Sarah Hazlegrove: Tobacco People

Sarah Hazlegrove, The Kambalames, Malawi, 2011, 24 x 36 in. (60.96 x 91.44 cm.)
C-print on paper, Courtesy of the artist

TRAVELING EXHIBITION PROSPECTUS
Sarah Hazlegrove: Tobacco People
documents an intensive four year international journey that sent one of Virginia’s most engaging photographers around the world documenting the changing faces of individuals and communities bound with the rapidly disappearing world of tobacco cultivation. Shot entirely on location without the aid of specialized equipment or postproduction digital effects, Hazlegrove’s dramatic and moving images combine elements of the formal portraiture of Richard Avedon with the journalistic style of photo documentary legends Walker Evans and Robert Frank. From sweeping landscapes to captivating glimpses of everyday commerce and intimate portraits, Hazlegrove investigates, captures, and celebrates the differences and universalities of peoples involved in and societies built around centuries old customs and practices surrounding the lifecycle of tobacco.

Photographing entirely on location in the rural outreaches of Malawi, Africa, Indonesia, Brazil, Dominican Republic, as well as Cuba and the United States, Hazlegrove “looks beyond the smoke” to investigate, capture, and celebrate the untold story of tobacco.

Hazlegrove’s project speaks to an international unity of landscape, practice, and community but what is most powerful is the presence of humanity. Appearing both antique and modern, her images transcend simple documentation not only in content but in form. Hazlegrove uses traditional methods of printing and framing for the smaller images. However, her choice of vinyl tarpaulin for the oversized B & W’s boldly challenges our ideal of fine art photography, by printing on a common farm material used for hauling rubbish. Some photographs reference classical portraiture, offering reminders of tobacco’s role in colonial expansion and exploitation; others capture intimate moments of work, rest, and play offering direct insight into community and family. These portraits provide an opportunity to reflect upon our own relationships to history, land, tradition, and the often ignored people whose labors have underpinned the modern world.

The exhibition Sarah Hazlegrove: Tobacco People was organized by guest curator Brian Sieveking and the Taubman Museum of Art in Roanoke, Virginia.
Sarah Hazlegrove
Artist Biography

While the exhibition *Sarah Hazlegrove: Tobacco People* introduces and explores the daily lives of people in Malawi, Africa, Indonesia, Brazil and Cuba, the project had its inception almost twenty years ago outside of Farmville, Virginia. Reacting to the tragic loss of her sister and wishing to expand upon the more commercial based photography with which she made her living, Hazlegrove began recording the people, livestock, machinery, and landscape of her family’s Southside Virginia dairy and tobacco farm. As she went about the documentation, Hazlegrove realized that what had begun as a personal project about a family and its history with tobacco raised larger issues about extended families, continuation of community, state and national history, and the ending of a way of life that had existed and thrived for almost four centuries. These initial photos, all taken with a medium format camera and black and white film, led to trips across the tobacco regions of the United States and eventually around the world. The project is ongoing and to date includes traditional black & white and color photographs as well as projected video essays, and installation pieces.

*Tobacco People* was presented for the first time as a joint collaborative exhibition at the Taubman Museum of Art, the O. Winston Link Museum and the Harrison Museum of African American Culture in 2015-2016. *Sarah Hazlegrove: Tobacco People* at the Taubman Museum of Art was the most extensive of the three exhibits, showcasing the full scope of Hazlegrove’s project. Large format images of tobacco farmers in Malawi and the Amazon River basin printed on white tarpaulin were combined with traditionally printed and framed black & white prints of workers from the Connecticut River Valley, Virginia, Brazil, Indonesia and Malawi. Evidence of the labor intensive nature of tobacco production is the rope tobacco Hazlegrove has collected. These beautiful artifacts, treated and exhibited as “objets d’art”, represent the ancient connection humans have with the plant. Hazlegrove explores how the separate worlds of tobacco as mass commodity and tobacco as cultural artifact collide through a video installation that juxtaposes the mass...
The early photographs taken at Hazlegrove’s family farm that inspired her project were initially shown at the O. Winston Link Museum, focusing on four family farms and the men who worked at the farms over the years. *Who Works These Fields* is a 25 foot long installation piece printed on long sheets of white vinyl tarpaulin Virginia tobacco farmers and their workers. Portraits of the two farmers hang on opposite ends of the installation. The portraits of the workers, arranged in a grid, fill the wall between.

*Tobacco People: Africa and the Americas*, initially shown at the Harrison Museum of African American Culture, presented portraits and videos from Malawi, Cuba, Brazil and the US, and documented how tobacco played a critical role in the dissemination of Africans throughout the world. Africans and their diaspora in the U.S, South America and the Caribbean share a complicated entanglement with tobacco that goes back centuries. There is no denying that the success of America as an emerging country was due in large part to the economic boon tobacco provided. Today, however, there are a great number of both African farmers and descendants of African slaves who now raise tobacco as a cash crop.

Throughout the three exhibits, Hazlegrove’s signature full frame, un-cropped, medium format black and white photographs add authenticity and nostalgia to her work.

Sarah Hazlegrove is a fine art and commercial photographer who lives in France and Roanoke, Virginia. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Hollins University, with a double major in French and Philosophy. Her work has been included in museums nationally and she had a solo exhibition at Roanoke College Olin Hall Galleries in 2009.
Traveling Exhibition Specifics

Includes: 5 Objects, 33 Photographs and 4 Videos

Space Requirements: 176 linear wall feet; Gallery size 2,500 square feet depending on the layout used (Customization available on request)

Rental Fee: * $12,000
*Rental Fee includes artist travel and talk

Shipping Costs: Exhibiting venue pays pro-rated one-way shipping costs

Insurance: To be carried by the venue

Courier Expenses: Exhibiting venue pays courier transportation, lodging and per diem

Supporting Materials: Includes exhibition didactic, labels, and gallery guide electronic files

Availability: Twelve week rental, January 2018 - January 2023

Catalogue Exhibition Books: Tobacco People: Sarah Hazlegrove Photography
Books are available for individual sale or sold as box sets. Box Set includes: Brazil, Indonesia and Malawi
Illustrated Checklist
Sarah Hazlegrove
The Kambalames, Malawi, 2011
24 x 36 in. (60.96 x 91.44 cm)
C-print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
Pinar Del Rio, Cuba, 2013
24 x 36 in. (60.96 x 91.44 cm)
C-print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
Tenant farmers McPherson Farm, Malawi, 2011
24 x 36 in. (60.96 x 91.44 cm)
C-print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
Malawi Curing Barn, Malawi, 2012
24 x 36 in. (60.96 x 91.44 cm)
C-print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
_Smith Men_, 1998
Farmville, VA.
60 x 60 in. (127 x 127 cm)
Digital print on coated textile
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Tobacco Skirts_, 1998
Farmville, VA.
32 x 32 in. (81.3 x 81.3 cm)
Digital C-print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Uncle Joe Work_, 1998
Farmville, VA.
32 x 32 in. (81.3 x 81.3 cm)
Digital C-print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Emma and Minnie Tying Leaves_, 1998
Farmville, VA.
32 x 32 in. (81.3 x 81.3 cm)
Digital C-print on paper
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Emma*, 1998  
Farmville, VA.  
60 x 60 in. (127 x 127 cm)  
Digital C-print on coated textile  
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Anguiano*, 2010  
Keysville, VA.  
60 x 60 in. (127 x 127 cm)  
Digital print on coated textile  
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Who Works These Fields - Tim Napier*, 2010  
Keysville, VA.  
32 x 48 in. (81.28 x 121.92 cm)  
Digital print on coated textile  
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Who Works These Fields - Tim Napier’s Men*, 2010  
Keysville, VA.  
40 x 60 in. (101.6 x 152.4 cm)  
Digital print on coated textile  
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
*Who Works These Fields - Tim Napier’s Men*, 2010
Keysville, VA.
30 x 60 in. (76.2 x 152.4 cm)
Digital print on coated textile
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Shy Pepe*, 2010
Keysville, VA.
32 x 32 in. (81.3 x 81.3 cm)
Digital C-print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Who Works These Fields - Elvis Witcher*, 2015
Rocky Mount, VA
32 x 48 in. (81.28 x 121.92 cm)
Digital print on coated textile
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Who Works These Fields - Elvis Witcher’s Men*, 2015
Rocky Mount, VA
40 x 60 in. (101.6 x 152.4 cm)
Digital print on coated textile
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
*Who Works These Fields - Elvis Witcher’s Men*, 2015
Rocky Mount, VA
40 x 60 in. (101.6 x 152.4 cm)
Digital print on coated textile
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Stacking Hands, Malawi*, 2012
16 x 16 in. (40.64 x 40.64 cm)
Digital C-print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Full Cartload, Brazil*, 2011
16 x 16 in. (40.64 x 40.64 cm)
Digital C-print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
_Arapiraca Rope_, 2012
16 x 16 in. (40.64 x 40.64 cm)
Digital print on styrene mounting
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Segenter Village_, 2012
32 x 32 in. (81.3 x 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Amazon Cowboy_, 2012
60 x 60 in. (127 x 127 cm)
Digital print on coated textile
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Arlindo and Lizette_, 2011
32 x 32 in. (81.3 x 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
_Nereo,_ 2011
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Connecticut Shade Leaf_, 2011
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Alagoas_, 2012
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
_Gaucho Farmer_, 2012
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Jember Shade Leaf*, 2012  
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)  
Digital print on paper  
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove  
*John Deere*, 2009  
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)  
Digital print on paper  
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Kasungu Farmer*, 2011  
60 × 60 in. (127 × 127 cm)  
Digital print on coated textile  
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove  
*Kasungu Family*, 2011  
60 × 60 in. (127 × 127 cm)  
Digital print on coated textile  
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
*Madura Leaf Buyers*, 2011
32 × 32 in. (81.3 × 81.3 cm)
Digital print on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*From Seed to Sale*, 2015
Each box 24 x 30 in. (60.96 x 76.2 cm)
Two lucite boxes filled with (1) cigarette boxes and (2) tobacco seeds
Courtesy of the artist

Amazon Tobacco Rope
51 x 2 ¾ in (129.54 x 5.715 cm)
One rolled tobacco rope
Courtesy of the artist

Dominican Republic Tobacco Rope
60 x 2 ¾ in. (152.4 x 5.715 cm)
One rolled tobacco rope
Courtesy of the artist
Sarah Hazlegrove
*Witcher Farm*, 2015
Digital video projection
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
Digital video projection
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Cigarette Filters*, 2015
Digital video projection
Courtesy of the artist

Sarah Hazlegrove
*Cigarette Machines*, 2015
Digital video projection
Courtesy of the artist

*All digital videos are to be projected from individual projectors and run on loops*

To get a brief overview of the material covered in the exhibition, Sarah Hazlegrove produced a short video to encompass the project:  
*Look Beyond The Smoke*  [https://vimeo.com/242981883](https://vimeo.com/242981883)
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For more information, please contact:

Kimberly C. Piland, Exhibition Coordinator
kpiland@taubmanmuseum.org
540.204.4126