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Sharma, Meara. "Eight Photographers' Pictures From Isolation." *T Magazine*.
April 29, 2020.

T The New York Times Style Magazine



"Untitled." Alec Soth

Alec Soth **Pictures taken in Minneapolis, Minn.**

I'm at home with two kids and my wife and many animals: two dogs, three cats, an iguana and a hamster. I couldn't pick up a real camera to take pictures, because that felt too much like being a real photographer. I didn't want to give it that sense of authority. I was just kind of overwhelmed, and I'm not a photographer who runs toward crisis. But I had this memory of using binoculars on a safari a few years ago. I found that looking through them renders space really beautifully — it makes faraway things close but in a peculiar way. On a whim, I put my iPhone up to the binoculars and started taking pictures. It's clumsy and really hard to do — the power of binoculars is not as strong as most telephoto lenses on a camera — but I kind of enjoyed the game of it.

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"Untitled." Alec Soth

So I pulled out those same binoculars and drove around in the bubble of my minivan looking for signs of life. Nowadays, it feels like everything is seen through panes of glass. Binoculars have multiple layers of glass, and I shot these pictures through the added layer on the iPhone, as well as through the car windows. So, distance, distance, distance.



"Untitled." Alec Soth



"Untitled." Alec Soth

The picture of the house with the window has this lens aberration. I like how the bubble's colors are similar to arched

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those of the fabric hanging in the window. It's one of those beautiful accidents. The very stalker-ish photo of the guy in the window was hard to do technically, because of the binoculars and the low light and the need for the guy to stay still.



"Untitled." Alec Soth

My photography has always been about social distance, in a way. Social awkwardness, social distance, all of those things. I've always thought about this in terms of the lens, that this piece of glass is separating me and protecting me in some ways from the world. The thing I'm trying to process now relates to the larger ethical meaning of being a photographer. I'm always conflicted about using people as fodder for my artistic pursuits. And this idea of traveling great distances, driving all over, using gas, flying places, and spreading things — is that really the best way to be in the world? That's partly why I admire photographers who make work at home and teach us how to be observant of our own lives. What will it mean for me to be an ethical photographer in whatever new world comes out of this?