

Joel Sternfeld Independent 20th Century

September 24–27, 2026
The Breuer Building, New York

Rodder is pleased to announce a solo presentation of photographs by renowned artist Joel Sternfeld (b.1944, New York, NY) at the fifth edition of Independent 20th Century. For the first time, the fair will take place in New York City's iconic Breuer building, just a few blocks away from the gallery. This presentation will offer viewers insight into Sternfeld's initial exploration of color photography through a selection of small-format, dye transfer prints. Many of these images were taken during rush hour, in New York City, in some instances around the corner from the Breuer building.

In the early 1970s, when Sternfeld began exploring the nascent medium of color photography, few guiding principles had been established. In time, color theories of Bauhaus artists such as Joseph Albers and Paul Klee became important to the chromatic organization of Sternfeld's emerging work.

These six dye transfer prints (presented as a group for the first time at Independent 20th Century) embody some of the early principles with which he was working. Eventually, his study of color in the landscape facilitated his mature style, fully seen in *American Prospects*.

Simultaneously, in the mid-1970's, he was working on the streets of New York City and concerned with Time as manifest in rush hour urgency—and with the look of a slice of the American populace during a year of an uneasy Bicentennial.

Even though these photographs were the basis of Sternfeld's first Guggenheim application (submitted in the Fall of 1977 and received in the Spring of 1978), they went largely untouched in the artist's studio for 30 years while he focused on four national surveys, *American Prospects*; *Stranger Passing*; *On This Site*; and *Sweet Earth: Experimental Utopias in America*. But to this day these photographs have not been properly exhibited in New York City. This year marks both the 50th anniversary of this series and the 250th anniversary of the United States, making this presentation a rare occasion to bring these works to a New York audience. Even half a century later, these photographs continue to capture a sharp truth about life in America, and particularly in New York City.

ABOUT JOEL STERNFELD — Joel Sternfeld (b.1944, New York, NY) lives and works in New York, NY. He received his BA from Dartmouth College in 1965 and began making photographs in the 1970s. Sternfeld is regarded as a pioneer of color photography, alongside Stephen Shore and William Eggleston. His work en toto constitute a sweeping summation of the American Landscape as well as the many meanings of the American experience.

Recent solo exhibitions include 'Joel Sternfeld', Hall Foundation, Reading, VT (2025); 'Joel Sternfeld: When It Changed', Georgia Museum of Art - University of Georgia, Athens, GA (2025); 'Joel Sternfeld: On this Site', California Museum of Photography, Riverside, CA (2025). In October, Sternfeld's influential *American Prospects* series will be the focus of 'American Prospects and Landscape Photography, 1839 to Today' at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO.

Works by the artist are held in major international collections, including the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA; the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; the Museum Folkwang Essen, Germany; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Albertina, Vienna, Austria; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Fotomuseum Winterthur, Zurich, Switzerland; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, among others.