



MATTHEW BRANDT
PARIS PHOTO LOS ANGELES 2013
SOLO PRESENTATION

M+B is pleased to exhibit a solo presentation of new work by Matthew Brandt at Paris Photo Los Angeles. On display will be works from his *Lakes and Reservoirs* series, along with the premier of his *Night Sky* series, with this new body of work tilting our gaze upward from the horizon line to the great swaths of the expansive universe enveloping us. These new works further exemplify Brandt's engagement with landscape, and--as always--the materials he employs further inform the read of his images.

For his *Lakes and Reservoirs* series, Brandt travels across the United States capturing large format, classically romantic shots of various bodies of water. He returns to his studio in Los Angeles where he produces chromogenic prints and then soaks them in the water he gathered from the source. Depending on the length of time he soaks the prints, the type of paper used and the elements in the lake water itself, the emulsion of the photograph breaks down revealing an entirely new composition. The resulting painterly abstractions result in work both visually and physically informed by its subject matter: all part of Brandt's interest and continual investigation into the charge that imbues meaning within an image.

For the *Night Sky* work, Brandt essentially paints and draws with cocaine, creating bright starry fields against a background of plush black, light absorbent "photographer's velvet." Inspired by visions of Thomas Ruff's and Vija Celmins' starry skies, Brandt scoured astronomy books seeking out those transcendent moments that convey the awe, wonder, power and the exhilarating rush of peering up into a universe larger than our own minor understanding of our present existence. The final aesthetic presents a juxtaposition of a natural sublime "painted" with a substance that leads to an artificial neurological sublime. Present also is a play on the idea of the "luxury" status of a drug like cocaine with the "luxury" status of an art object, and Brandt's very choice of background—black velvet—harkens back to that idea. The resulting vertical panels are a continued expression of Brandt's sensibilities and his abilities as a photographic alchemist, satisfying the urge for the tangible and grounding us in the present.

Matthew Brandt has been gaining critical attention for what Eugenie Tsai, curator of contemporary art at the Brooklyn Museum, likens to both the 19th-century Hudson River School painters who "traveled around the country, celebrating the beauty of nature" and more recently, the Earthwork artists of the 1970s with their "tinkerer, experimenter, mad-scientist impulses [and] the[ir] 'Let's see what happens if' attitude." Brandt's work is included in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; The Columbus Museum of Art; the Brooklyn Museum of Art; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Elton John Collection, UK; the UBS Art Collection, NY; Bidwell Projects, Cleveland, OH; and the Statoio Collection, UK. His first solo exhibition at M+B was selected by *Modern Painters* as one of "The 100 Best Fall Shows" and reviewed in the December 2011/January 2012 edition. Other notable press includes *The New Yorker*, *TIME Lightbox*, *Arte Fuse* and *Elle Décor*. Brandt received his BFA from Cooper Union in 2004 and MFA from the University of California Los Angeles in 2008. Brandt lives and works in Los Angeles.

***Matthew Brandt "Night Sky" Disclaimer:** *These artworks contain trace amounts of cocaine incorporated into the materials used and thus rendered unusable in any other context. The inclusion of the cocaine is strictly for conceptual artistic purposes and is not intended in theory or practice to be considered by the viewer or purchaser in any other way. The Artist would deem the removal of any materials from any of these pieces an unauthorized alteration or destruction of the work in violation of the Artist's copyrights including, but not limited, to the Visual Artists Rights Act.*