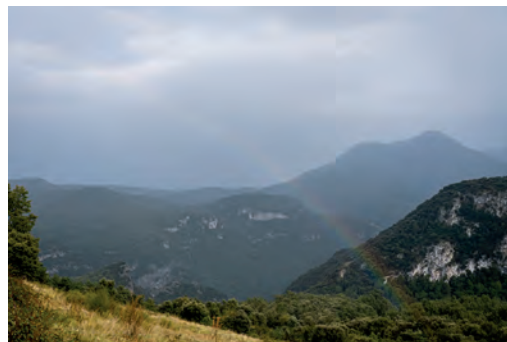


Blue Mountain, White Cloud

A photo essay
on the nature of
impermanence.
Mountains at
Bori Sa Retreat
Center.



All images taken by
Hector Mediavilla
during a summer
Kyol Che at Bori Sa
Retreat Center in
Catalonia, Europe.
Text by Gasper Sopi.

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*“Spring comes,
grass grows by
itself. The blue
mountain doesn’t
move. White
clouds float back
and forth.”*



The Buddha taught *sabbe sankhārā aniccā*—all conditioned things are impermanent. Our bodies break down and wane, and our minds slowly dwindle as we age. Emotions, feelings, and perceptions appear before our mind’s eye in one moment, only to vanish in the next. “Everything is always changing, changing, changing, moving, moving, nonstop,” Zen Master Seung Sahn used to say. The world may appear solid, but even the oceans dry up, mountains tumble down, and stars implode. The entire perceivable universe is in a process of constant change. Changing. Changing. Changing. Even one second of our lives seems full of so much movement—but our mind, says our founding teacher, is “like a lens whose shutter speed is 1 divided by infinite time.” Photography aficionados can relate to this, namely that the quicker the world moves in front of the camera lens, the quicker the shutter speed needs to be to capture it properly. One divided by infinity equals 0. (Reverent mathematicians

might object, but I kindly appeal to their poetic side in letting this one fly.) Zero shutter speed of our mind’s lens gives rise to “moment mind.” Zen Master Seung Sahn says, “if you attain that mind, then this whole world stops. From moment to moment you can see this world completely stop . . . Like the film, you perceive every frame—this moment—which is infinitely still and complete. In the frame, nothing is moving. There is no time, and nothing appears or disappears in that box.” But unlike the camera lens, our thinking mind is always busy projecting, so we experience the world as being in flux—we experience impermanence. When we practice, however, to paraphrase Zen Master Seung Sahn, we can stop our mind-lens and then experience the moment mind, the mind that is actually beyond time and space. Then our mind becomes like a camera lens at 0 speed: Mountain appears, blue. Clouds float by, white. Everything is just like this—complete. ♦