

# INTRODUCTION

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*Souvenirs for the Future* is an immersive nature experience presented as a series of photographic images. Forging a path through varying landscapes, Julia Champtaloup's images focus on micro views of verdant fields, wild gardens, seaweeds, mosses and ferns against backdrops of threatened or vulnerable land and seascapes. The viewer is invited to observe and connect with natural landscapes and underwater habitats at a personal level.

The ongoing conversation about the Anthropocene, the geologic age in which human activity is the dominant influence on climate and the environment, comes into play in everything we do and everywhere we look. We are reminded daily of the urgency to restore and protect forests and to renew wetlands and marine environments.

But how do we navigate the way forward as stewards of ecosystems in the future? There is growing recognition that by actively immersing ourselves in biophilia, we can build a stronger connection with the natural world, expanding our ecological sensitivity and eco intelligence.

*Souvenirs for the Future* brings awareness to the urgency of planting for increased biodiversity, growing seaweed to help cool and clean up oceans, and encouraging movements to plant and protect landscape and improve local ecologies. Alongside views into underwater worlds of carbon-sequestering seaweeds, Julia's photographs depict micro ecosystems of varying landscapes that are also vital habitats for birds, insects and marine life.

While presented as aesthetic windows, Julia's images are intended to be viewed as a pathway through nature and a record of walks in wild and not-so-wild places.

*Souvenirs for the Future* also represents mementos that serve as relics or tokens of lost landscapes and threatened flora and fauna. These could

be seen as a metaphor for ways in which we might reflect back and wonder how we could have treated our planet so carelessly. The next generation might even ask: "What did the garden sound like when there were many birds?" or, "Did you see many bees and butterflies when you were young?"

*"Did you see many bees and butterflies when you were young?"*

# ARTIST STATEMENT

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BY JULIA CHAMPTALOU

We have many souvenirs of the past, reminders of extinct species and disappearing forests on museum walls. We cherish postcards as tokens of lost landscapes and natural wonders. Yet we seem to have forgotten our role as chroniclers of nature and stewards of the land.

Wandering in wild and natural places, I think about sharing my visual observations as records that also tell stories. The visual record becomes a way of seeing, a mild contemplation that I am eager to share. Stories emerge that stir a deeper engagement with what lies beneath and near. Walking and photographing become forms of documenting our place in nature, our small findings that bring pleasure.



It takes time and is often a difficult journey to see a work of nature these days. Contemporary life mostly lacks connection with a past, which included extended walks in nature and immersions in the natural elements. We know there are ways of seeing nature without distractions that entail discipline and physically slowing down; we just need reminders. Perhaps going slow is a requirement for pleasure. My images are an encouragement to slow down, to wander and to observe.

In the act of lingering, perhaps even resting or doing nothing, the elements fully reveal themselves as do the wonders of nature. The invisible becomes visible and the quiet landscape comes alive.

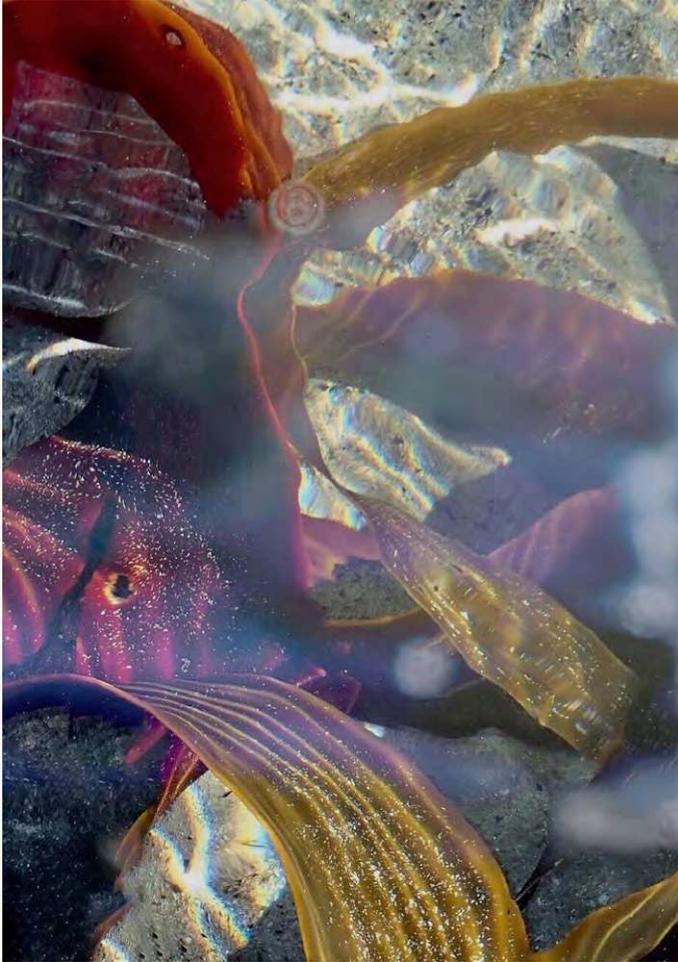
Walking in nature, I am reminded of how hopeful it is. Landscape is as encouraging as we are, regenerating and reviving. I am also hopeful that we can live in several landscapes at once - the landscape of hope and memory and the landscape of immediate pleasure in an intimacy with nature.

"Stories are  
compasses and  
architecture,  
we navigate by  
them, we build  
our sanctuaries  
and our prisons  
out of them, and  
to be without a  
story is to be lost  
in the vastness  
of a world that  
spreads in all  
directions like  
arctic tundra or  
sea ice."

Rebecca Solnit,  
*The Faraway Nearby*

Brown Kelp Blur





Kelp Curves

"How long does it take to see something? Looking might be the business of glancing at things long enough to take them in as information; seeing is the art of soaking them up, of letting them sink in, of feeling them."

Rebecca Solnit,  
Slow Seeing