

# NICHOLAS HILL

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## THE DRESDEN JOURNALS

The longer I delve into Dresden-related content, the more clearly my work seem to be about time, the passage of time and the ways that one interprets, invents and reinvents the past. What I have observed has been affected by my familiarity (or lack of familiarity) with places, the seasons of the year and times of day, the people I have met and the stories they have told me about their city and its history, what I have read about Dresden and Germany, what I have seen in art museums and historical locations, and how I have reflected upon these sources. As I list the influences, I think that “The Dresden Journals” is an appropriate title for the exhibition. The visual notations that have led to the works are like a diary.

The Elbe River is an essential part of Dresden. The many bridges that cross the river have distinctive stories, as do the architectural remnants of Baroque monuments. They are characters in the life of the city. Although I have taken countless walks throughout Dresden and made drawings and photographs of specific locations, none of the architectural forms in the works is a representation of a specific place. Each is a composite or perhaps summation is a better term. I attempt to find essential forms. Often a textural surface or a particular color will be the necessary first step for a print, and it will lead to the type of architectural form that follows.

When I first visited Dresden in the late 1990's the echoes of the Second World War and the Soviet domination that followed it were still readily evident. As time has passed, those elements have become less pronounced. The patina of soot-covered and war-ravaged stone facades still remains, often juxtaposed with pastel-coated restorations and new architectural creations. However, the past still lingers in the present. It is this sense of “in- between time and place” that attracts me. How is it that one can see the past in the present?

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