

# PETER WIARDA

## *Still Life with Cliff and Trees*

“Still Life with Cliff and Trees” is an exploration of memory loss through digital noise. Noise is a byproduct of the digital photographic process that is caused by a number of factors. It can result from a buildup of static electricity on an active sensor—the longer the exposure time, the more static electricity accumulates on the sensor. At higher ISO sensitivity settings, the signal from the light hitting the sensor is amplified, which also amplifies noise. When a photograph is under-exposed, the areas that are darkest receive a little signal with which to produce detail. Increasing the exposure in Photoshop is another signal amplification process that reveals that noise in the shadows.

Neither a still life nor a landscape in the traditional sense, this photograph deviates from either category by presenting the subject through a thick haze of digital noise generated using the methods described above. The image depicts the view from the front porch of a house I used to live in, though obscured. As I no longer live there, this view is only accessible through memory. Yet each time a memory is recalled to mind, it changes ever so slightly; details may be modified or lost. Eventually, with enough repeated remembering, the signal of the original memory will be replaced with noise.