

Richard Misrach

May 11 – June 15, 2024

267 Itaewon-ro

Seoul



Richard Misrach, *Elephant Parable #22*, 2020 © Richard Misrach, courtesy Pace Gallery

Seoul—Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of work by photographer Richard Misrach at its Seoul gallery. On view from May 11 to June 15, this presentation, which marks the artist's first-ever solo show in Asia, will spotlight photographs from his *On the Beach*, *Shorebreak* and *Icarus Suite* series along with his never-before-exhibited *Elephant Parable* body of work. Together, these mesmeric images—exhibited across two floors of Pace's Seoul gallery—meditate on humans' relationships to the natural world and one another.

A champion of color photography since the 1970s, Misrach is known for his poignant, large-scale images that lean into social, political, and environmental issues of the present while also engaging with the history of photography. Subjects for his work have included desert fires, nuclear test sites, and animal burial pits in the American West; San Francisco's iconic Golden Gate Bridge; and the landscape of the US-Mexico border. In his radiant, contemplative works, Misrach—who lives and works in Berkeley, California—often examines the destructive effects of human intervention in the natural world. Recent solo exhibitions by the artist include his 2022 presentation *At the still point of the turning world, 2002–2022* at Pace Gallery in New York and *Border Cantos*, which opened at the San José Museum of Art in California in 2016 and later traveled to the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas. His works can be found in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in California; the Centre Pompidou in Paris; the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra; and many other institutions around the world.

In his upcoming exhibition at Pace in Seoul, Misrach will present works created between the early 1990s and 2019 on the gallery's ground floor. Among these photographs is *Outdoor Dining, Bonneville Salt Flats* (1992), an image from the series *Desert Canto XV: The Salt Flats* depicting a surreal scene of dining tables and chairs situated, inexplicably, in the middle of a vast salt desert. Meanwhile, in *Cloud, Roden Crater* (2016), Misrach investigates plays of light and color in the sky at sunset. Photographs from the artist's *On the Beach* series, comprising aerial images of figures in the sea, will also figure in the show. With these works—which Misrach has captured from the same vantage point on a hotel balcony in Hawaii for some 20 years—he bears witness to individuals' interactions with and relationship to the natural world. The first floor will also feature one work from the artist's *Icarus Suite*, a series informed by Pieter Bruegel's take on the Greek myth in *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* (ca. 1560)—in these photographs, figures are overpowered and engulfed by towering, swelling ocean waves.

The second floor of the gallery will spotlight Misrach's *Elephant Parable* body of work, which the artist produced during the COVID-19 pandemic and will be exhibited publicly for the first time in this presentation. Inspired by the fable of the blind men and the elephant, the varied works in this series are all derived from a single image of a bamboo forest in Hawaii to signify the unique perspectives and understandings we each bring to our experience of the world. For Misrach, a negative image is not merely a technical tool but also a vehicle for exploring different aesthetics. Originally commissioned for the UCSF Nancy Friend Pritzker Psychiatric Building, these semi-abstract works explore perceptual nuance through color, composition, and scale.

Richard Misrach (b. 1949, California) 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, large-scale color 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. 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, *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 in collaboration with Kate Orff.

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 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.

Today, Pace has seven locations worldwide, including European footholds in London and Geneva as well as Berlin, where the gallery established an office in 2023. Pace maintains 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 was open 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, along with an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2024, Pace will open its first gallery space in Japan in Tokyo's new Azabudai Hills development.

Press Inquiries

Kyungmi Kim
Public Relations Associate
kkim@pacegallery.com
+82 070 7708 7755

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