Candidate Statement

change. permanence.

I took a picture of a city intersection. The composition was scattered in the normal pattern of daily life. Although a cityscape by definition, my subject was the atmosphere and the poise of that one moment. Perhaps these people would never cross paths again, and it is the perfection of that moment, when all of the people are in the same place at the same time that enraptured me. My source of inspiration was the camera itself. Photography is powerful: it can capture a moment in time, and immortalize it in a tangible object.

Influenced by city photographers of the early 20th century and by the romantic and realist landscape artists of the late 19th century, I began to focus on landscape and cityscape photography. I found in my photographs more than the physical location, but a juxtaposition of various scales of opposing forces, whether nature and industry, or local traditions and a global material culture. Place, like photography, has the ability to capture within it stories and memories, unique to each individual, but they differ in one substantial way: time. While photographs defy time with permanence, place is subject to the progress and development of time. The world itself seemed to be a play between permanence and change.

In my works, I found that oftentimes change and permanence coexist in harmony. In my rooftop photography of a solar paneled roof leading to a view of a traditional Chinese hotel building, I realized that in our world, there is a sense of compromise that overwhelms the conflict. Many of my works show that in context, change can be good, and that there can be middle ground between preservation and development. The important part is to not overlook the significance of each moment, because in this world, nothing lasts forever, and in the end, all that is left will be a series of photographs, a string of memories, a sequence of moments that remind us that change is inevitable and can be embraced.