

The Luminescence of Memory

"The landscape is what defines me. When I am somewhere new or familiar, I am constantly in dialogue with the past, present, and my future self. When I am thinking about landscape, I am thinking about those who had stood on this land before me. Whoever they are, hopefully, history recorded their markings on the land for us to study and contemplate" - Binh Danh, an excerpt from *Reflections in a Mirrored Eye*.

ROSEGALLERY is pleased to present *The Luminescence of Memory*, a presentation of daguerreotypes by Binh Danh. *The Luminescence of Memory* consists of a selection of daguerreotypes taken by Danh at various US National Parks, such as Death Valley, Joshua Tree, and Yosemite National Parks.



Binh Danh, Bridalveil Falls, Yosemite, 2012

The imagery found in Danh's silvery daguerreotypes grounds itself in the work of Ansel Adams and Carleton Watkins, with their early images defining the grandiose beauty of the National Parks and their scenic landscapes. Danh builds upon this legacy, furthering the narrative of exploration and documentation by infusing his own personal and familial experiences. He calls to his family's journey to the United States as refugees of the Vietnam War and their subsequent assimilation into American Society; with this assimilation echoing through the experiences of many of those who have immigrated into the United States. With this, Danh acknowledges

the violent history of these spaces and of the Indigenous groups who were driven out in order to establish these lands.

Danh cites a remark by environmentalist Carl Pope's on the Ken Burns PBS series *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*: "[the parks] are the meaning of home for many of us. There're what it means to be an American and to inhabit this continent. It's the end of the immigrant experience. And they're what takes you and says, 'Now, I am an American.'"

In a way, these daguerreotypes visualize a new expedition into these outdoor landscapes. The solarized skies and glimpses of reflection carry an invisible



Binh Danh, Artists Palette, Death Valley National Park, 2017

aura that seems to meander through the dense history of the place. Time and dimension are synthesized into the iridescent and polished surfaces that creates more than just an image of a scenic viewpoint, but a marker of acceptance and belonging.

"Growing up in a Vietnamese American family, the outdoors to me was a 'white' space," Danh recalls. "[Camping] was what white people did; it was not for people who ran through jungles at night to get onto a "shing boat and head into the South China Sea." - Binh Danh, from *The Enigma of Belonging*

Binh Danh (MFA Stanford; BFA San Jose State University) emerged as an artist of national importance with work that investigates his Vietnamese heritage and our collective memory of war. His technique incorporates his invention of the chlorophyll printing process, in which photographic images appear embedded in leaves through the action of photosynthesis. His newer body of work focuses on nineteenth-century photographic processes, applying them in an investigation of battlefield landscapes and contemporary memorials. A recent series of daguerreotypes celebrated the United States National Park system during its anniversary year.

The Luminescence of Memory

will be on view at ROSEGALLERY from **20 April 2024 through 15 June 2024** with an opening reception on **Saturday, 20 April from 2 - 5PM.**

For inquiries please contact: Angela | angela@rosegallery.net or Brianna | brianna@rosegallery.net