

## ELEPHANT ROOM, INC. ART GALLERY

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### **1000 Miles Shy**

Artist: Jay Lawrence Pearson  
Location: Elephant Room, Inc.

Chicago - Elephant Room, Inc. holds its 3rd art exhibition featuring large-format documentary photography by Seattle-based photographer Jay Lawrence Pearson. *1000 Miles Shy* is a personal journey for Pearson. He hiked the northern half of the Appalachian Trail in the Spring of 2005 equipped with a 4x5 field camera in order to document his own hike, the trail and other people. In addition to the work being a self-study of his own experience, Pearson has also managed to pay homage to the people of the AT and offers a unique and intimate perspective of the hiking subculture.

"Passed by seasoned hikers and slowed by excessively rocky terrain, I often found myself alone, or otherwise struggling to capture painfully ephemeral experiences with hikers. This struggle, coupled with the apparent physical and psychological toll of the hike, set the tone for the work. The trail became a stage for many self portraits; for enactments of internal conflicts, attempts at humorous commentary or simple documents of daily activities. In addition, the trail offered an elegant backdrop for portraits of others along the way, who kindly offered themselves to the camera in spite of their own ambitious daily goals." - Pearson

The current exhibition is a reinterpretation of the original work shown at UIC in 2006 and contains a new selection of photographs. Pearson is also editing an experimental video with footage from the southern half of the AT taken in 2007. The exhibition contains various sizes of photographs from small 4"x5" images up to 40"x50" images. The collection of photographs maintains a balance between self-portraits that showcase isolation and a feeling of loneliness on the trail, juxtaposed with a profound respect and camaraderie seen through the portraits of the other hikers on the AT.

For this particular exhibition, both Pearson and the gallery are reaching out to various hiking associations in order to bring individuals and groups together to create a dialogue about the hiking subculture that exists. There is rarely a platform granted to this culture in America outside of these organizations, and the art gallery presents a unique opportunity to bring both hikers and artists together, as well as allow others to learn something about the experience and lifestyle.

*1000 Miles Shy* will be exhibiting February 8th - March 24th, 2010. There is an opening reception with the artist on Friday, February 12th from 6 - 10pm.