

Joseph Mougel

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I am fascinated by the manifestation of self through the disruption of structured systems. My work transforms places through the manipulation of objects, memories, and rituals to create manufactured scenarios that explore manual labor, land use, and tactics for deciphering space and time on a human scale. This creative research spans genres of performance, video, and photography, while engaging with topics of site specificity through a field-based practice. In some projects, the transformation of the landscape occurs through my own physical effort, while in others, I interact with the sites to reference ecological, historical, and/or contemporary management of resources.

Encounters Sec3 Sec2, 2017



Effortless Sage Before - After, 2017



The Montello residency offered me the time and space to produce work in response to the Nevada desert, both initiating new investigations and continuing existing endeavors. On early morning hikes, I identified sites to photograph during the cooler conditions after sunset. These scenes bathed in colored light capture a surreal presence, human or otherwise, that permeates the remote landscape. During the daytime, I worked on an additional installment of my *Effortless* series, examining the history of range management and sagebrush removal throughout the region. At the conclusion of the residency, I traveled to Muley Point, Utah, and completed another *Effortless* piece featuring tinajas, which considers access to water in the desert. My creative documentation of these transient works persists, even as the products of my activity are ultimately undone when, for example, the rains come again with the change of seasons and the field inevitably returns to its overgrown condition.