

## *The Vanishing American Landscape*

### **Cirkut Photography**

**By Richard Malogorski**

**December 1 – January 30**



### ***THE ARTIST***

Richard Malogorski was born in Kettering, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton. His father was a painter and photographer, and passed on his interest to his son. Richard went on to Wright State University, in Film Studies, but found his interest lay in still images. Working primarily with 35 mm cameras, he wanted to experiment in other formats. Influenced by the history of photographers using the 8 x 10 inch negative, including Ansel Adams, Paul Strand, Diane Arbus, and Walker Evans to mention a few, he acquired his first 8 x 10 view camera in 1992.

A few years later Malogorski came across a Cirkut camera in an estate sale. It was a photographic format Malogorski was very aware of and intrigued by, as the negatives the

camera produced are up to 90" long and 8" wide. The Cirkut Camera was old, used, and in rough shape. "I had to have some gears custom made, it took a lot of work to get it in working order." Within this new format, Malogorski's landscape took on new proportions and dimensions.

### ***THE WORK***



The influence of the great photographers can be seen in Malogorski's work. The extreme patience to get the shot at just the right moment is crucial. The light and the position, coupled with Malogorski's innate sense of composition, all contribute to these breathtaking images. However, the way in which the empty space-the negative space- is used is paramount in forming the narrative quality in the photographs. The empty space may be in the foreground, or stretching out into the background, or both. The church is set, under a roiling sky, with a few grave markers in the foreground, in otherwise emptiness. There is a place for us, as viewers to exist in picture plane, which is one key to the success of this work.

The photos by Malogorski, while most often devoid of human form, address that which is fundamentally human. He documents the places of worship and education, the machine shops and repairs shops, cafes, groceries- those places that we conduct our lives and lay our loved ones to rest. He captures the essence of the spaces which we inhabit and make meaningful personal connections.

Within these landscapes, the breathtaking beauty shines forth. The patterning of silos, rhythm of utility poles, receding country road, show a comfort with silence and give us a place to breathe. Many of the photographs are minimalistic, just enough information to hold us captivated, while others lose us in collections of tools, horseshoes, and anvils.

## THE VANISHING AMERICAN LANDSCAPE



For a month every year, for the last few decades, Richard Malogorski loads up his camera equipment and takes to the road. He picks a place- perhaps in Wyoming, North Dakota, or Kansas. He traverses the landscapes on back roads, in search of his subject matter- something he knows only when he sees it. Many of the groceries, machine shops, old churches, and other subjects he has photographed are no longer standing. Malogorski has documented much of rural America that has fallen by way of nature, as seen in the school all but overgrown with corn, the farmer just waiting to have more land to plow. The cost of maintaining old structures, or the lost business due to shrinking population or large box stores, has taken its toll on the quaint mom-and-pop establishments that used to be the staple of small towns. With them goes the personal touch, the inquiry to health and family, the human connection that makes our lives worthwhile.



*"Although the world of photography is now almost entirely digital, I continue to work with large format film and silver gelatin paper, as I believe that for monochrome it still gives the best image quality.*

*The greatest quality of photographic art, in my opinion, has always been that it is an expression of reality and a good photographer can find beauty in the world without resorting to manipulation.*

*My work is straightforward and truthful. I continue to work with only two cameras, my 8" x 10" view camera and my no. 8 Cirkut camera.*

*My method is to travel around America and find beauty in the landscape, not only the natural world but also in small towns, churches and churchyards, schools and schoolyards machine shops, grocery stores, water towers, windmills, grain elevators, hardware stores and anything else that I find expressive of a life that is a part of the world.*

*While much new photography is computer based, I am still a traditional photographer."*

Richard Malogorski

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