

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Michael Slade

Michael Slade has been photographing all over the world for the past twenty years. A Cache Valley native, Slade received his B.A. degree in photography from Utah State University (1994) and is currently an MFA candidate, with an emphasis in photography.

He comments, “My work is often less about the photography and more about the experience, which I try to share with the viewer. Not all of the experiences are earth-shattering or spiritual, but images that are broad, wide, simple, and not distracting are most often those where I have a head-clearing experience.”

He seeks landscapes that make him “reset some kind of cog in the machine that is me” and works predominantly in black and white.” Avoiding “the seduction of color” makes him “more concerned with content.”

He describes himself as “interested in telling stories,” particularly those that “are not obvious and that take some time to discover. The stories I look for are patiently waiting for someone to tell them. I enjoy the hunt, the research of the story, the fleshing out of the details, and the ultimate image making.”

Slade’s recent work has focused on extended visual stories, the largest being “The Great Salt Lake Photographic Survey,” a ten-year project that he admits may never be finished. Additional long-term photographic essays deal with topics as diverse as North Korean refugees living in South Korea and Utah locations of personal interactions with Bigfoot.

“Emotion ultimately is a large portion of an image’s content,” he adds. “If an image is devoid of emotion or a feel of place, the image does not succeed. It is my job as an image-maker to find ways to instill emotion in my images. It is also my constant challenge to do so without being heavy-handed. Staying out of the way of the story is always on my mind. Finding the stories that need to be told and being presented the opportunity to do so is a privilege. I feel fortunate when I am in a position to do so.”

He, his wife, Polla, and their two children live in Riverton, Utah. Other Slade photographs appear on www.gslps.org.