

BETHANY ARTS

ZACK BENT

SPIRES

Zack Bent is an artist based in Seattle, Washington. His sculptures, photographs and videos are often mythic translations of his home, his family and the stuff he collects. Bent received degrees in Architecture and Environmental Design from Ball State University and an Masters of Fine Arts in Photomedia from the University of Washington. He currently teaches at Seattle Pacific University.



Artist Statement

Since I was a small child I have been involved in the midwestern rite of morel mushroom hunting, a fleeting and mysterious foraging practice that my family would pursue in the warm days of spring in dense deciduous woodlands. Nearly three years

ago, I was initiated into the practice of morel hunting in the west on newly ravaged forest fire land. Traversing burnt land is a mysterious and silent experience. While all parties are busy collecting mushrooms, the hush of the forest and the creaking of the trees are your only companions. It is both eerie and comforting. The forest new in its death leaves its black charcoal marks on you at every turn and permeates your nose with its carbonized fragrance. The silence and death present in this land offers an inside-out view of sublime beauty in the wilderness.

Through these experiences, the 'burn' became lodged in my imagination and I began to scheme projects that would use the vast and monumental scorched landscape as a backdrop for photos and videos. This exhibition Spires is the first wave of work created during multiple visits with my sons to a parcel of forest fire land south of Cle Elum, Washington over the past year. The photographs include sculptural and performative interventions that are process-driven images responding to the desolation of the forest while acknowledging the impending growth just beneath the surface of the land. Including my young sons as players in the photographs is my way of comparing the land to our fragile flesh and interjecting quiet acts of human presence amidst the ruinous spires.



















