

## Richard Misrach: Isolation/Solitude

14 October – 26 November, 2022  
 Quai des Bergues, 14-17  
 Geneva



Richard Misrach, *Diving Board, Salton Sea*, 1983  
 pigment print mounted to board © Richard Misrach

Geneva—Pace Gallery is pleased to announce *Richard Misrach: Isolation/Solitude*, the American photographer’s first solo exhibition in Switzerland. Surveying nearly four decades of the artist’s career, this exhibition showcases Misrach’s pioneering practice at the forefront of colour photography. The artist has carefully selected works from several of his key series – including rare examples of his iconic Desert Cantos project – to meditate on man’s relationship to the land and the awe-inspiring, sometimes overwhelming, nature of the Western American territories. Marking the artist’s first solo exhibition in Europe in two decades, *Richard Misrach: Isolation/Solitude* coincides with Pace’s presentation at Paris Photo (10 – 13 November) and the launch of Misrach’s latest publication *Notations*, which takes place on November 11 at 3pm at the Paris Photo Radius Booth.

Conceived in the wake of the many global lockdowns and confinements, *Richard Misrach: Isolation/Solitude* meditates on the sometimes subtle difference between choice and imposition. Indeed, the most recent photographs in the exhibition come from Misrach’s own experience of COVID-19 in Hawaii earlier this year. While socially distanced, Misrach captured *Hydrofoil Surfer #2, Hawaii* (2022) and *Being Photographed (The Covid Moment) [April 13, 2022 2:07pm]* (2022) – two striking images of minute figures dominated by the wild majesty of nature.

An early champion of colour photography, Richard Misrach is known for his powerful, expansive images that capture the magnitude of the American landscape, often through a socio-political lens. Characterised by their extraordinary sense of scale, his images present the natural world as a dominant, enveloping force. Misrach’s work is equally concerned with his chosen subject matter as he is with the medium and history of photography itself. Throughout his five decade career, Misrach has continually investigated the visual and technological capacities of cameras as well as processing and printing techniques. From early darkroom experiments to his recent digital exploration, the artist’s openness to the practice of making photographs has been central to the development of his distinct visual language, rich with tonality, colour, form, and composition.

In works such as *Untitled (July 20, 2013 4:17PM)* (2013), *Untitled (January 21, 2016 1:51pm)* (2016), and *Hydrofoil Surfer #2, Hawaii* (2022) Misrach presents the joyfulness of solitude, capturing people at peace immersed in nature. The size of the photographs enfolds the viewer in the wild landscapes, allowing them to feel at once a part of the scene and a distant observer. Several of these images are captured from the same vantage point – a hotel balcony in Hawaii. Misrach is interested in the idea that these images come to him, not the other way around. Seen

in the context of one another, the works explore the ever changing landscape, with the artist often titling them after the moment of their capture to underscore the fleeting, transitory quality of life.

*Diving Board, Salton Sea* (1983), an early classic work from Misrach's epic visual poem, *Desert Cantos*, speaks to the devastating effect humankind has had on the natural resources of our planet. Despite the desolate scene, the image retains the artist's singular aesthetic of engrossing, delicate colours and tones. In this way Misrach's work utilises beauty as a means of engaging audiences with the reality of contemporary issues.

**Richard Misrach** (b. 1949, Los Angeles, California) is considered one of the most influential photographers of his generation, instrumental in pioneering the use of colour photography and large-scale format in the 1970s. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1971 with a BA in Psychology. For over 50 years, Misrach has photographed the dynamic landscape of the American West through an environmentally aware and politically astute lens. His visually seductive colour vistas powerfully document the devastating ecological effects of human intervention, industrial development, nuclear testing and petrochemical pollution on the natural world. His best known and ongoing epic series, *Desert Cantos*, comprises 40 distinct but related groups of pictures that explore the complex conjunction between mankind and nature. Otherworldly images of desert seas, rock formations, and clouds are juxtaposed with unsettling scenes of desert fires, nuclear test sites, and animal burial pits. Recent chapters capture the highly charged political climate following the 2016 US presidential election through photographs of spray-painted graffiti messages scrawled on abandoned buildings and remote rocky outcroppings in desolate areas of the Desert Southwest.

Other bodies of work include *Golden Gate*, a careful study of times of day, weather, and light around San Francisco's famed bridge; *On the Beach*, aerial views of individuals and groups against a backdrop of water and sand; *Notations*, ravishing landscapes and seascapes in a reversed colour spectrum; *Destroy This Memory*, a haunting document shot with a 4-megapixel pocket camera of graffiti found in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; and *Petrochemical America*, an in-depth examination of petrochemical pollution along the Mississippi River produced in collaboration with landscape architect Kate Orff.

Misrach and Guillermo Galindo's exhibit *Border Cantos / Sonic Border* about the wall on the U.S. Mexico border has been traveling since 2018 under the auspices of Crystal Bridges' Art Bridges, and has gone to over a dozen museums. More recently, Misrach was commissioned to produce all the art for the five-story UCSF Nancy Friend Pritzker Psychiatry Building in San Francisco.

**Pace** is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide, including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace's long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which operated from 2016

to 2022. Pace's engagement with Silicon Valley's technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. Pace's satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach present continued programming on a seasonal basis.

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