

Aging Well

Oxidation, Determination, Deterioration, Accumulation

People age. Things age. It's an organic process that leaves its mark in a variety of visible ways. This show celebrates the wear and tear, the beauty in the ugliness, the sublime in the sadness.

I took these photos over the last fifteen years in a lot of different places without considering how they work together or what they were trying to say. I just liked what I saw. Photography is about framing what you see so that it communicates what you saw to others. At the same time there is a subconscious process in play that says a lot about the photographer. When I shoot photos, I consciously seek out the randomness of surface texture produced by natural forces over time. When planning this show, I noticed that I am clearly fascinated by the aging process. Once I passed the "60" mark the concept of aging took on a whole new meaning. Have I have been capturing images of aging to celebrate its beauty rather than avoid it?

The aging process leaves traces in different ways. In this collection you will see that time causes *oxidation* of inorganic materials such as metal and human-produced substances like plastic. Organic materials such as wood *deteriorate* as the process of decay takes over after human-applied paint wears away. Often at the same time objects *accumulate* dirt and living organisms such as lichen or mold. That *accumulation* is driven by natural forces of wind, rain, and sunlight which decorate the object in striking ways. Sometimes people *accumulate* ideas, causes and ephemera such as the folks in Metaline Falls, WA. But humans also adapt in ways non-sentient objects cannot. You see that *determination* in the eyes of the man at the church in Nicaragua, in the lace curtains and flowers decorating the rusty home in St. Elmo, and in the ghostly presence in the room at Lindenwald Haus in Elmira, NY.

Several of these photos have been shown before, and two have won awards: *Still Waiting: Civil War Wives* and *Hombre en la Iglesia*. But the bulk of the images here are newly printed and framed.

Bio

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McCormick is an award-winning photographer, clay artist, scholar, and educator. She earned her degrees from Penn State Harrisburg and taught photography and other communications courses there until her retirement in 2021.

She lived in Pittsburgh for ten years, and York County for six years, but the Harrisburg area has been home for most of her life. Prior to her teaching career, she worked as a freelance communications professional, as director of communications for JPL Productions, and as an education coordinator for Carnegie Science Center. She co-founded Third Street Pottery in Harrisburg and Penn Street Pottery in Pittsburgh. Her goal in life is to age well.