

ARTIST STATEMENT

There are places that cannot be fully seen. Not because they are hidden, but because the forms available to represent them—the photograph, the document, the archive—flatten what they attempt to hold. A photograph can show a wall, but it cannot fully convey the experiences, histories, and transformations accumulated within its surface over time. Images stabilize what they depict, while certain places and forms of memory resist stabilization. My practice begins with this tension between the image's capacity to represent a place and its inability to contain the complexity of lived experience.

My practice also emerges from a position of displacement. Having lived and worked across Korea, Germany, France, Indonesia, and Vietnam, I approach place not as a fixed point of origin but as something continually reshaped through movement, memory, and encounter. These experiences do not resolve into a single geographical or cultural identity. Instead, they inform a way of working through cutting, reassembling, and reconstructing images. Photosculpture is not only a formal methodology for me; it is a means of exploring how place might emerge from displacement and from the shifting relations between different memories, materials, and temporalities.

In 2006, I made *House*, an early work incorporating photographs of red brick walls. Although the images remained recognizable, they seemed unable to convey the lived experience associated with the places they depicted. The photograph was

flat: it could be seen, but not entered. The image preserved the appearance of a wall while leaving outside its frame the weight of the space, the traces of lived experience, and the histories that had accumulated around it. Over time, the photograph came to feel like a fossil—identifiable, yet detached from the life it was meant to hold. This limitation became a starting point for my practice. Rather than simply documenting a place, I began to explore how photography could be transformed to reconstruct the conditions through which a place is encountered: partially, materially, and without resolving its contradictions.

Since 2011, I have developed two interconnected forms through which to pursue this inquiry. *Photopiles* are made by cutting photographic prints into fragments and layering them into thin, three-dimensional structures. By dismantling the image's flat surface and recombining its parts, these works give material form to fragmented spatial and temporal experience. *Photosculptures* extend this process by translating photographs shaped by encounters with particular places into objects situated in space. Through their physical transformation and their relations to surrounding bodies and environments, these works explore how images can move beyond their initial representational contexts and enter new spatial and temporal relations. Across both forms, photography becomes not simply an image of a place, but a material and spatial process through which place can be reconfigured.

This transformation is not entirely predetermined. Cutting, folding, layering, stitching, and suspending images alter their forms and spatial relations, while

processes involving water and time can soften, separate, erode, or remove photographic surfaces. These material interventions do not simply damage an existing image; they change the conditions under which it can be encountered. Cracks, holes, folds, and fragments register both deliberate actions and processes that exceed complete control. As an image passes through different materials and transformations, it can branch into distinct material states without any one state becoming the definitive original. The work remains open to further relations rather than returning to a singular, stable form.

The subjects of my work often emerge from places where official histories and personal memories do not align, and where architectural surfaces carry traces of histories that remain only partially visible. Red brick walls encountered across Korea, Indonesia, and Vietnam have become a recurring point of departure in my practice. Their material familiarity connects places shaped by distinct colonial histories and subsequent transformations without making those histories interchangeable. Through photography and its subsequent material reconfiguration, I investigate how architectural traces can be detached from their original contexts and re-encountered through different spatial and temporal relations.

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I understand an *other place* as emerging through these processes of material and spatial translation. It is not another geographical location, nor a return to an original place that has been lost. Rather, it emerges where different memories, histories, bodies, and temporalities meet, overlap, and diverge without being resolved into a single origin. In this sense, place is neither fully given nor permanently fixed; it is continually produced through relations that remain incomplete and open to change.

Photosculpture, for me, is ultimately a practice of making place from what cannot be fixed—from fragments, residues, and incomplete structures that resist being settled into a coherent image. The incompleteness of these works is not a failure to restore what has been lost. It is a way of remaining attentive to the instability of memory, the material histories of places, and the possibility that something else may emerge through their transformation.