

Tom Patton: Ancient Earthworks: Native American Mounds and Monuments
Collection IAE2507

Introduction/Abstract

For 25 years, photographer Tom Patton documented and made images of more than twenty Native American mound sites in Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Biographical Note: Tom Patton

Tom Patton is a photographer and Professor Emeritus. He was born in Sacramento, California and studied photography at the San Francisco Art Institute and the University of New Mexico, studying under both photographic historian Beaumont Newhall and *New Topographics* photographer Henry Wessel Jr. He earned his BFA in 1976 with Honors, an MA in 1977, and an MFA in 1982. He taught at the University of Missouri-St. Louis and California State University, Chico.

Patton's photography has appeared in more than 300 exhibitions and been reproduced in 60 publications. His work is part of permanent collections in museums worldwide, and he has received fellowships and awards, including a Visual Artist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1990-1991, a James D. Phelan Foundation Award (administered through SF Camerawork) in 2001-2002. He currently resides in Tucson Arizona, with his wife, artist Nancy Scott Patton.

Scope and Content

Photographer and Professor Emeritus, Tom Patton, was working on a photographic series of gravel pits and mounds and associated highway construction sites when he took a position as head of the photography program in the Art and Art History Department at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 1983. He soon discovered and began photographing nearby Native American mound sites, likewise earthworks but used for ceremonial, burial, and ritual sites. Over a 5,000-year period hundreds of thousands of these structures were built, although many have since disappeared due to farming, erosion, urban expansion, and other forces. For 25 years Patton documented and made images of more than twenty sites in Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Materials include work prints from all sites during the 25-period of work, and a self-published Blurb book, *Ancient Earthworks: Native American Mounds and Monuments* that serves as a key to the sites and images.

This archive is currently in process.