

## Chasing waterfalls: Alec Soth's US road trip – in pictures

Mee-Lai Stone : 13-16 minutes : 1/11/2022

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## Chasing waterfalls: Alec Soth's US road trip – in pictures

The celebrated chronicler of American life started his latest photographic journey by following the route of Lincoln's funeral train ... and completed it by following darts thrown at a map

[Mee-Lai Stone](#)

Main image: Falls guy ... Alec Soth's tribute to Fredric Edwin Church. Photograph: Alec Soth/Magnum Photos

- **White Bear Lake, Minnesota. 2019**

Alec Soth created A Pound of Pictures by making a series of road trips between 2018 and 2021. *A solo show is at [Sean Kelly Gallery](#), New York from 14 January. Mack Books will publish [a new monograph](#) to coincide with the exhibitions. All photographs: Alec Soth/Courtesy Sean Kelly, New York/Mack Books*



- **Julie. Austin, Texas. 2021**

The monograph includes extensive notes and texts by Soth, illuminating the practice and philosophy of one of the most important photographers working today. Each book will contain five randomly selected vernacular photographs loosely inserted within the pages



- **Stuart. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 2021**

For the last few months Stuart had been attending a Vietnamese Buddhist temple. 'I've nearly died twice. Some people feel bad for me, but I wouldn't change my experience for anything. I learned that nothing can be controlled except yourself. I don't force things. I stay open to everything'





- **Queens, New York. 2019**

Soth references Edward Hopper's *Early Sunday Morning*. Both images evince a similar uncanny stillness despite their urban settings and clear suggestions of life just behind their surfaces





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- **Quan Am Monastery. Memphis, Tennessee. 2021**

Depicting a vast array of subjects – from Buddhist statues and birdwatchers to sun-seekers and a bust of Abraham Lincoln – this series reflects on the photographic desire to pin down and crystallise experience



- **Ames, Iowa. 2021**

Some of the photographs in this project were originally prompted by a desire to capture a different giant: Abraham Lincoln. In the spring of 1865, a train carrying Lincoln's corpse travelled from Washington DC to his hometown of Springfield, Illinois. Millions of Americans viewed the funeral train ... and Lincoln's rapidly decaying body. Soth began this project by following the path of the funeral train in an attempt to mourn the divisiveness in the US, but eventually abandoned the route and travelled by throwing a dart on a map to see where he would drive to next





- **King & Sheridan. Tulsa, Oklahoma. 2021**

Soth writes: 'If the pictures are about anything other than their shimmering surfaces then they are about the process of their own making'





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- **Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. 2019**

Soth positioned his camera exactly where Fredric Edwin Church painted the falls in 1857, cementing the site's legacy in American art history – but today an observation deck and a group of tourists obstruct the view \*  
*[This caption was edited on 12/1/22 to correct an error in the title]\**



- **The Coachlight. Mitchell, South Dakota. 2020**

A Pound of Pictures becomes a deeply self-reflective interrogation of Soth's entire body of work





- **Neil. Winona, Minnesota. 2019**

Soth, who is also an inveterate collector of photographs, describes the works in this exhibition as arising out of a wish to understand the 'weight' of photography both philosophically and metaphorically – as in the emotional weight of images







- **Camera Club. Washington, Pennsylvania. 2019**

The exhibition takes its title from a vendor Soth discovered on his travels in Los Angeles who sells photographs by the pound. Both poetic and prosaic, the images that comprise A Pound of Pictures demonstrate Soth's and others' longing to 'memorialise life while life continues to keep flipping by'



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- **Carmen. Williams, Arizona. 2020**

Soth is hiding behind the camera while taking a shot of his daughter, Carmen. The image is reminiscent of Francesca Woodman on the cover of Portrait of a Reputation, a book Carmen had purchased on the trip with her father



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