

NUDE DUNE

Simon Chaput

2 November – 19 December 2007

Nudes turn slowly into dunes; dunes transform into the essence of a human body. This striking visual alternation can be observed in the recent work 'Bare Landscape (2007)' by Simon Chaput, which is at the very core of his first solo-show at Fifty One Fine Art Photography. The viewer embarks into a nocturnal landscape with dunes, as complicated and thrilling as a human body in its pure essence. The abstraction of the nude has been pushed through to the extreme; what remains is a fine (horizon)contour. One could see in this image a synthesis of several famous pictures by the master in abstraction Edward Weston (1886-1958): the series 'Dunes, Oceano, 1936' and 'Nude on Sand, Oceano, 1936'. The essential and purified approach of Weston's dunes and nudes in the sand, meet in Chaput's work in one powerful image. The nude as landscape; the landscape as nude.

The study of the nude constitutes a recurrent theme in the work of the artist-photographer Simon Chaput (°1952, Fr.). His distinctive and abstract vision takes a daring and gratifying step forward within the age-old tradition of depicting the nude in art history. The exhibition NUDE DUNE shows within this context a series of nudes in their evolution towards diverse levels of abstraction. Chaput teaches us to 'look differently' at the everyday-reality that surrounds us. His images present minute studies in perception and abstraction. The ambiguous pictures are typified of a visual play of positive and negative, black and white, image and counterimage.

Simon Chaput travels extensively and is based in New York. His work includes a suite of images of the Stone Observatories of Jay Singh in New Delhi and Jaipur in India and an ongoing suite of modernist views of Manhattan's architecture. Both bodies are representative of Simon Chaput's interest in abstraction and Buddhism.

Apart from his personal oeuvre, he also worked with award-winning directors and producers on Documentary films and is a close associate of the artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude, working with them on many of their projects and exhibitions over the past fifteen years.

Private and institutional collections in France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, England, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, Japan and the United States feature his work. It was also part of the exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum (N.Y.): 'Looking Back from Ground Zero: Images from the Brooklyn Museum Collection' (2006).