

press release

## JAMES WELLING

**6 September – 6 October 2013**

**private view: Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September 6:30 – 8:30pm**

Maureen Paley is pleased to present James Welling's third solo show at the gallery. The exhibition will include new photographs from *Wyeth*, for which Welling travelled to Maine and Pennsylvania in pursuit of subjects and places painted by American realist painter Andrew Wyeth (1917 – 2009).

Although the project started in 2010, its origins date back to Welling's early years as an artist, when Wyeth was a major source of inspiration. In the *Wyeth* project, Welling is equally interested in the biographical significance of Wyeth's subject matter and in tracing the origins of how he came to photography. As he noted in a 2012 interview with Patricia Hickson, Emily Hall Tremaine Curator of Contemporary Art at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, the Wyeth project permitted him to uncover pictorial devices he had unconsciously adopted from the painter. The work inspired him "to look very closely at things, to be intense, to be very focused." *Wyeth*, in turn, goes beyond the straightforward question of influence, to engage with the complex relationship between the photographic image and its referent.

While several of Welling's photographs are based directly on Wyeth's tempera or watercolor paintings, other images depart from a visual resemblance to the painter's work and depict his studio and the environs where he lived and painted. Determining what was, and what was not, a Wyeth subject became a multi-layered project. Broader issues of temporality, aging, and creative renewal are evoked, while the photographs simultaneously trace Wyeth's oeuvre and open up a hitherto unexplored aspect of Welling's artistic practice.

Along with the *Wyeth* project, there will be a video projection of a recently restored 10 minute Super 8 film made by Welling in January 1971.

**Born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1951**, James Welling lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his B.F.A. and M.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California. Previously Visiting Professor at Princeton University in 2012, Welling is currently Area Head of Photography at UCLA.

Welling has exhibited widely internationally. Earlier this year a major survey exhibition, *James Welling: Monograph*, was held at the Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio accompanied by a catalogue published by Aperture. The exhibition will travel to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles in September. Future exhibitions include *James Welling: The Mind on Fire*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, (previously at the MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, England and the Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain), and a comprehensive overview at the Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland opening in November 2013.

Recent solo exhibitions include: the University Museum of Contemporary Art, UMASS Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts (2013); Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut (2012); Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota (2010); Horticultural Society of New York (2007); Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; Art Gallery of York University, Toronto (both 2002); Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Baltimore Museum of Art (all 2000); Sprengel Museum Hannover (1999); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; and the Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne, Switzerland (both 1998). Major group exhibitions include *The Pictures Generation, 1974-1984*, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2009); the Whitney Biennial (2008), and documenta IX (1992).

His work is held in major museum collections including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

For further information please contact Naomi Pearce: [naomi@maureenpaley.com](mailto:naomi@maureenpaley.com)