

Jem Southam: *The Seventh Winter* 25th January – 4th March 2023



PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE SEVENTH WINTER BY JEM SOUTHAM

Huxley-Parlour are delighted to announce their third presentation with British photographer, Jem Southam: *The Seventh Winter*. The exhibition is the culmination of seven years photographing the same, short stretch of floodplain on the River Exe, and is testament to Southam's enduring interest in conceptual landscape photography, ritual and repetition, transition and flux.

For the past seven years, Jem Southam has returned to the same, short, 100 yard stretch of the River Exe to photograph the liminal period between sunrise and daybreak during the winter period. Arriving in darkness, Southam waits and watches as the sky brightens, observing the gradual awakening of the river's wildlife, and as each day passes, the cumulative encroach of Winter.

The Seventh Winter brings renewed meaning to the 'presence' of the photographer, the landscape's slow evolution contrasting with his ritual return. Gestative and expectant, Southam's photographs describe the 'theatre' of the landscape: 'each and every day the sculptural form of the view I am contemplating is different, and presents a quiet drama of which I am a part. The river and its immediate banks, the stage; the distant view, the surrounding trees and the sky, make up the wings and the backdrop.'

Southam's photography in particular bears witness to the subtleties of the South West of England's unique atmospheric conditions and the arrhythmic geological and atmospheric forces at play: the steady transition of the seasons, the slow evolution of the days, and the volatility and activity of the

River Exe, which floods often. Presented in emphatic series, Southam's photographs are testament to both the endurance of the landscape and the ephemerality of the riverbank: the building dawn, the ebbing and flowing of the tide, and the coming and going of waterfowl.

The works in *The Seventh Winter* are tinged with the messianic, the mists of the early dawn lending mythic presence to his photographs. For Southam, the motif of the swan evokes a European folkloric and Mediterranean imagination, these birds harboring change, transformation, and particularly the hope and renewal of each new day - the same 'renewal which our ancestors celebrated as the swans or horses pulled the chariot once more from out of the underworld'.

The exhibition runs in parallel to Jem Southam: *A Bend in the River*, at the Royal West of England Academy, Bristol, from the 28th January until the 1st May, 2023.

Born in Bristol in 1950, Jem Southam has had solo exhibitions at The Photographers Gallery, London, Tate St Ives, Cornwall and The Victoria & Albert Museum, London. His work is held in many important collections, including those of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Museum Folkwang, Essen, the Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven, and the The Victoria & Albert Museum. He is currently Professor of Photography at the University of Plymouth.

Notes to Editors

The Seventh Winter

Jem Southam

25th January - 4th March 2023

Huxley-Parlour, Swallow Street

Private View: Tuesday 24th January, 6-8pm

Huxley-Parlour, 3-5 Swallow Street, W1B 4DE

Opening hours Monday to Saturday, 10:00am - 5:30pm

Additional information can be found online at www.huxleyparlour.com