

For immediate release

Larry Silver *From the Medium to the Message, 1949-2006*

January 11, 2007 – February 17, 2007

Opening: Thursday, January 11, 6-8pm

Silverstein Photography is pleased to announce **Larry Silver *From the Medium to the Message***. Juxtaposing photo-documentary works taken in New York City and Los Angeles in the early 1950s with dark room manipulated images of human-altered landscapes shot in Iceland fifty years later, *From the Medium to the Message* bookends two disparate bodies of work by an artist who has stood witness and reacted to the evolution of photography.

Larry Silver [b.1934] began photographing the streets and subways of New York City in 1949 at the age of 15, and studied photography at the High School of Industrial Art (1949-53). The School's proximity to Peerless Camera Store enabled Silver to meet numerous members of the Photo League, including W. Eugene Smith, Weegee and Lou Bernstein. In Silver's senior year, he won first prize in the Scholastic-Ansco Photography Awards, and was granted a full scholarship to the Art Center School in Los Angeles (1954-56). During visits to the Santa Monica Beach, Silver photographed the local weightlifters, body builders, and acrobats. This celebrated series, "Muscle Beach" (1954), was the subject of a solo exhibition at the International Center of Photography in 1985, and again in 1999 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Upon moving from New York City to Westport, Connecticut in 1973, Silver began a thirty-year project that would become *Suburban Vision*. Focusing on the isolating relationship between the inhabitants and the physical landscape of an evolving metropolitan suburb, Silver's highly constructed images counterbalance the more satirical social depictions of Garry Winogrand and Bill Owens, who also worked during this period. *Suburban Vision* was exhibited at Silverstein Photography in 2002.

In 2003, after more than 50 years, Larry Silver began to move away from documentary photography and began creating a series of water abstractions. These photographs often bear little resemblance to water, incorporating natural and unnatural impurities such as pollution, bacteria, leaves, and brush. For Silver, these works were the beginning of a conceptual leap – moving away from depicting people in their environment to the effects of people on their environment.

Two years later, at the age of 70, Silver took to the road, traveling across Iceland by car seeking images balancing the pristine landscape with human encroachment. Amid the era of Photoshop manipulation, Silver, a master printer, alters the landscape of his images through experimental dark room techniques developed over his lifetime. As result, a new landscape is born. In one such image depicting footsteps in snow, Silver further pushes the boundaries of the medium by walking on the print itself.

Larry Silver, father of Bruce Silverstein, has work in over 20 museum collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Brooklyn Museum, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Yale University Art Gallery, and George Eastman House. His work was also included in the recent publication "This Was the Photo League."

Upcoming Exhibition:

Mario Giacomelli

February 22 – March 31, 2007