

Uta BARTH
Sundial

October 18-November 24, 2007

Gallery 1

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is delighted to present *Sundial*, an exceptional group of new works that comprise Uta Barth's seventh solo exhibition with the gallery.

Conceived as pictures of light, the photographs that make up *Sundial* trace the effect of the sun's movement as natural light falls and moves across the interior spaces of the artist's home over the course of the day, on different days throughout the year. These photographs were primarily taken at dusk, when the last play of light begins to erase itself and the illuminated world is put to rest, when objects are caught in beams of light and cast their quickly fading shadows on walls, ceilings and floors. The resulting images are still, silent and slow. They are occasionally interrupted by the drifting optical afterimages produced by prolonged staring into the light, inverted visions our eyes can see, yet the camera cannot, a place where logic begins to slip and unexpected associations are made.

Throughout her career, Barth has photographed exquisitely composed scenes of blurred backgrounds, fleeting glimpses and peripheral details. Often 'empty' or without a central subject, Barth's images highlight objects and views taken for granted in our daily lives, the ones that frame and contain our existence and are so familiar to us that they become almost invisible. In bringing to our attention scenes and objects that habitually go unnoticed, the subject of Barth's photographs becomes the act of looking itself. Subverting the notion that the principal purpose of photography is to capture spectacle, the artist chooses instead to use the camera as a way of evoking the passage of time, the evanescence of memory, and the fallibility of the human eye.

In each new series Barth simultaneously expands and refines her investigation of the nature of vision, always pushing the camera to show us more about the way we see. Repetition and the serial accumulation of images plays an important role in her work. Whether photographs of the artist's living room, as in her series *...and of time*, 1999, or the view looking out from a window in *nowhere near*, 2000, the use of a repeated subject allows both the artist and the viewer to explore the passage of time through the subtlest markers that might otherwise be ignored, such as the changing color of light, or the settling of dust from the air. Importantly, in *...and of time* and *nowhere near*, as well as the works that make up *Sundial*, Barth chooses to repeat pictures taken in her own house, a deliberate decision that challenges the convention of photography as a medium meant to document 'events,' rather than life's quiet meditative moments. While the work is calm and reflective, it is also full of visual excitement, examining not only the passage of time, but also the human eye's own optics, and the phenomenon of visual memory. Creating images that go beyond what the camera can replicate, Barth includes panels in her pieces that resemble what is seen with eyes closed: the fleeting retinal afterimages that appear when the eye has exhausted itself looking at a single scene.

Uta Barth's work has been exhibited widely by museums, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Guggenheim Museum, New York and Bilbao; The Tate Modern, London; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; The Getty Museum, Los Angeles; The Wexner Center and many others. A mid-career survey of her work was presented by the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle and the MCA in Houston. Uta Barth's work is currently included in *Depth of Field: Modern Photography at the Metropolitan*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and through December 30th she is featured in *Viewfinder*, at the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle. Her recent exhibitions include, *Uta Barth: 2005-2006*, Franklin Art Works, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2006, and she will be in the upcoming group show, *Keeping Time*, at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, New Zealand in 2008.

Sundial will be on view through November 24, 2007, and will be the sole presentation of this new body of work in the United States. For further information or images please contact the gallery at 212-414-4144, or info@tanyabonakdargallery.com.