

# STEPHEN WIRTZ GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALEC SOTH

*The Last Days of W*

Exhibition dates: January 8-February 21, 2009

Opening reception: Thursday, January 8, 2008, 5:30-7:30

Stephen Wirtz Gallery is pleased to announce *The Last Days of W*, an exhibition of photographs by Alec Soth. A visual coda to the presidency of George W. Bush, it is assembled from images made throughout the United States over the past eight years. Presenting a time that could be “either dawn or dusk,” a pervasive metaphor, Soth’s images are a poetic and politically charged expression of collective bewilderment as Americans awake to immeasurable crisis. An informal newsprint publication titled *The Last Days of W*, created and self-published by the artist, was recently released and accompanies the photographs in the exhibition.

Landscapes, portraits, and interiors collectively present a profound portrait of America, debilitated and exhausted by the legacy of our recent administration. This body of work draws from Soth’s recent editorial projects, in particular his four-part series on the decline of the American empire for *Telegraph Magazine*. Following *Niagara* (2006) and *Sleeping by the Mississippi* (2004), his acclaimed surveys of regional America, Soth has worked for various print media, photographing the mortgage crisis in Stockton, California, mothers of US Marines, and religion in the workplace. These assignments and others revealed a disfranchised nation, compelling Soth to assemble the resulting images in a manner that quietly commemorates a nation on the verge of historic transition.

ALEC SOTH (born in 1969 in Minneapolis, MN) received his Bachelor of Arts, Sarah Lawrence College in 1992, and became a full member of Magnum Photos in 2008. Exhibitions of “The Last Days of W” are taking place concurrently at Haunch of Venison gallery in Zurich and Gagosian Gallery, New York. A traveling survey exhibition “Soth: The Space Between Us,” originated at the Jeu de Paume, Paris, in 2008, and is currently on view at Fotomuseum Winterthur. Soth came to prominence with his celebrated series and monograph *Sleeping by the Mississippi*, which was exhibited at the Whitney Biennial in 2004. This work, along with his subsequent series and monographs *Niagara* (2006), *Fashion Magazine* (2007) and *Dog Days, Bogota* (2007), has been widely exhibited and represented in numerous public collections, including the Whitney Museum, the Walker Art Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the LACMA.

Stephen Wirtz Gallery is located at 49 Geary St., 3<sup>rd</sup> 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@wirtzgallery.com](mailto:julie@wirtzgallery.com).