

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Bevan Davies / Lower Manhattan:
Vintage Photographs 1975-77***

January 7-February 27, 2016

Deborah Bell Photographs is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition, *Bevan Davies / Lower Manhattan: Vintage Photographs 1975-77*. The exhibition opens on Thursday, January 7 and will continue through Saturday, February 27, 2016.

This is the first exhibition of Bevan Davies' work in a New York gallery since his solo and group exhibitions at Sonnabend in the mid- and late 1970s.

Bevan Davies / Lower Manhattan: Vintage Photographs 1975-77 will present Davies' luminous and highly detailed large-format black-and-white architectural views from 1975-77.

Bevan Davies (American, b. 1941 in Chicago) studied humanities at the University of Chicago in the early 1960s. While living in Chicago, Davies met Hugh Edwards, the renowned curator of photography at the Art Institute of Chicago. They had many conversations about photography and the work that Edwards was exhibiting. Edwards' approach to art left a lasting impression on Davies. In the 1970s Davies took a seminar course from Bruce Davidson in his New York studio, where he met Mary Ellen Mark, Ralph Gibson, Danny Lyon and the South African photographer Ernest Cole. He was also influenced greatly by his friendship with Diane Arbus. After a period of photographing people on the street, especially those at odds with society, in both daylight and evening hours with a hand-held camera, Davies changed his working methodology to describe the physical character of the city: the building façades, and the alleys and streets, with tripod-mounted 5 x 7- and 8 x 10-inch view cameras.

This change in subject and approach resulted in Davies' most celebrated work. When created in the mid-1970s, Bevan Davies' architectural photographs situated themselves wholly within the dictum laid forth by William Jenkins as "New Topographics," the title of the legendary exhibition Jenkins organized in 1975 at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York. Davies himself writes of his own approach as "an effort being made to let the camera almost see by itself." This notion was carried further by the late photographer Lewis Baltz who, in 1976, referred to Davies' photographs as "rigorously contemporary, while acknowledging a use of the camera which dates from the inception of the medium." The images of New York façades, photographed in the early morning

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hours and devoid of people, describe spaces and shapes defined by light and shadow. They depict a specific time and place, as evidenced by the window dressings and signage, and they portray a formal grace among the buildings' details that are included within Davies' ground glass. The resulting 16 x 20-inch prints, with their glossy, ferrotyped surfaces and brilliant definition, are at once objective records and seductive objects.

Davies' first New York exhibition was held at Witkin Gallery in 1969. Sonnabend Gallery featured Davies' work in solo and group exhibitions in their SoHo gallery in the mid- and late 1970s. During this period, Davies' work was also exhibited at Broxton Gallery in Westwood, CA, and internationally – at Galerie Wilde, Cologne, and at Stills Gallery in Edinburgh. Davies also owned and operated the legendary SoHo bookstore, Untitled, from 1985-2005.

Davies' photographs can be found in the collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Center for Creative Photography, Tucson; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City; the Minneapolis Institute of Arts; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the George Eastman Museum, Rochester; the Corcoran Gallery of Art (now incorporated into the collection of the National Gallery of Art), Washington, DC; the Harry Ransom Center, Austin; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Seattle Art Museum; the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College, Ohio; the International Center of Photography, New York; the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; and numerous private collections. Davies received a National Endowment for the Arts Photographer's Fellowship in 1978.

In 2014 Nazraeli Press released *Los Angeles, 1976*, a monograph on Davies' photographs from that region and era. The photographs depict the residential architecture and neighborhoods through nuanced arrangement and clarity. A forthcoming volume on Davies' New York photographs is scheduled for publication in 2017.

This exhibition is held in cooperation with Joseph Bellows Gallery, La Jolla, CA.

To request further information or high-resolution images please contact Deborah Bell Photographs by email at info@deborahbellphotographs.com, or telephone Kat McElroy, Director, at 212-249-9400.

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