

Curatorial Rationale

The core theme of my artwork is the massive amount of waste our society produces. Trash is never really the centerpiece of photography because no one wants to acknowledge its presence in our world. It is easier to turn a blind eye to waste once it is out of sight. However, by making trash the focus of my work, it prevents viewers from ignoring its existence. I believe that accepting the fact that each and every one of us is responsible for producing an excessive amount of waste is the first step to fixing the problem.

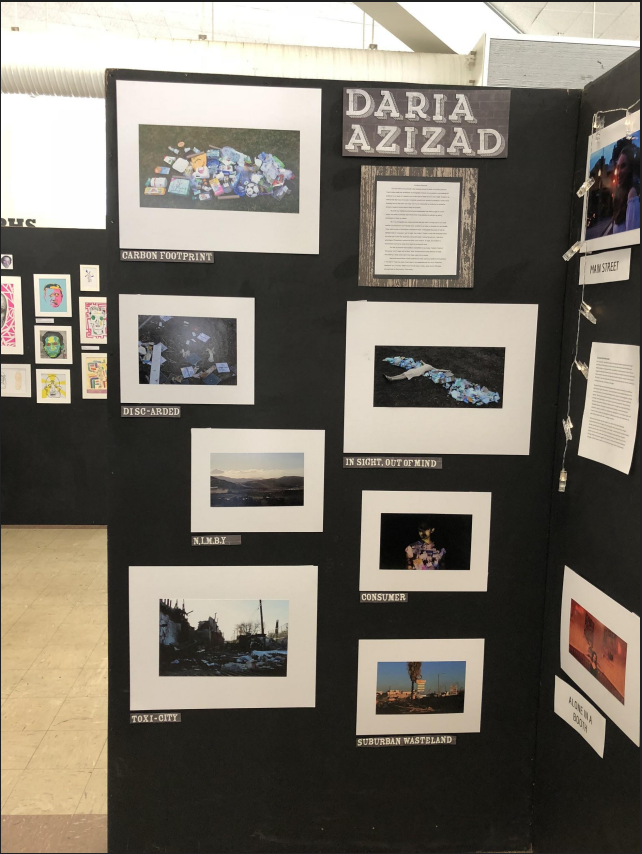
My work was inspired by environmental photography that shines a light on human impact. One artist in particular, Barry Rosenthal, brings attention to pollution by taking photographs of trash he collects.

All of my photographs are united under the idea that trash is a major part of our world, whether it is produced in our everyday lives, compiled in our cities, or devoted to in our landfills. I have used an array of techniques to present this idea. I manipulated the power of color to highlight trash in “Consumer,” and “In sight, Out of Mind.” Further, I used both landscape shots and close-ups to show the big picture, along with details I wanted to point out. I also took advantage of Photoshop to remove the head of my model in “In sight, Out of Mind” to demonstrate how trash is rarely at the forefront of anyone’s mind.

The idea of personal responsibility is exemplified in my photos, “Carbon Footprint,” “Consumer,” and “In sight, Out of Mind.” Each of these photos draws attention to waste amounted by a single entity, rather than mass waste from a society.

I also took several shots of areas dedicated to trash, such as a landfill in the mountains in “N.I.M.B.Y.” I took two shots of trash piled in the residential area of a city in “Suburban Wasteland” and “Toxi-city.” Within one of the city areas, I took a closer shot of CDs piles amongst trash on the ground in “Disc-arded.”

Exhibition Photograph



Selection 1: Toxi-city



Size: 34.0cmx22.0cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/7.1$
Focal length 27.0 mm
ISO 100
Exposure time 1/25

This image was taken in the middle of a city, next to a residential area and fast food restaurant. There has been no effort to clean it up, and has just become an accepted part of the town. Although no image can capture the putrid scent or sloshing decay I walked through to photograph this area, the visual aspects are striking enough to depict the problem our society has with producing trash.

Selection 2: Disc-arded



Size: 25cmx18cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/5.6$
Focal length 27.0 mm
ISO 100
Exposure time 1/80

When photographing trash, I found a “collection” of CDs piled amongst other discarded objects. I decided to photograph them because I don’t normally think that someone’s musical work is something to be thrown away without regard. CDs are mostly obsolete with the rise of iPods, so they have become useless. The large collection of CDs shows that trash can be the fate of anything, even things that were supposed to be valued.

Selection 3: Suburban Wasteland



This photo that juxtaposes waste and typical parts of a city (signs, roads, streetlamps). Even though the waste is present, no one acknowledges its presence. The fence represents a blindfold for society, pushing forth ignorance and an “out of sight, out of mind” mentality.

Size: 24.8cmx14.5cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/8.0$
Focal length 55.0 mm
ISO 100
Exposure time 1/160

Selection 4: N.I.M.B.Y



Size: 24.8cmx14.5cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/11.0$
Focal length 55.0 mm
ISO 100
Exposure time 1/400

This piece's title refers to "Not In My Backyard" (N.I.M.B.Y): the title for people that reject unpleasant developments (like prisons and landfills) being nearby, but are okay with them if they are far away. The image shows the huge amount of land given solely to manage waste because we try so hard to keep our trash out of sight, and in consequence, out of mind.

Selection 5: In sight, out of mind



Size: 35.0cmx16.5cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/4.5$
Focal length 18.0 mm
ISO 100
Exposure time 1/60

I wanted to photograph the waste I produce in order to acknowledge my responsibility for it. I removed the head of the figure to show how our own waste production is never at the forefront of our minds. I also kept only the trash in color to highlight what our focus should be on.

Selection 6: Carbon Footprint



The carbon footprint is supposed to be a measure of our individual impact on the environment. I decided to explore that idea by constructing a footprint out of my trash.

Size: 40.0cmx20.0cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/6.3$
Focal length 18.0 mm
ISO 400
Exposure time 1/80

Selection 7: Consumer



I wanted to demonstrate how our carbon footprint is part of us. By projecting the image of a carbon footprint on a human form, it prevents us from disassociating from our environmental impact.

Size: 25.0cmx15.5cm
Medium: Printed Digital
Photograph

Aperture $f/5.6$
Focal length 51.0 mm
ISO 800
Exposure time 1/80