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Samuel (Ben) Fagan's Digital Media Portfolio

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ARTIST STATEMENT

• Recently I have discovered the power of process in life, in other words, enjoying the grass you stand on. It is about focusing on improving as the day goes on, rather than trying to be at your best every day. In the words of French philosopher Michel Foucault, "I don't feel that it is necessary to know exactly what I am. The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning" (Foucault, 1982). This concept, for me, encompasses what I strive for with my art, and, in a larger picture, with my life. Very early on, I decided baseball is what I wanted to do with the rest of my life; I wanted to become a Major League Baseball player. I ate, drank, slept, and breathed baseball. I was baseball, and baseball was me. As I progressed, and with each level I reached, the competition got stiffer, and the group of athletes became more and more elite. I had to invest more and more time in the game. In the middle of my college baseball career, I took a video editing class and quickly developed a second passion. Creating became a way to decompress. For the first time in my life, I began to allow myself to truly explore one of my other passions. I began to see that this exploration was not detracting from my on-field performance, but rather complementing it. Giving myself this permission helped me remove a great deal of the pressure I was experiencing from identifying so much as a baseball player. I was always more than just an athlete, but once I genuinely permitted myself to believe that, I became the player I had always wanted to become. The creative process for me is an enriching routine. "Routine" is a funny word to use, as each project is explored through steps that are rarely the same. I say "routine," though, in reference to my process. My process is very routine. The starting point for the majority of what I do stems from passion. I attempt to capture ideas that I am passionate about in my work because I believe that it results in products that are true to who I am. Art is a funny practice. I feel it is easy to get caught up in the final product, as that is what society has deemed to hold value. I believe the result is merely a fraction of what art truly is. I think that art, in whatever you do, is experienced within the process of doing it. The value lies in the journey to get to the final result and not just in the result itself. Again, as Foucault contends, art and life are only exciting because the end result is unknown. That is the splendor of my practice; it can grow as big or remain as small as my journey dictates.
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