

**LEAF, TWINE, NAIL, AND STICK: Everyday Life in Composition,  
Collection, and Creative Non-Fiction.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **LEAF, TWINE, NAIL, AND STICK: EVERYDAY LIFE IN COMPOSITION, COLLECTION, AND DOCUMENTARY FILM.**

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This thesis documents how my media artwork and process of using everyday life has developed. In my current work, I am exploring the broad intersection of fiction, poetry, history, documentary film, and sound; especially how all of them relate to our lived experience of daily life. I ask myself the questions: “What aspects of our daily lives are ‘fictionalized’ as they become our own histories,” and “How does an acute awareness of this become a part of what I create?” My art practice draws from a variety of disciplines including integrated electronic art, ethnography, musical composition and improvisation, poetry, fiction, experimental documentary, collection, observation, and routine. I combine these influences and means of working to inform both my process and the resulting work.

I have worked in music for over a decade, dividing my time equally between composition and improvisation. Much of my work has been informed by various pieces of fiction, poetry, or a combination of both. After discovering the work of Raymond Carver, I became increasingly interested in using daily life as a metaphor for the larger arc of “life,” with great effort to focus on the minutiae. Combined with a growing concern about the degree to which humans are detached from the natural world, and their sense of ‘place,’ I look to observation, collection and documentation of daily life to form and guide my practice.

My goal is to illuminate the way in which I see daily life functioning as an artistic tool and guide for myself, and use that to make a creative body of work. By collecting

objects, stories from other people, or sounds, from our lived experience, we become acutely aware of our surroundings. In *Leaf, Twine, Nail, and Stick*, I visited the same place in the woods on a regular basis for four months. I collected objects, both ‘natural’ and human made, wrote observations in a journal, and made field recordings. I then took this ‘data’ of my lived experience and wrote a semi-fictional, autobiographical, narrative influenced by the objects and observations. The field recordings became a part of a larger, one hour composition which was presented on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2007 as a piece of an installation including the objects and writing.

This thesis further describes the significance of my process, and how it relates to daily life, and my thoughts on the human disconnect from nature. All of my work, and especially the work focused on in this writing, has had a profound impact on my perception of place and self. Through my work I have come to a greater understanding of how everyday life functions in the context of art, and I hope that viewers of my work will in turn begin to examine their own daily life through different eyes.