

Upon seeing the theme, I instantly thought of this seemingly simple, blurry, mildly absurd image awaiting in my camera roll. Driving through the Sacred Valley of Peru last November, I had a split-second reaction to this sight and caught a flick. I was immediately struck with amusement and curiosity, pondering the who, what, when, where, and why of it all as we continued further, almost in bewildered, comical disbelief at whether the few frames that had flashed before my eyes had been real.

I feel like this image represents movement in a multifaceted way—with both physical movement and the movement of culture. The initial movement of colonizers into the region and subsequent globalization made the eventual presence of a Western film franchise character (or perhaps a Japanese Gundam) possible; the Transformer/Gundam itself of course represents movement—a change of state, a vehicle on wheels or on foot. And here I was, in a vehicle with wheels, with the view of the mountains replete with their endlessly sprawling Inca trails, which have been trekked on foot by the Incan peoples on a daily basis for hundreds of years. People from all over the world come to take the journey from the entrance of the valley to the base of Machu Picchu, guided by porters who carry their belongings, echoing the mode of transport of goods on the trail, which is its principal purpose.

Movement, then, is truly a universal and unifying practice, if not the most human act there is; for it is bipedalism and the continuous will to move that created our such varied and vast human world.



AN UNEXPECTED SIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHY & PROSE
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