

**JAMES
HARRIS
GALLERY**
312 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104
T: 206 903 6220 F: 206 903 6226
JAMESHARRISGALLERY.COM

PRESS RELEASE



Steve Davis *The Western Lands*

July 16 – August 22, 2009

Opening Reception
Thursday, July 16, 6 – 8 pm

Near Rochester, Washington, 2007

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present *The Western Lands*, our second exhibition of photographs by artist Steve Davis. The show will consist of new work from his recent sojourn across the western expanse of the United States. For the past 10 years, Davis' work has investigated and often times critiqued the way contemporary culture deals with people who reside at the margins, the so-called underbelly of our social classes. The show marks the artist's shift away from portraiture to landscape, new territory for the artist.

Davis' work is very much rooted in the tradition of landscape photography. It is through the artist's framing mechanism that his images demonstrate the visual capacity of place. The artist is exploring the history of the landscape and our relationship to it physically, socially and culturally. For Davis, the photographs, lacking textual signs or obvious geographic landmarks, become signifiers for the non-specificity of place; how images can act as a trigger of distant memories or dreams. Each image is imbued with a sense of familiarity, a recognizable feeling, yet conveying an ambiguity of being close to nowhere. Often there are traces of human activity which add a human gesture to a landscape devoid of people. Davis' project began in the summer of 2007 before the historic 100 year flood in that occurred in Washington State in the fall. *The Western Lands* is an exploration of the harshness of nature and its beauty. It encompasses the emptiness of the high desert, the richness of the verdant temperate Northwest, and the arid valleys of southern California.

Steve Davis is the Coordinator of Photography and faculty member at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA. His work has appeared in the New York Times Magazine, The 50 States Project and is in the collections of the George Eastman House, the Tacoma Art Museum and the Musee de la Photographie in Belgium.

Gallery hours are Wednesday - Saturday 11:00am - 5:00pm
Images are available upon request.