Paige Burger Artist Statement SMP in Studio Art, 2014

Meaningless Moments

My generation is suffering from a lack of engagement with the moment, the present. Experiences are filtered by societal expectations. We are at a point where the presentation of these moments has become more important then the moments themselves. Life has become a contrived spectacle at the expense of experiential awareness.

Meaningless Moments is an exhibition about how the emphasis upon certain events determines the prominence of specific memories and therefore facilitates the construction of our identities. When viewers enter the space they will follow a path, built atop wooden crates, along the perimeter of the room. The walls are coated in brown paper. The paper is littered in candid photographs, snapshots of moments that document the memories of relationships over time. Visitors are invited to literally look more closely at these experiences using binoculars placed at different intervals along the path. Up close, viewers will see the snapshots are filled with laughter, hardships, rebellion, discovery, sadness, love, confusion and contemplation. These moments are harder to access within the installation because they are more difficult to access in everyday life; they require patient observation and the ability to see the value in the meaningless moments.

Within the installation there are many options from which viewers can chose to navigate and engage with the space. However, this installation aims to emphasize the moments that have been filtered out, by disabling "distractions" represented by objects in the middle scene. The middle scene depicts the destruction of contemporary filters. These "distractions" tend to hold us back from true engagement with the moment and facilitate *for us* a way of thought and memory construction.

In actuality, our identities are largely defined by the seemingly meaningless moments. My work shifts the focus away from culturally fabricated, iconic milestones and impresses upon viewers the importance of meaningless moments.