



GOOD NIGHTS

SCOTT HOCKING IS A COLLECTOR OF ALL THINGS HIDDEN AND FORGOTTEN, CREATING SITE-SPECIFIC SCULPTURAL INSTALLATIONS USING FOUND OBJECTS. THE DETROIT-BASED ARTIST AND PHOTOGRAPHER ALSO DOCUMENTS URBAN LANDSCAPES, ABANDONED BUILDINGS, AND SIGNS OF DECAY IN LOVING DETAIL. THIS ONGOING SERIES IS CALLED **DETROIT NIGHTS**.

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I WAS INTRODUCED TO HOCKING'S WORK IN INDY LAST FALL WHEN BIG CAR'S TUBE FACTORY ARTSPACE HOSTED HIS INSTALLATION OF ITEMS SCAVANGED FROM THE FORMER RCA MANUFACTURING PLANT COMPLEX ON THE EAST SIDE.

But this time was different. I was thrilled by the chance to meet Hocking in person on his home turf in Detroit. He invited me to his studio, north of downtown on an eerily quiet street. Old brick homes shared the block with boarded-up businesses, and a gas station on the corner.

Hocking's studio turned out to be a two-story brick warehouse. Its street-facing walls wore colorful murals, while the others stood guarded behind a forbidding metal fence topped with barbed wire.

A quick glance around the yard confirmed Hocking's reputation as both a collector and a scavenger. Old cars, odd-shaped metal objects, tools, lumber, hoses, tires, and other hard-to-identify objects covered every available bit of space that was not already taken up by unrecognizable machinery in varying stages of rust.

Inside the warehouse, which Hocking shares with another artist, was even more congested with wondrous refuse. Old books, ornate frames devoid of pictures, vintage car hoods, a life-size plastic giraffe, ropes, ladders, road signs, and large chunks of melted Styrofoam, reminiscent of human entrails that Hocking salvaged for the RCA installation in Indianapolis. These parts and pieces spilled onto every inch of floor, and up the wall, and to the ceiling. Just a narrow path snaked through the maze of his collection, allowing visitors to circumnavigate the space while staring slack-jawed at so much unexplained detritus. I could have spent hours quizzing him on the provenance of each object. Except, he distracted me by pulling out a box of his photographic prints.

I LEARNED THAT HOCKING, A LOVER OF SOLITUDE AND NIGHTTIME ADVENTURES THAT FEW PEOPLE WOULD DARE BRAVE ON THEIR OWN, HAS BEEN PHOTOGRAPHING DETROIT'S URBAN PRAIRIES SINCE THE NINETIES.

His work is not limited to shooting just in his hometown, but Detroit does make up the bulk of his portfolio. Hocking did not start thinking of these nighttime captures as a series until the mid-2000s, but since then has built up an impressive collection of photos that perfectly capture the eerie and desolate corners of Detroit. We culled a small selection of these images to share with you.

For a more extensive view of Hocking's incredible body of work, visit SCOTTHOCKING.COM. Though it's not the same as walking amid his installations and collections or chatting with him personally, this online gallery offers an inspired sampling of what awaits you in the Motor City.

DETROIT
TURNED OUT
TO BE HEAVEN,
BUT IT ALSO
TURNED
OUT TO
BE HELL.
/MARVIN GAYE/





DETROIT

WHERE
MOTHER
IS HALF
A WORD.

(GLENN FREY)