

MEMORY CITY

Alex Webb & Rebecca Norris Webb

This project is a photographic exploration of Rochester, NY — for 125 years the home of Eastman Kodak, a company that declared bankruptcy in 2012 — during what may very well be the last days of film as we know it.

MEMORY CITY – Is a complex and indirect elegy, laced with symbol, and created by photographers Alex Webb and Rebecca Norris Webb in 2012 and 2013. It is on one level a farewell salute to an American film, the passionately colorful Kodachrome with its unique and sought-after characteristics, and also to the KODAK firm itself which declared bankruptcy in 2012. Alex Webb, also shooting in “modern color” uses the last of his supply to photograph Rochester, New York, the city where KODAK was established and where Kodachrome was created. Now his Kodachrome images have no choice but to be processed as black and white and they appear a bit weathered, fitting metaphors for the fading memories Alex is exploring. Rebecca Norris Webb uses color to create a visual refrain throughout the body of work (and the book, published by Radius) of dresses for all occasions, and the women who inhabited and inhabit them - both currently and from times past. Major historical figures with local connections such as Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony are referenced and Memory City is replete with reflections, murals, flags and there is even a haunting portrait of the fabled and emblematic American Passenger Pigeon. On this level Memory City embraces people, places and things in a quiet reflection. The city’s passing citizens seem largely lost in thought, meditative. The use of rich darks and deep shadows throughout the photographs lends a somber note, and serves to unify the project. In most of the pictures of people, eyes are shaded and gazes averted. Each photograph in Memory City has its own life but seen together, the works become an almost wistful tapestry of interwoven themes and carefully chosen tableaux, a tribute to the passage of time and memory.

Reception With the Artists, Friday, November 7, 6:00-8:00pm

Exhibition runs from November 7, through December 27, 2014

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