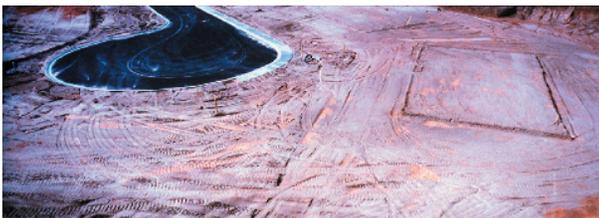




“DIRT FOR SALE: CONSTRUCTING THE LANDSCAPE OF THE NEW AMERICAN SOUTH”



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THE I-85 CORRIDOR BETWEEN CHARLOTTE, NORTH Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia, is one of the five fastest growing regions in the country. As this system intersects with the upstate counties of South Carolina, population growth and land use changes are increasing at alarming rates.

In the resulting rural-urban fringe areas, the traditional boundaries between cities and the surrounding countryside are becoming eroded, and are being transformed into alternate economic and spatial conditions.

This transformation is characterized by residential cul-de-sac subdivisions and commercial strip developments in undifferentiated and dispersed patterns that put enormous economic pressure on open farmland, forests, and otherwise idle property.

The net result of this transformation is a degradation of the air and water quality, loss of wildlife habitat, a scarcity of open space and scenic vistas, and the overall fading of rural character.

The work presented here is a response to this dynamic condition and is part of a larger body of work entitled: “Dirt for Sale: Constructing the Landscape of the New American South”. It presents a partial photographic documentation of these varied visual conditions as the Southern landscape is being transformed into something different.

“ROBERT SILANCE’S PHOTOGRAPHS FRAME THE RESIDUE OF COMMUNITIES -- rugged structures quickly built, used, and vacated. He guides his lens towards urban landscapes of texture, granularity, and diversion. Silance shows us urban ephemera -- streets with detritus, signage, and paint, haphazardly applied and deserted. He showcases the formal oddities within structures built or repaired, or strung together with more attention to meeting a need than maintaining a design standard. Shooting photographs along the corridor of I-85 that connects South Carolina to Georgia, Silance documents the “visual conditions” produced by the rapid encroachment of cities into rural fringe areas. The resulting landscape, as seen in Silance’s work, is bleak, thinly inhabited, and laden with concrete. His work redeems the landscape with a wistful if not mournful nod. Similar to Robert Adams, Silance’s pictures reveal socio-economic truths and the role of aesthetic values in the construction of communal places - truths made even more astonishing as we consider the quotidian pervasiveness of his subject matter. Silance is an artist, photographer, and architect who holds a professorship at Clemson University. His artwork is exhibited through the United States.”