

# Wim Wenders

## Early Works: 1964 — 1984

23 March — 5 May 2018

Blain|Southern London

Private View: Thursday 22 March, 6-8pm



*Liquor Store, San Francisco, 1973*  
Courtesy Blain|Southern, © Wim Wenders

*Early Works 1964-1984* at Blain|Southern London features C-prints (based on original Polaroids) and black-and-white photographs from Wim Wenders' archive, many of which have never been shown before. The exhibition speaks to the artist's belief in the authenticity of photographs that have not been altered, and the spontaneity of scenes that have not been staged or directed.

Wenders talks more about the influence of painters on his work than of any photographer or director. His early interest in painting and continued love of American Realism, are reflected throughout the works in the exhibition. The exteriors in *Liquor Store, San Francisco* and *Paris Brasserie* are loaded with a kind of narrative portent reminiscent of Edward Hopper. In other works, Wenders' vast landscapes of Southern Australia and the plains of Montana are closer, in both subject matter and intent, to the paintings of Andrew Wyeth. In the exhibition Wenders adopts both perspectives, stating that he loves storytelling, but also loves to just record something as it is.

Many of the photographs in the exhibition were shot while on the locations of films such as *The American Friend* and *Alice in The Cities*. The black-and-white landscapes, on 35mm and panoramic film, are largely unpopulated, yet the Polaroids, taken during the same period, also include portraits of cast and crew. Wenders enjoyed the social, playful nature of this immediate format while working on set. He claims to have taken over 12,000 but gave away the vast majority to his subjects because he felt they had more right to it than he as the photographer. The remaining pictures were stored away in old cigar boxes, which acted like humidors, so they were perfectly preserved when unearthed decades later.

As unique, delicate objects, the Polaroids have been scanned and reprinted in a process that retains the saturation, contrast and atmosphere of the original medium. Most of the Polaroid C-prints have been printed at the original size and dimensions, preserving the intimacy of the original format, while a selection of them have been enlarged to 60cm, creating new photographic prints. Alongside this there are a range of black-and-white landscapes, many of which have never been shown before, and a group of panoramas shot on Wenders' first 35mm panoramic camera. The black-and-white landscapes offer another window into Wenders' roaming, curious eye, and feature depictions of landscapes from Brittany to Bali, Australia to Iceland.

## Notes to Editors

### About the artist

Wenders (b.1945, Düsseldorf, DE) is one of the most important figures to emerge from the New German Cinema period of the 1970s. Alongside directing atmospheric auteur films, the artist works with the medium of photography, and his poignant images of desolate landscapes engage themes including memory, time, loss, nostalgia and movement. Wenders studied medicine and philosophy before settling in Paris to become a painter and engraver. His career as a filmmaker began in 1967, when he enrolled at the newly-founded Academy of Film and Television, Munich. Along with fifteen other directors and writers, he founded the production and distribution company Filmverlag der Autoren in 1971, then directing his road movie trilogy : *Alice in the Cities* (1973), *The Wrong Move* (1974) and *Kings of the Road* (1975), in which his characters confront their lack of roots in post-war Germany. He won the Golden Palm at Cannes Film Festival in 1984, along with the Best Director award at the BAFTAs for his film *Paris, Texas*. The artist's critically acclaimed film *Wings of Desire* was made in 1987, winning him the Best Director award at Cannes. Most recently, he was awarded the Honorary Golden Bear for lifetime achievement at the Berlin Film Festival (2015), as well as receiving three Oscar nominations for his documentary films *Buena Vista Social Club* (1999), *Pina* (2011) and *Salt of the Earth* (2014).

Wenders became a member of the Academy of Arts Berlin in 1984. He was awarded honorary doctorates at the Sorbonne University in Paris (1989), the Theological Faculty of University of Fribourg (1995), the University of Louvain (2005) and the Architectural Faculty of the University of Catania (2010). He is currently the President of the European Film Academy and is a member of the order Pour le Mérite. He has been teaching film as a professor at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg until 2017. Since 1986, Wenders' photographs have been exhibited internationally at museums and galleries including the Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR (1986), Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, DE (2001), the Guggenheim Bilbao, ES (2002), the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, AU (2003), the Shanghai Museum of Art, CN (2004), the Scuderie del Quirinale in Rome, IT (2006), the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, BR (2010), the Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, and Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, RU (2012), the Fundació Sorigué, Lleida, ES (2013), the Villa Pignatelli, Naples, IT and GL Strand, Copenhagen, DE (2014), and a major retrospective of his photographs at Stiftung Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, DE (2015). His exhibition of Polaroids at The Photographers' Gallery, London October 2017, moves to the C/O Berlin in July 2018.

### About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an expanding roster of international artists and is the exclusive representative of the estates of Lynn Chadwick and Avigdor Arikha. Recent exhibitions include Marius Bercea, Rachel Howard, Michael Joo, Avigdor Arikha, James White, Sisley Xhafa, Jake & Dinos Chapman and Michael Simpson.

The gallery has also launched a series of exhibitions in London collectively titled *Lodger*, conceived by the writer, curator, and Contributing Editor for frieze magazine, Tom Morton. Running concurrent to the exhibitions in the central space, *Lodger* expands Blain|Southern's programme into new territories, often spotlighting a younger generation of artists. To date artists have included Alex Dordoy, Sophie Jung and Brian Griffiths

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Monday to Friday: 10am - 6pm  
Saturday: 10am - 5pm

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