



Natural Mystics

Dylan Dodson

Artist Statement

Ansel Adams described Yosemite Valley as “always a sunrise”. This overarching idea that the wonders of nature spill out like the light of a sunrise inspired me to intersect the wonder of nature with the wonder of surrealism. I’ve always admired nature and surrealism in photography, and by challenging myself to view the two together I grew to appreciate the two more than ever before. Another aspect of photography I grew to appreciate was the black-and-white contrast that Adams used extensively while in Yosemite. It made the imagery I already had in my head come together like a solved puzzle. Also, surreal elements seem to flow with the natural elements present in my photos, like how photo (8) makes you think of the trees as a reflection in a puddle above the squirrel. I believe making people pause and think is an important aspect of photography and one of the most crucial tools a photo holds.

My photos were all taken in Yosemite National Park, home to some of the greatest natural formations in the world. Its atmosphere is one of spectacles and conveyed the living sense of the past when I was standing on the floor of a valley formed from a glacier thousands of years ago. Not as long ago, Adams captured Yosemite with the same sort of vision of its valley and surroundings. His photos also include very dynamic skies, an element I strived for within many of my photos for added surreal effects to the landscapes I was photographing. What I found while in Yosemite is that nature offers many planes of diversion from reality, but it’s up to us to envision what makes our existence unique and memorable.



















