

STATEMENT

In 2011, I discovered that our local shopping center had been built upon a 2,000-year-old sacred burial ground and village site of the Monongahela tribe. I frequently shopped at the Center and this new revelation transformed my understanding of the landscape and place I called home. Reflected in the scene in front of me was an ancient, spiritually important and hallowed landscape clouded by the tangible constructions of our modern culture. I am fascinated by this simultaneous presence and absence in the landscape, the seen and unseen, and in the apparent disparity between Western and Native views of the sanctity of the land. I felt compelled to document the site and the resulting photograph inspired a project that I have been actively working on for the past six years.

In *Vanishing Points*, I combine extensive research of historical archives, maps and contemporary satellite imagery, as well as direct collaboration with archaeologists, historians and scholars in an effort to locate and photograph significant sites of previous Native American presence. The sites I choose to visit and photograph are literal and metaphorical vanishing points. They are places in the landscape where two lines, or cultures, converge. They are also actual archaeological sites where the sparse evidence of a culture's once vibrant existence has all but disappeared. While visiting these sites, I reflect on the monuments our modern culture will leave behind and what the archaeological evidence of our civilization will reveal about our time on Earth.

Recent controversy over the Dakota Access Pipeline project on the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation, and subsequent protests, has brought new attention to issues regarding the treatment of sacred Native American land and its people. The *Vanishing Points* project participates in this important conversation, providing a reflection and critique on the historical impacts of Manifest Destiny and the continued subjugation of Native American tribes, while also connecting a mysterious and ancient past with the familiar present.