

JAY MARK JOHNSON TIMELINES

This exhibition presents twenty-one large format photographs by artist Jay Mark Johnson. They are selected from a decade long inquiry focusing on the possibilities for timeline photography.

All of the images in the exhibition are true timelines. They are akin to seismographs and electrocardiograms—and music scores—in that the left side of the photograph depicts movements that occurred before those shown on the right. Produced in locations around the world, the range of subjects include the fluid choreography of dancers, the mechanized migrations of cars and trains as well as the infinite cycling and recycling of ocean waves and waterfalls.

To make these images, Johnson employs a motorized scanning device that is normally used for capturing 360 degree wide panoramic images. He modifies the camera—disengaging its motor—thereby eliminating its ability to register left-right space. But what it loses in space, it gains in time. In its renewed configuration, the camera is able to render smooth, delineated visualizations of events unfolding in front of it.

In the resulting photographs, the rules for representing reality have shifted. Shadows are crisscrossed, the relative speed of an object determines its size, moving subjects appear isolated from their backgrounds, and the backgrounds themselves have been decimated.

Art critic Shana Nys Dambrot writes "Johnson's pictures look nothing like the world as we know it, and they are not really meant to. Yet still, their brain-melting relationship to the truth remains unassailable. The best thing to do is just relax, and let art and science blow your mind."

