

## Gregory Halpern: King, Queen, Knave

31 October- 30 November 2024



*Untitled, from the series King, Queen, Knave*

Huxley-Parlour are delighted to announce *King, Queen, Knave*, a new solo exhibition of works by American photographer Gregory Halpern, opening at our Swallow Street gallery in October 2024. The exhibition will present twenty-one photographs from Halpern's latest body of work, which he photographed over the last two decades, mostly in and around his hometown of Buffalo, New York. The series extends beyond a portrait of place, celebrating the poetic idiosyncrasies of everyday life.

Buffalo acts as a vast stage in Halpern's series, hosting a cast of people, animals and buildings that pass before the photographer's lens. At times the city feels outsized for its inhabitants: open spaces appear unvisited; a large factory looms over a solitary figure picking flowers in a meadow; snow-covered streets are left unwalked. In his photographs, Halpern reimagines the city's abandoned sites and urban landscape. Once a centre of industry, which has since migrated elsewhere, along with half its population, Buffalo has witnessed significant loss, although a quiet resilience and strange sense of beauty remain.

Eschewing the straightforward approach of traditional documentary photography, Halpern seeks to encapsulate the contradictions and nuances that coalesce in the quotidian. In his compositions, the 'ugly' and the 'beautiful' coincide: a gable-roofed house is mirrored by its abandoned counterpart that leans precariously towards it; nature reclaims the hollowed out shells of disused spaces and the mundane is transformed into the otherworldly. Time moves cyclically through the work, slowly unfolding across seasons as palettes of white and grey subside to warmer tones. Stretching time in this way, Halpern's photographs probe the slippages between entropy and renewal, discerning an inherent hopefulness in our ability for regeneration.

Halpern's series confronts the difficulties of photographing a subject that is personal and attached to memory. He states that photography 'sits in a space somewhere between truth and fiction', conferring a subjective truth as something objective. In presenting his subjects closely-cropped and exclusively in portrait orientation, Halpern decontextualises his images and complicates this singular viewpoint. Denying the viewer a more expansive plane of seeing, he records details, preferring his images to remain unresolved and, instead, open to the viewer's own narratives. In focusing on often overlooked, quiet moments, Halpern's photographs edge towards the surreal, emphasising the strangeness of fleeting vignettes and the ordinary. In one image from the exhibition, a lone white deer ushers us through a bower of branches, while in another, the word 'until' is painted bright yellow onto steps that lead somewhere out of view. In Halpern's depictions, Buffalo is transformed into a distinct world; untethered from the confines of our reality, we are invited to reach for alternative possibilities.

Halpern (b. 1977) gained a BA in History and Literature from Harvard University in 1999, and an MFA from California College of the Arts, San Francisco in 2004. His work has been the subject of numerous monographs including *A* (2001), *Harvard Works Because We Do* (2003), *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*, (2014) a collaboration with Ahndraya Parlato, *ZZYZX* (2016), *Confederate Moons* (2018), *Omaha Sketchbook* (2019), and *Let The Sun Beheaded Be* (2020). In 2014, Halpern was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and in 2016, *ZZYZX* was awarded Photobook of the Year at the Paris Photo Aperture Foundation PhotoBook Awards. Halpern is a member of Magnum Photos and is a professor of photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York. His work has been exhibited in the United States, Europe, and the United Kingdom and is held in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio and George Eastman Museum, New York.

The exhibition coincides with the publication of Halpern's latest monograph, *King, Queen, Knave*, published with MACK Books.

Gregory Halpern

King, Queen, Knave

31 October - 30 November 2024

Private view 14 November, 6–8 pm

HUXLEY-PARLOUR

3–5 Swallow Street, London W1B 4DE

Opening Hours Monday to Friday, 10:00am - 5:30pm

Saturdays, 1:30pm - 5:30pm

Entry is free

More information can be found online at [www.huxleyparlour.com](http://www.huxleyparlour.com)