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Lewis Baltz: Candlestick Point



Synopsis

The New York curator Marvin Heiferman characterized Lewis Baltz's landscape photography as "a topography of the emptiness of random, damaged, remote places." The images in his 1989 series *Candlestick Point* show fallow Californian land, where piles of rubble and waste accumulate in the middle of the prairie. Traces of technical land development--drainage channels and water dams--are visible, becoming a typically American theme: the development of a territory in the almost infinite prairie. Baltz's photographic record of the development at Candlestick Point combines sociological and analytical rigor and is strongly oriented towards the tradition of Land art, and retrospectively pays tribute to its crucial influence on conceptual art since the 1970s. *Candlestick Point* was first published in 1989 and has been unavailable for decades (except as an expensive collectible on the secondary photobook market). Lewis Baltz's works have been the subject of over 50 one-person exhibitions. Seventeen monographs have been published on his work. He came to prominence as a part of the 'New Topography' movement of the 1970s. Baltz studied at the San Francisco Art Institute and received a Master of Fine Arts from Claremont Graduate School in 1971. He is currently based in Paris and Venice.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This version of "*Candlestick Point*" (1st Edition, 2011, by Steidl) is remarkably similar to a previous version (1989, printed by Gallery Min, distributed by Aperture), so I guess I somewhat baffled by the editioning of the work. Since the photographs are all the same, and in the same sequence, and only

the length and apparent rigor (complete with reproductions of classic paintings, of all things) of the essay following the work, and the size, color and quality of the printing differ, I think this should be considered a second edition of this work--but--well, I guess it's the first German edition. The 1989 edition has been out of print for years, although copies do surface on e-bay at outrageous prices (I should know, because I always try to buy them cheap)--I do have a copy, though, that I bought many years ago--so I could compare the two "first editions" side by side. There are significant difference between the two--the Steidl version is smaller and colder than the 1989 version--which changes the mood of the light--the earlier version feels like the air itself is toxic, hanging over a very damaged landscape--the Steidl version feels humid but not poisoned. But the images are baffling in both editions--I once took a walk in Candlestick Point several years ago--it's a "park" of dog walking and drug dealing--it's very close to San Francisco--so maybe it remains open land because of the danger of earthquakes shaking the earth into the bay--and the trash that is the subject for Baltz's work might just be "clean fill wanted" to try to raise the ground just a few feet--but it feels much more damaged than that--like the remains of a landscape after a nuclear holocaust.

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