then a fluid world becomes transformed when it is projected on to a static piece of film'. Similarly, there is also an important lack of spatial hierarchy within his compositions, which is achieved by photographing a more or less flat facade that is itself parallel to the picture plane – in this case, huge sheets of water. Allied to this particular depiction of space are the formal decisions that Boomoon has made – his fixed vantage point, clear perspective, tight framing, timing and so on. Through the repeated emphasis on masses of descending water, Boomoon invites us to contemplate such seemingly impenetrable physical matter, prompting deeper philosophical enquiry beyond the shallow depictive level of the photograph.

Boomoon has previously explained that he is not so much invested in the idea that a photograph expresses only the beauty or power of the subject in front of his lens, but rather finds more interest with the resonances in himself that result from his encounters with natural phenomena. He employs the camera to enter into a dialogue with the material reality he is looking at, deploying all the senses when creating imagery, which forces him to focus on his perceptions and origins. In the process, Boomoon develops a unique relationship with his images, claiming for them neither self-expression nor message insofar as they are merely the embodied result of certain interactions with his surroundings.

In the accompanying essay for *Constellations*, his exhibition for South Korea's Daegu Art Museum in 2013, curator Charlotte Cotton expands upon this, describing Boomoon's photographic practice as 'essentialist'. On one hand, his

work reconsiders the ontological quality of the photograph and the medium's limits and possibilities in terms of its ability to represent a subject. On the other hand, these essentialist thoughts press harder when we consider Boomoon's choice to photograph nature as his subject through his views of vast expanses of sea, sky and land, and, more specifically, as Cotton notes, 'subjects including oceans, volcanic landscapes, and ice formations that (by molecular and tectonic degrees) share a profound state of infinite change'.

Naturally, this also extends to the anticipated experience in the viewer as well. The size and scale with which he displays the final prints in exhibition form operates at magnitude in order to establish further context, which, combined with their content being devoid of human presence, ultimately grasps at the earth's history as a passage of deep, geological time.