

New York Sleeps – Christopher Thomas

22nd of January – 6th of March 2010

Opening: 21st of January, 18-21h

Fifty One Fine Art is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition of the German photographer Christopher Thomas.

The desolateness which is so profoundly present in Christopher Thomas' images of New York has a surprising impact. These pictures are quite opposed to our expectations of this turbulent metropolis. The urban landscape may be familiar, but this is not the city that most of us know and experience. For example the image 'Grand Central Terminal II', once the largest train station in the world when completed in 1913, now appears totally abandoned. Thomas erases the profane and quotidian in favor of the "eternal" or timeless. This transformation of lively urban zones is particularly evident in Christopher Thomas' photographs of Times Square, one of the icons of urban turbulence. The long exposure times erase the constantly changing lights of the advertisements, and reduces this mecca of commerce to its essence. The city seems to hold its breath; hectic activity is transformed into metaphysical emptiness. The lack of passers-by who usually populate the city means that our perception is no longer distracted but concentrated instead on the city's "casing": its architecture and streets. The city is reduced to its essential and bare architectural form. As if, at this moment when night borders day, Thomas could uncover its essence.

Born in Munich in 1961, Thomas has received many international awards for commercial photography. He has worked for magazines as Geo, Stern, Merian, and the Süddeutsche Zeitung Magazin and produced numerous photo essays. As an alternative to such commissioned works, which usually have to satisfy the guidelines and expectations of his clients, the photographer began to shoot views of cities on his own initiative in order to – as he puts it – "get back to the roots". He started to capture the architecture in his native city, Munich. This work resulted in the series 'Münchner Elegien' (Munich Elegies), exhibited in 2005 at the Fotomuseum München (with publication by Schirmer/Mosel, Munich, with which he became known as an artist. Travelling back and forth between Munich and New York, Christopher Thomas began photographing this series in 2001, but made most of his images over the past two years.

The book 'New York Sleeps' published by Prestel Publishing, recently won the Deutschen Fotobuchpreis in Silber 2010.