

JAYNE H BAUM

Contemporary Photography and Fine Art

Scott Morgan: *10,000 Years*

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Scott Morgan's *10,000 Years* is a series of photographic works that deconstruct the traditional elements of analog photography and darkroom chemistry, reconfiguring them in new ways that draw out the alchemical energies at the heart of image making.

Using the rays of the sun to etch directly onto an array of modern and vintage silver gelatin photographic papers, the artist deftly manipulates light and chemistry, returning photography to its etymological root as "light drawing", and foregrounding the photographic process as metaphor for vision and transformation.

The project title, *10,000 Years*, refers to the age of the photons birthed by the sun that daily bombard the objects and surfaces around us as light. The individual work titles, meanwhile, often consist of long strings of numbers that might connote arcane codes but are, in fact, indications of the date and time they were made, as well as the location of the sun in the sky at the time of exposure.

Morgan explores the physical properties of light and the photo-sensitive materials at the heart of these images' formation. The interaction of the sun's rays and the photographic emulsions coating the paper cause complex and unpredictable material reactions: burning holes, singeing the paper with deep gold, oxblood, blue, and orange hues, and drawing metallic silver particles to cluster at the surface, creating shimmering reflective finishes.

10,000 Years is the latest of the artist's innovative photographic explorations; Morgan has in the past appropriated scientific imaging techniques as a way of probing the relationship between the material and the metaphysical—and humankind's relationship to the natural world and the cosmos has always been close to the center of his practice. The spiritual underpinnings of the artist's methodology in this new series is reflected in the term he has coined to describe his unique process: "Suryagrams", named after the Vedic god of the Sun.

Scott Morgan was born in Patuxent River, Maryland, and studied painting, sculpture, photography and literature at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The artist has exhibited at The Museum of the Southwest, Midland, TX; The Power Plant, Toronto; Bergdorf Goodman, New York; and The Ansel Adams Center for Photography, San Francisco, among many other venues internationally, and his work can be found in prestigious private and public collections including The Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY; The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C; the Polaroid Corporate Collection, Boston, MA; and the US Consulate, Capetown, South Africa. Parallel with his art practice, Morgan has also enjoyed a highly successful career working in the field of commercial photography and film direction. The artist currently lives and works in Toronto, Ontario.

<https://www.artnet.com/galleries/jhb-gallery/10-000-years>