

STEPHEN WIRTZ GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TODD HIDO

A Road Divided

Exhibition dates: October 22-December 20, 2008

Opening reception for the artist Thursday, November 6, 2008, 5:30-7:30

Stephen Wirtz Gallery presents *A Road Divided*, new landscape photographs by Todd Hido. Hido's seasoned practice allows him intermittent moves between the genres of the Portrait and the Landscape, continually adding to and drawing from his ever-expanding archive of images. Following his 2006 debut of previously unseen portraits, Hido has focused his attention once again on the American landscape, a subject explored in his widely acclaimed 2004 series *Roaming*. Presented mostly in large scale, these photographs hit a new mark, with sublime referrals to painting as a means of aesthetic expression.

Driving lonely roads on the outskirts of American cities, Hido creates poignant images filled with inexplicable gravity, cinematic scenes of places that somehow reside in our collective memory, in a paradoxical realm where sense of place and a sense of displacement co-exist. In these new pictures, Hido demonstrates his fluidity within the daytime realm, putting aside the harder edge that characterizes his night work by photographing through veils of rain or ice. Delicately, potently embracing the beauty of the pictorial, Hido's new pictures present an image plane that is often fully disintegrated, recalling impressionist painting. With an unquestionably modern affect, he often frames the compositions from inside his car, photographing straight through the windshield, using it as an additional lens and bringing the immediacy of a fleeting moment to these stationary scenes. The visionary experience he records unfolds from close, patient observation. Chance patterns of sprinkling raindrops on the windshield and sunlight breaking the shrouded sky combine to luminous yet unsettling effect.

While Hido embraces the aesthetic, he does so with a critical eye. His vision is one of austerity, of America as an empty place, evidenced by crossroads, dead-end streets, broken trees, and highways that never end. Moody and psychological, his landscapes are metaphors for personal emotions, evoking dark things that keep us awake at night. And they are, in a larger sense, a remarkable record of the American Psyche at this moment in history. In them, we find the hopeful, but possibly final, turn-off in the road before the bridge to nowhere.

TODD HIDO (b.1968, Kent, OH) is a San Francisco Bay Area-based artist who received his M.F.A. from the California College of Arts and Crafts in 1996 and his B.F.A. from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Tufts University. His photographs have been exhibited internationally, including solo exhibitions at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, and are included in numerous museum collections, including the Whitney Museum of Art, Guggenheim Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, as well as in many other public and private collections. His work has been featured in *Artforum*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Eyemazing*, *Metropolis*, *The Face*, *I-D*, and *Vanity Fair*. In 2001 an award-winning monograph of his work titled *House Hunting* was published by Nazraeli Press and a companion monograph, *Outskirts*, was published in 2002. His third book, *Roaming*, was published in 2004. His latest book, *Between the Two*, focusing on portraits and nudes, was published in 2007. He is an adjunct professor at the California College of Art, San Francisco, California

Stephen Wirtz Gallery is located at 49 Geary St., 3rd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94108, (415) 433-6879. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday, 9:30-5:30, Saturday 10:30-5:30.

For additional information please contact Julie Casemore, Tel.: (415) 433-6879, julie@wirtzgalleries.com.

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