



## **WAVE HILL HOUSE**

August 28–December 5, 2021

**DAVID BENJAMIN SHERRY**

*Earth in Peril*

## DAVID BENJAMIN SHERRY

Born 1981, Stony Brook, NY  
Lives in Santa Fe, NM

*Falling Man Petroglyph,*  
*Gold Butte National Monument,*  
*Nevada, 2018*  
Chromogenic print  
Courtesy of Salon 94 and  
the artist

With an unrelenting reverence for the natural world, David Benjamin Sherry photographs the American landscape with a particular focus on the West, highlighting its beauty while hinting at its precarious future. Showcasing a selection of color, monochromatic and black and white photographs made over the past 12 years, *Earth in Peril* highlights Sherry's technical skills, sensitive eye and queer perspective that set his landscape photography apart from his predecessors and contemporaries.

One of the most recognizable aspects of his monochromatic photographs is the vibrant and saturated colors that wash over the landscape. The result of an experimental and deeply personal darkroom developing process, the color itself is a tactic for Sherry, turning the landscape into something that is recognizable yet unfamiliar and desirable. In this way, Sherry reflects on the land we occupy and are supposed to care for, even as the protected status of National Parks and wildlife refuges across the United States is at risk. Historically associated with a self-aggrandized heroism and rugged individualism, the idealized images of the American West are strikingly absent of queer people and their perspectives. Tapping into a longstanding vernacular of queer aesthetics, Sherry utilizes the drama of lighting, as well as the scale of his prints, to ignite both the mundane and the cast-away. Within his photographs, these landscapes are imbued with a newfound sensibility of self-discovery, once emblematic of the American frontier.

In addition to his signature color works, *Earth in Peril* also features a selection of smaller, black-and-white photographs that reflect on issues of ecological distress and devastation. The colorless palette of these photographs is solemn, acting as a portent or warning about the stresses of climate change and species die-off. Photographs of melting ice sheets broken off from the last glacier in Glacier National Park, and images of burned down forests in Wyoming, all speak to a changing landscape, to an earth in peril.

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