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HOWARD GREENBERG GALLERY

Steve Kahn

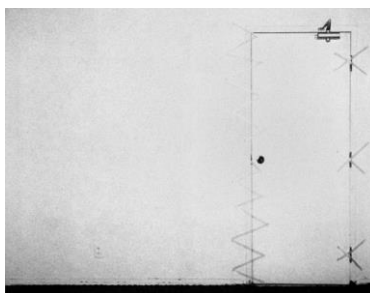
The Hollywood Suites

February 1 – March 17, 2018

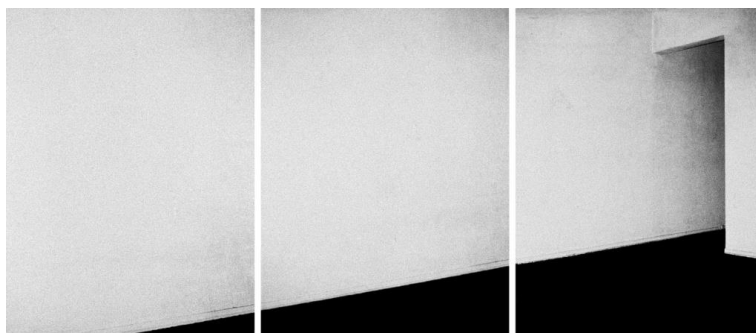
Howard Greenberg Gallery



The Hollywood Suites (Nudes) #06, 1974-75



The Hollywood Suites (Bound Doors) #5, 1976



The Hollywood Suites Triptych #4, 1976

NEW YORK – Juxtaposing nudes and seascapes with architectural interiors, *The Hollywood Suites*, Steve Kahn's enigmatic series of photographs made between 1974 and 1978, will be on view at Howard Greenberg Gallery from February 1 – March 17, 2018. The series will be the subject of an upcoming exhibition at the de Young Museum in San Francisco opening on September 29, 2018. Kahn is part of a generation of photographers that emerged in Los Angeles in the 1970s, including Robert Heinecken and Lewis Baltz, who deconstructed the medium with a conceptual and abstract approach. An opening reception with the artist will be held on Thursday, February 1, from 6-8 p.m.

The Hollywood Suites has been seen in solo exhibitions on the West Coast and in Europe and included in group exhibitions such as *The Altered Photograph* at P.S. 1 in New York in 1979. The exhibition at Howard Greenberg Gallery represents the first time the series will be seen in a solo show in New York, and is the artist's first exhibition with the Gallery. A book on the series was published by Nazraeli Press in 2014.

Kahn created this body of work in rent-by-the-day rooms of an old tenement building in a run-down section of Hollywood, California. Looking to create work that spoke to containment and isolation, Kahn began photographing professional bondage models using a Polaroid camera. Later, in his studio, he would copy the Polaroids with 35 mm film, documenting the events he had orchestrated, and initiating a formal process of reproductions and generations. As Kahn notes, “These were situations entered into without a plan, full of anxiety, in the hope of producing some document of the experience that was explicit, visually powerful, yet went beyond what it was.”

One day, the model didn’t show up, and Kahn found that he could explore the same provocative and haunting issues by photographing the room itself. This led to stark images of the walls, windows, mirrors, doors and hallways, which evolved into studies of defined space that became abstract in triptychs and quadrants. Except for certain interventions – adding graphic elements to a few doors with tape, rope, and black yarn – rarely did he manipulate the rooms.

As Kahn wrote, “All of this work was process oriented, having started off as pull-and-peel Polaroids. The work was concerned with formal issues including generations, re-iterations, sequences, and multiple image presentations.” Ultimately Kahn notes, “I took the space apart and reconstructed it. I ended up creating an existential situation for myself.”

About Steve Kahn

Steve Kahn was born in Los Angeles in 1943 and took up photography at an early age, shooting assignments for a local newspaper while still in grade school. In 1968, he took to the streets as a young photojournalist working as a stringer for *Time* and *Newsweek*. In 1973, *Stasis*, a monograph of 22 images, was self-published, marking his departure from traditional photographic concerns. This body of work and other projects that followed reflected his interest in drawing, architecture, and abstraction.

In 1986, Kahn moved to New York to pursue a career as a commercial photographer. During the next 25 years he produced several bodies of personal work including *Chemical Plants*, 1989, a photo essay shot in petrochemical facilities; *Subway Portraits*, 2002-03, a response to 9/11; and *Brooklyn Shadows*, 2006-08, images of barren trees projected onto the raw, urban canvas of concrete and asphalt. Kahn’s books published by Nazraeli Press include *The Hollywood Suites 1974-1976* in 2014 and *Corridors* in 2015. *Chemical Plants* will to be published in 2019.

His work is included in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Art Institute of Chicago; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Bibliothèque National de France, Paris; among others.