

MARSHALL GALLERY

presents

scott b. davis | sonora

12.04.21 – 01.22.22



Marshall Gallery is pleased to open a new exhibition space in Santa Monica's historic Bergamot Station with a solo showing of work by scott b. davis. An opening reception will take place on Saturday, December 4th from 4-7 pm with a discussion between davis and Virginia Heckert (Curator of Photographs, Getty Museum) at 4:30 pm. Also opening the same evening is a project room installation of rare 1940's light abstractions by Texas Bauhaus artist Carlotta Corpron.

Over the past two decades, scott b. davis has committed his creative process to a pair of key variables: The exclusive use of platinum-palladium media and a focus on the western landscape. As a result, he has developed an expressive photographic syntax all to his own. One of monochromatic warm impressions rendered along the extreme ends of the tonal spectrum. Otherworldly scenes alternate between impossibly dark, starlit nights and blinding daylit ridgelines, the scale and arrangement of which the viewer is left to decipher. Often presenting inverted and/or overlapping scenes, the artist chooses to "favor abstraction over representation," alternating between reality and fiction, emptiness and density.

Celebrating the much-anticipated release of davis' first career monograph, published by Radius Books, the exhibition will survey the artist's experimental desert compositions that push the limits of the platinum-palladium process and, in turn, the tradition-laden genre of landscape photography from the American West. Featuring many works from the publication and shown together for the first time, the exhibition intends to distill the unique visual aesthetic connecting davis' work, while inviting viewers to slow down and question his ghostly topographies and their inverse relationship to the hyper-fidelity of modern digital methods and romanticized historical renderings.

While too easily labeled as *minimalist*, davis' atmospheric prints display a subtle and elegant reticence, the lack of visual information as significant as its presence. At times appearing like extraterrestrial scenes beamed back from a million light-years away, they evidence an original artist with a keen eye for deceptively complex compositions, often spanning multiple frames. Diptychs from the series *half blind* include pairings of positive prints and paper negatives made using large format cameras ranging from 4x5 inches to a laborious, hand-made 16x20. The prints require time for one's eyes to adjust to their binary palettes of light and dark which expand across a velvety, charcoal-like surface; Symbolic of the intense luminosity encountered in the remote deserts where davis explores along the western US/Mexico border.

scott b. davis (American, b. 1971) is a leading figure in West Coast contemporary landscape photography and has exhibited widely since the late 1990s. His works are held in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles, CA), George Eastman Museum (Rochester, NY), The J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, CA), Kiyosato Museum of Photographic Arts (Kiyosato, Japan), and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (Kansas City, MO) among others. He is also the founder of Medium Photo, the annual photography festival held in San Diego, California, where the artist is based.

Image: scott b. davis, *saguaro in bloom, palomas plain, arizona* 2021.