

David Zwirner
525 West 19th Street
New York, NY 10011
tel (212) 727 2070 fax (212) 727 2072
info@davidzwirner.com
www.davidzwirner.com

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EXHIBITION:

JAMES WELLING – *New Work*

DATES:

April 7 – May 7, 2005

Opening on April 7, 2005, David Zwirner will present work by Los Angeles-based photographer James Welling. In 2000, Welling was the subject of a mid-career retrospective at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, OH, which traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. In 2002, there was a second mid-career retrospective, highlighting Welling's color photographs, at the Palais de Beaux Arts in Brussels, Belgium. In 2006, his work will be included in the group exhibition *The Los Angeles Art Scene, 1955-85*, at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, France. James Welling has exhibited extensively in the United States and abroad. This will be the artist's debut exhibition at David Zwirner.

James Welling's thirty-year career has met with extensive critical acclaim. Welling was first known for his abstract photographs in which he used such materials as crumpled aluminum foil, velvet, and gelatin as subject matter. In recent years, he has produced an expansive body of work, moving effortlessly from recognizable subjects (architecture, landscape, railroads) to abstract photograms, from exquisite gelatin silver prints to radiant fields of color. Moreover, Welling's sensitivity to the nuances of photographic processes and his resistance to preconceived notions of photography has produced a body of work which defies easy categorization.

In this exhibition, Welling will present work from three series: *Light Sources*, *Screens*, and *Flowers*. The *Light Sources* series, begun in the early 1990s, points to the centrality of light in the process of photography. Although these large inkjet prints cover a wide variety of subjects (from light bulbs to architecture to apples), they say less about the content of the images than about how different types of light articulate form.

In the two newest series, *Flowers* and *Screens*, Welling uses photograms to further explore the physical phenomenon of photography, now without the agency of a camera. The *Flowers* were made by placing Plumbago blossoms onto large-format sheets of black and white film and then making an exposure. Each negative was then printed on metallic color photo paper in one of Newton's 7 primary colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. With the *Screens*, Welling jettisons the negative as well as the camera, exposing light directly onto metallic color paper. In addition, he projects the light through metal screens, thereby creating complexes of overlapping moiré patterns, which resemble magnetic fields or sound waves.

"Welling proclaims an unapologetic respect for the traditions of photography even as he pursues distinctly non-traditional ambitions... It is their utter lucidity, however, that makes these photographs so astonishing, a clarity of intention matched by a palpable luminosity. (Geldin, Sherri, in her foreword to *James Welling: Photographs 1974-1999*, Wexner Center for the Arts, 2000).

For information, please contact the gallery at 212-727-2070, or visit www.davidzwirner.com