



Illusion

Julia Forrest

A woman presents herself within the landscape. She turns a mirror towards the viewer, breaking up the solid environment. She interacts with the landscape she wanders in, blending into the background, changing with scale, or holding a part of the landscape itself. The whole image becomes a pictorial illusion and as the photographer, I am in complete control of the composition.

In reference to the “The New Mimesis”, like greek mythological stories of goddesses, these women look gentle and fragile, yet posses a strong power. Without seeing their faces the identity becomes unimportant, the focus being on their performance. The variety of mirrors I use help them blend into their surroundings, the mirror serving as an illusion to show off their power by changing nature and the landscape at will.

Using a medium format film camera and no digital manipulation, I create an illusion within the lens. I am inspired by Pictorialist photographers and how they create a purely photographic reality in their images. Early 20th century photographer Anne Brigman seamlessly meets the human figure with a surreal landscape. Her figures have the same powerful presence that I strive to create in my photographs. Shooting in black and white, I make a historical reference to this period. I use Infrared film to emphasize the grain and to create a more surreal and distant reality. I challenge the notion of the landscape by referencing what makes a photograph: the women use their mirror to re-frame what I have framed and capture in their mirror like a camera captures in the lens.
