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Lydia See | archetypographia@gmail.com | <http://archetypographia.com/>

Family Vacations I Have Never Taken | 2.16.17-3.9.17

an exhibition of altered photographs | Weizenblatt Gallery | Mars Hill University | opening reception + artist's talk 2.16.17 - 6-8pm



Referencing iconic destinations and women's work, multidisciplinary artist Lydia See's newest series of embroidered vernacular photographs invites the viewer to consider one's own memories and how time and circumstance may have altered them.

With more ubiquitous access to digital cameras and mobile devices comes an extreme lack of physical prints being made, a premise which prompted the concept behind **Family Vacations I Have Never Taken**. The transience of photographs, social media timelines, and instant sharing has replaced the communal nature of vacation slide shows and family albums. These works invite a closer consideration of place, experience, and memory-making. Memories are not stored in brains in an orderly or systematic way, they are re-creations or reconstructions of past experiences from elements scattered throughout various areas of our brains.

Utilizing embroidery, a stereotypically "feminine" domestic craft, applied to images of sites commonly associated with masculinity and new frontiers, "The Classic American Road Trip" never taken is recreated by stitching together memory elements which never occurred, fabricating a fictional journey, obscuring and highlighting detail, drawing attention to what is held and released in one's memory and allowing the photograph to supersede the absent memory itself.

The panoramic images were taken by the artist's Uncle Charlie and Aunt Joan (who stated in response to the works: "Interesting contrast in the careful, precise stitching and the natural free forms of the eroded rocks, also that the actual textures are paradoxical, soft for precise and hard for sculptured.") between 1997-2002. The sewing thread used for embroidery was given by Aunt Jean, and the works (titled according to notations on the backs of images when available) were created by Lydia See between October 2016 and February 2017.

(images: "Untitled (MAY/23/02 Vermilion Cliffs)" / "Untitled (Capitol Reef NP - northerly view from Frying Pan Trail (toward Freemont River Gorge) probably late '90's)" / "8/97 Grand Tetons from the East MC. Trip (8)")