



Flea, Man, Tree

92 x 119 cm inc.2cm border (framed 94 x 121 x 3 cm)

Archival digital print, waxed tulipwood frame

Edition 2 + 1 A.P.

2003 / 2026

Description Narrative by Becky Beasley

Flea, Man, Tree

A black and white portrait format archival digital photograph which is 90x120cm. The delicate frame profile is made from tulipwood which is pale yet sturdy and has been lightly clear waxed. The photograph is quite dark, and moody, somewhat melancholic, and is primarily in shades of mid and dark grey. The image is street documentary in style and shows a public space which has a concrete ground and several pine trees which grow out of the concrete in one area. The bottom half of the photograph is mainly grey concrete ground with some stains and debris indistinctly visible. The top half is mainly pine-trees with some lighter areas of sky emerging towards the top right of the image behind the tips of the pines. Across the middle of the image, shaded under the small group of pines is the darkly dressed torso and legs of a figure wearing a jacket and trousers. The head and shoulders of this figure are occluded by a pine branch. A soft beam of light is just catching this leafy pine branch, which gives it a slightly fluffy, ambiguous, cloud-like quality.

In front of the figure, on the ground is a light fabric sheet on which about sixteen dark handbags are arranged in a grid. The figure is an illegal street vendor. It is Athens, in 2003, the year before the Athens Olympic Games. I lived in Athens for six months at this time and spent a lot of time walking and photographing the city streets. My interest was always in objects and provisional structures. Illegal street vending was becoming harder as a way to make a living.

The larger print size allows a visitor to view it from afar and then to approach in search of more detail. On approach, there is little further detail to be seen due to the dark quality of the image and the negative from which

it was printed. The handbags, for example, remain dark and indistinct up close. The image was photographed on a Holga, plastic medium-format film camera which has a plastic lens which vignettes the negative edges and gives a dreamy quality to photographs shot on it.

Behind the figure and pines, also along the horizontal central full width of the image, there are concrete public park plaza structures such as six long, three metre wide steps leading up to a second level behind the figure; a low perimeter wall to the left; and, to the right side of the image, the edges of three large curved concrete shapes, which are likely part of a public fountain or pond which is out of frame.



Flea, Man, Pond

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A black and white portrait format archival digital photograph which is 90x120cm. The delicate frame profile is made from tulipwood which is pale yet sturdy and has been lightly clear waxed. The photograph is quite dark, and moody, somewhat melancholic, and is mainly in shades of mid and dark grey. The image is street documentary in style and shows a public concrete plaza park space, to the rear, several tall pine trees which fill the top half at left and right sides of the image, with the top middle central space open to the sky which is the lightest part. The top of the front of what looks like a fairly, grand Victorian public building is just visible, rendered in a light tone, above the trees. The bottom half of the photograph is mainly grey concrete ground with some stains and debris indistinctly visible. Across the horizontal middle section of the image is a simple, concrete cast shallow circular public pond or minimal fountain. It appears to be empty. On the ground around the curved front perimeter of the pond, cleaved to its curve, are about twenty-five items of clothing have been carefully laid out. They appear to be jackets in various shades, from light grey to black. Towards the right side of the curved line of clothing is a figure with their back to the camera, dressed wearing a dark jacket and dark trousers. A lighter toned item of clothing hangs vertically from their left arm. The figure is an illegal street vendor. It is Athens, in 2003, the year before the Athens Olympic Games. I lived in Athens for six months at this time and spent a lot of time walking and photographing the city streets. My interest was always in objects and provisional structures. Illegal street vending was becoming harder as a way to make a living.

The larger print size allows a visitor to view it from afar and then to approach in search of more detail. On approach, there is little further detail to be seen due to the dark quality of the image and the negative from which it was printed. The clothing, for example, remains dark and indistinct up close. The image was photographed on a Holga, plastic medium-format film camera which has a plastic lens which vignettes the negative edges and gives a dreamy quality to photographs shot on it.

Behind the figure and the circular pond, also along the horizontal central width of the image, there are concrete public park plaza structures such as, to the left side of the image, six long, three metre wide steps leading up to a second level behind the pond and a low perimeter wall behind the upper level, behind which are the pines and some other trees.



The two photographs were shot from the same standing position, likely about ten metres away from both figures, and likely slightly furtively as the vendors were working illegally and, in both images, I cannot see their faces, nor they, mine. I am sure that at the time what attracted me were the objects, the grid of bags and the curved line of clothing. My interest in the shady figures, of the effect of light on the pine fronds, for examples, only came later, once I had a chance to see the negatives and prints. I likely composed the first shot of the bag seller under the pines with the figure and bags centred in the frame. I then would have turned my camera very slightly to the right and centred the pond and clothing in the centre of my frame. The expanse of grey concrete ground and the steps and curved concrete pond structure reveals the space and time likely connecting the pair of images. I had made a small print of the figure with the bags many years ago and when I returned to the negative recently to digitally print a

larger version, I discovered a second, equally thin negative attached to it, which, on scanning revealed the circular pond image and the clothing vendor.