

# BRUCE SILVERSTEIN

For Immediate Release

## **Michael Wolf: iseeyou**

October 28 – December 24, 2010

Opening: Thursday, October 28, 6-8pm



Bruce Silverstein Gallery is pleased to present **iseeyou**, a groundbreaking and provocative exhibition by German photographer Michael Wolf. Encompassing four bodies of work—*Transparent City*, *Architecture of Density*, *Tokyo Compression*, and *Street Views*—**iseeyou** addresses the realities of 21<sup>st</sup> century metropolitan existence, one defined by constant access, vanishing privacy, and unlimited exposure.

By sampling images from Google's Street Views, Wolf's series becomes a postmodern departure from the 20<sup>th</sup> century definition of photography. Wolf creates his series from a subset of images made without human intervention, rather, by an automobile with nine mounted cameras capable of a 360° perspective, automatically recording without discrimination. Wolf's *Street View* photographs are slightly unsettling in nature, and these images press us to consider what is left of our privacy in an era when many of our actions are publicly recorded, traced, and archived.

To create *Street Views*, Wolf substitutes the camera lens for the computer screen—hunting for, isolating, cropping, and enlarging images of anonymous city dwellers captured by Google's automobile mounted Street View cameras. Wolf's deliberate and engaging compositions highlight the artist's innovative vision, reflecting a new approach to imaging our world's

most photographed cities. These beautifully composed, blown-up pixilated moments appropriated from Google's much-contested copyrighted images, depict people engaged in private or awkward moments and occasionally implicated in shocking interactions. They are a pointed commentary on the increasing ubiquitous presence of this omniscient American corporation.

His three earlier bodies of work provide a context for Wolf's Street View series and demonstrate the artist's pursuit of a new perspective on urban life in the digital age. *Tokyo Compression* is a series of images of Tokyo subway passengers crushed against the glass of a crowded train car, unable to protest Wolf's photographing them. The images are painterly and sometimes abstract in appearance, pain and discomfort marks those faces that are visible. Wolf's two best-known series, *Architecture of Density* and *Transparent City*, are large-scale, formulaic studies of Hong Kong's highly compressed, brutal concrete architecture and Chicago's pervious transparent skyline. While Wolf's flattened images of these massive structures in Hong Kong only allow the viewer to imagine the thousands of lives contained within each building, his photos of Chicago's glass skyscrapers permit the viewer to permeate the buildings' facades and arouse the voyeur in each of us. As with Street View, Wolf was drawn to those instances where people's daily lives were exposed, scouring every inch of these cityscapes for even the smallest human elements and details to drastically enlarge and complement his *Transparent City* images.

Michael Wolf was born in Munich, Germany. He grew up in the USA and studied at University of California, Berkley and at the University of Essen in Germany. He has been living and working in Hong Kong for the past 16 years. A number of books have been published on his work, which was most recently featured at the Venice Biennale for Architecture, 2010.

Displayed concurrently with **iseeyou** in the gallery's third viewing room is **CITY VIEWS: André Kertész, Curated by Michael Wolf**, featuring a selection of Kertész' New York images which share a certain voyeuristic quality and reflect the artist's sense of isolation in his adopted homeland. From the privacy of his Fifth Avenue apartment, Kertész hones his telephoto lens on anonymous city dwellers. Capturing passersby on the streets below, in the windows of adjacent buildings, sunbathing on rooftop gardens or walking in Washington Square Park, these images reveal the artist's attempt to connect and reflect.

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