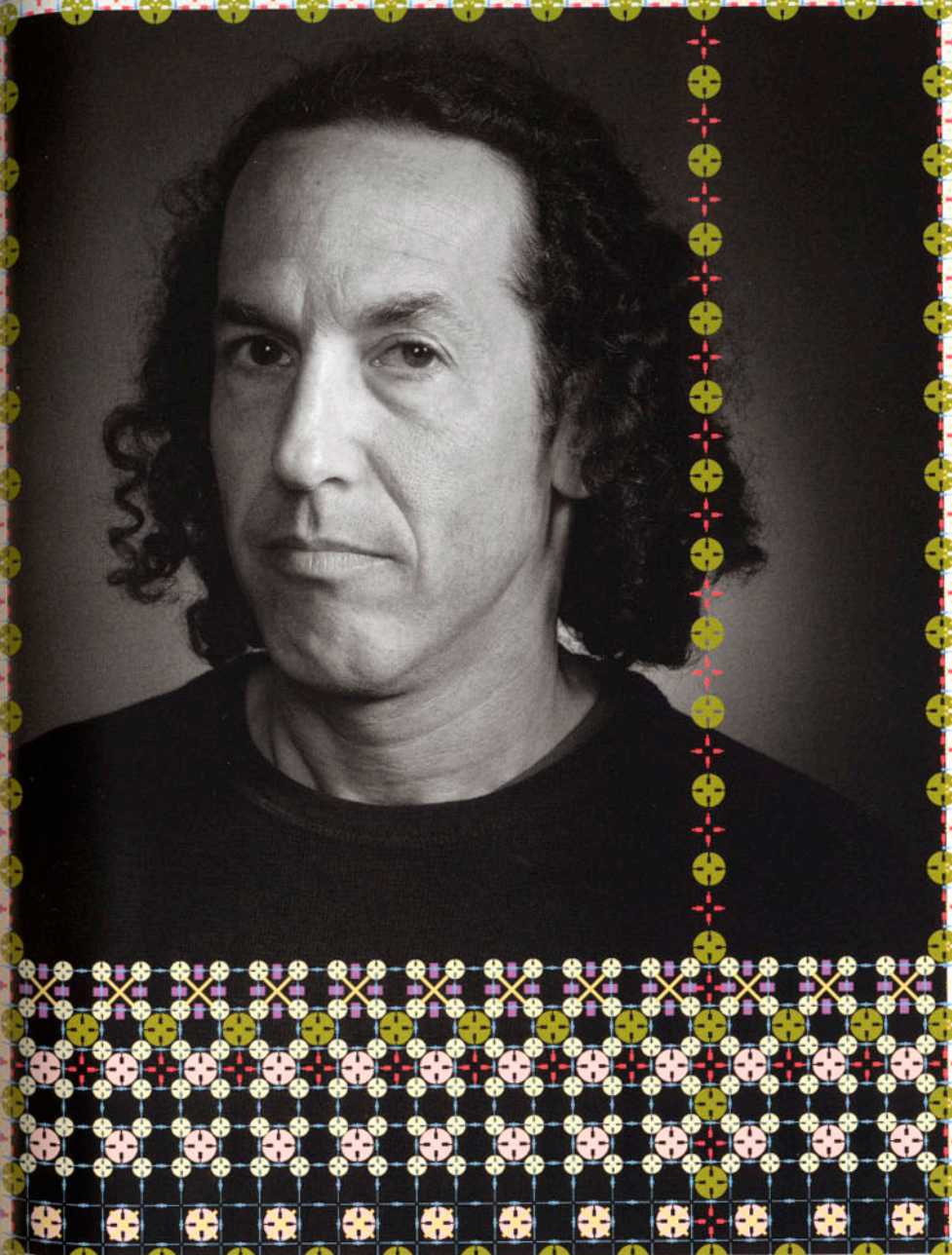


BRIAN C. MOSS

Brian C. Moss engages reflexively with photography, even when working in other mediums, as he strives to understand its phenomenological entanglement with lived experience. His numerous projects confront issues as diverse as urban decay, nomadic movement, personal loss, collective identity, and archival mania. Taken together, however, this body of work highlights the myriad ways technological mediation participates in a world of shared embodiment, fluctuating between substitutional representation and augmentative prosthesis.

In one early project, *What helps Dodge helps YOU* (1991 to 1993), Moss built an oversize pinhole camera out of debris from an abandoned foundry in Philadelphia, which he then used to document the decaying facilities and absent workforce. The overt compression of temporality inherent to the pinhole camera, in which an extended duration redacts onto a singular image, allowed Moss to explore, in this project and those that followed, the complex relationship between photography and time and, by extension, memory and desire.



Relocating to Los Angeles, Moss turned his camera to the itinerant trajectories embedded in the rhizomatic networks of Southern California roadways. For series such as *Medians* (2000) and *Skys* (2003), he explored the lateral slippage of a banal landscape that seemed to fly by as he traversed space. Taking photographs while driving foregrounded the blur of motion, highlighting the temporal and spatial relativity of an embodied perspectival position and, therefore, of documentary image making in general. The static vanishing point (*punto di fuga*, "point of flight") became, for Moss, a Deleuzian "line of flight" that blurred the distinctions between stillness and movement, past and present, and subject and object.

This deconstructive approach to photography's intrinsically ambiguous dichotomies may explain why Moss often references his own autobiographical narrative and yet simultaneously creates linkages to collectivities. Inspired by his loss of dear friends to cancer and AIDS, the installation *Pyramid* (1999) arranged clumps of Moss's own hair into a visceral fusion of individual and collective mortality, overtly referencing ancient Egyptian tombs and Victorian-era memento mori. Remembrance, Moss makes clear, is itself a creative act. Absence is always an experience of the present and one that is often shared, if only empathetically.

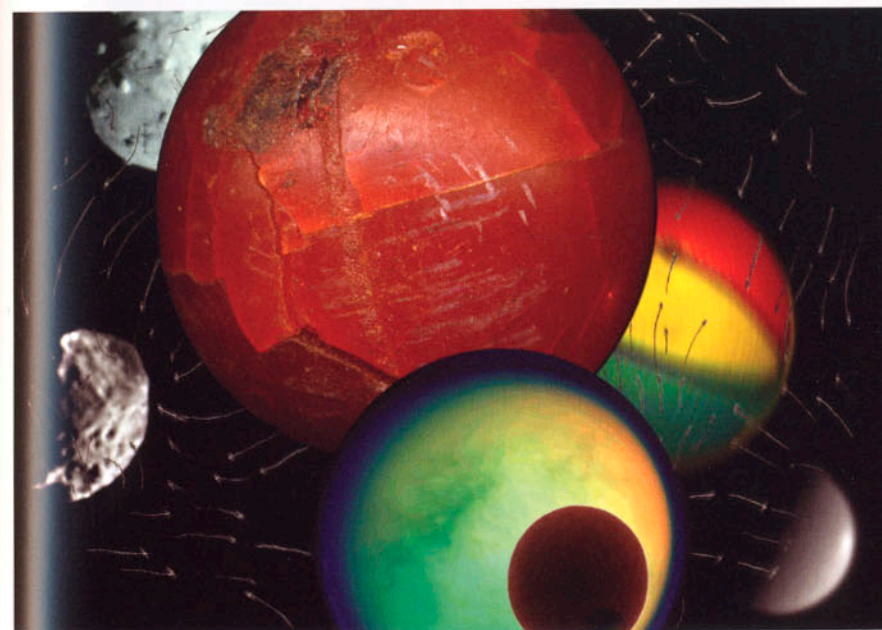
Since communal networks form from the intersections of such nodal experiences, many of Moss's projects clearly reach out to physically or philosophically incorporate those communities in which he himself participates. *what is santa monica? us.* (2003) transformed mundane population charts into playful installations at Clover Park; *Boulevard Without Borders* (2008) resulted from a collaboration with local children to document the multicultural thoroughfare Pico Boulevard; and for *Lucid* (2001–6), Moss worked with cancer patients to create photographic (self-)portraits.

For his newest project, destined for the C.O.L.A. exhibition, Moss confronts the absorption of mediated inscription into the networked digital archives through which images and their attendant data circulate. Perpetually fragmented and (re)assembled by the intertwined protocols of coded access and accessible code, digitized images themselves now participate in socialized transactions, an interstratic phenomenon whereby representations of bodies, abstracted into discontinuously patterned flows, become part of larger "bodies" of information, often made available to an algorithmic gaze. With this in mind, Moss's latest project can be seen as an autotopographical portrait of his own bodily engagement with, and through, images.

— James MacDevitt



Left
From the series
**Dormire (Where
am I when I'm
asleep?)**, 2001–04
07–04–01
2004
Digital C-print
24" × 30"



Bottom
planets
2006–8
Digital C-print
17" × 24"

Top
spheres
 2007
 Digital pigment print
 24" x 24"

Bottom
Dodge Steel Castings, Inc., Tacony, Philadelphia, 1992
 1992
 From the project *What helps Dodge helps YOU*, 1991-93
 Gelatin silver pinhole print shot with "trailer camera"
 12" square (in grid of 9 40" squares)

Opposite
 (clockwise from top)
Untitled (ID 1982)
 2010
 Archival pigment prints
 141" x 157"
 (in grid of 323 8 1/4" squares)

Untitled (Lubavitcher Boy)
 2010
 Archival pigment print
 Dimensions variable

Untitled (Palestinian Boy)
 2010
 Archival pigment print
 Dimensions variable

