

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE



BING WRIGHT

Selected Photographs 1991-2010

July 7 to August 13, 2011

Opening Reception

Tuesday, July 19th, 5:30-7:30 pm

Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday 11:00am - 5:00pm

Additional images are available upon request

Greyscape (Lake Union), 1991

Silver Print

50" x 40"

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of photographs by Bing Wright. The show will feature selected works from 1991- 2011, displaying his *Greyscape*, *Silver on Mirror*, and *Silver Prints* series that draws viewers into an abstracted yet familiar and haunting investigation of surface, planes, and form. The individual bodies of work seem to evolve out of one another, carrying on a sense of a quotidian romanticism throughout the entire show while combining traditional photography with conceptual ideas. Wright examines charged subjects with a minimalist approach, veering away from specificity or his own subjectivity.

Through his photographs, especially in the *Greyscape* series, Bing Wright explores monochromatic landscapes, constructed out of subtle shifts in grey. Developed out of his earlier *Windows* series, Wright created a collection of work focused on the greyness in Seattle. Photographing only on overcast days, he successfully creates a feeling that is familiar yet oppressive, and soothing all at once.

Wright honors the historical and central role of silver in the process of photographic printing in his series of *Silver Prints* and *Silver on Mirror*. In 2007, he began by producing images that focus on the subject of silver itself, creating "silver prints" that are literal images of silver. Before dismantling his darkroom, he photographed silver leaf on glass, often allowing shadows to be cast. When the print was still wet from being processed, Wright randomly dropped pieces of silver leaf that adhered and became a part of the picture plane of the photograph itself. He then allowed the silver leaf to age and color before ultimately sealing the tarnishing process with a thin wax coat. The resulting images were entitled "*Silver Prints*" and individually dedicated to various nineteenth-century classical photographers.

In 2009, Wright began his work on the *Silver on Mirror* series, heavily informed by John Szarkowski's *Windows and Mirrors* exhibition, displaying a fascination with the correlation between photo and mirror. The alternating crumpled, flattened, wrinkled, and ripped shards of silver leaf create a cinematic and textural landscape from folds and shadows as it exposes the metallic tonality of the subject. The angled surface of the mirror causes the light to reflect between the silver leaf and the mirror itself, resulting in bright flashes, sparkles, glints, and glimmers.

Continuing his examination of mirrored surfaces, Bing Wright constructed an enchanting and unique full plate daguerreotype in 2010 simply titled *Silver in Hand*. Reflected light on the burnished glossy surface reveals an image of the artist's almost phantasmal hand covered in fragments of silver leaf, the material that plays an integral part of the series *Silver on Mirror* and *Silver Prints*. Hence the daguerreotype becomes a poetic stand in for Wright's artistic process.

Wright's more recent work includes a silk scroll called *Grey Winter Day*. It displays stretches of grey skies punctuated by the black inky silhouettes of bare trees and their thin spindly branches. Once again drawing upon commonplace images, Wright transforms the familiar into the mysterious and romantic.