

## Field Study

of Contemporary Art Practice

# Justin Berry/the dust never settles

Essex Flowers

19 Monroe St

New York, NY 10002

September 10 – October 8



Justin Berry  
Gradient  
2013  
Inkjet on Baryta Paper  
12×15 in

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## Gallery

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## Artist/Show

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Alex Da Corte/Harvest Moon

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Alastair Mackinven/Untitled

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Chris Ofili/Paradise Lost

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Helen Johnson/Ends

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Josephine Meckseper

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Joshua Abelow and Steve  
Keister/Necropolitan Avenue

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Justin Berry/the dust never settles

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Kahlil Joseph/Shadow Play

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Kara Walker/Sikkema Jenkins and  
Co. is Compelled to present The most  
Astounding and Important Painting  
show of the fall Art Show viewing  
season!

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Letters Are T.H.I.N.G.S.

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Lisa Oppenheim/A Durable Web

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Miriam Bennani/Siham & Hafida

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Petrit Helilaj/Ru

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Pill

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Printed Matter's NY Art Book Fair

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Rachel Rossin/Peak Performance

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René Daniëls

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Susan Frecon/recent oil paintings

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Thomas Eggerer/Todd

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Torbjørn Rødland/First Abduction  
Attempt and Other Photographs

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Trevor Paglen/A Study of Invisible  
Images

Justin Berry's "the dust never settles" is a photographic series comprised of screenshots of Shah-i-Kot Valley in Afghanistan as depicted in a Call of Duty video game. This in-game location was visited in 2012, then again in 2013, and finally in 2017, and Berry claims that this action of returning has something to do with the unchanging digital space compared to real life wartime developments. That's where the commentary begins, and that's about where it ends as well. It's a decent (if simplistic and maybe revisionist of its intentions) commentary if the actual works on the wall functioned to service its claim.

On the wall, the images read aesthetically as zone system balanced black and white "vest guy" photographs. Here, there might be an interesting notion of critiquing the vest guy's preconceived notions of digital environment against formalist photography... if it was intentional. Instead, the zoned, perfect, endless depth of field compositions are simply an inherent characteristic of the video game screenshot itself.

And aside from the press release (including its contrived notions of revisiting a literally unchanged environment – the basic essential quality of the software itself), the images barely function as video game screenshots. By desaturating the image, its source is confused – cloaked in an air of missed opportunity and obscured intentionality. Thus, the existence of the screenshot itself is a punchline, only available to those in on the joke or those who spend long enough observing its details to "get it" and be disappointed.

With that being said, there are a few interesting moments in the work: the unnatural jagged

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Trigger: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon

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Wade Guyton Stephen Prina

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Wook-Kyung Choi

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The WPA (Save the NEA)

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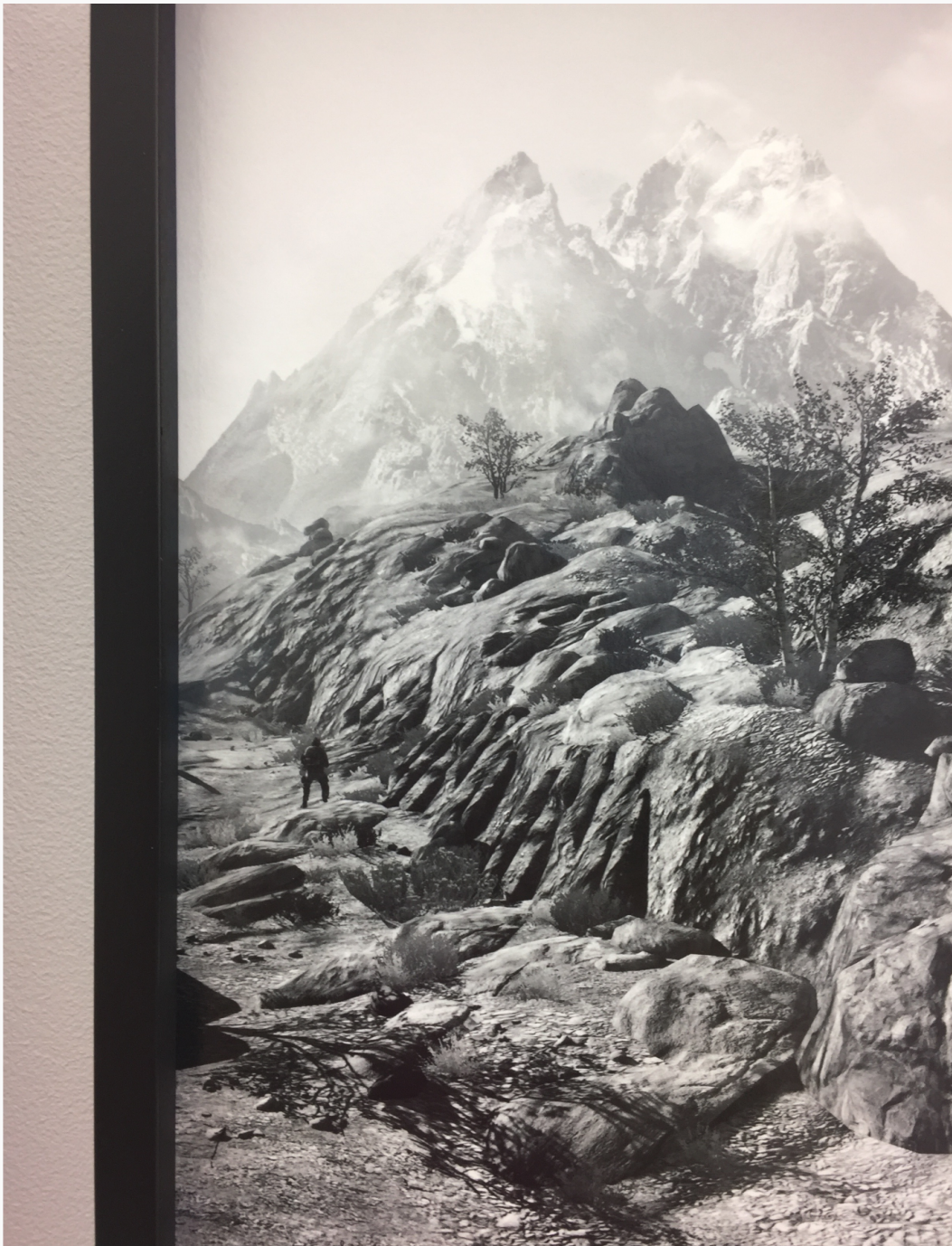


formations of the captured rocks, the all-too-crisp yet still lossy and detailless tree forms, the distant geared-up bodies and cargo trucks. These images of war sprinkled throughout the imagery give off the appearance of set dressing rather than remnants of actual conflict. And that's because that's what they were to begin with — even before Berry took the shot.



Justin Berry  
There  
2017  
Inkjet on Baryta Paper  
12×15 in

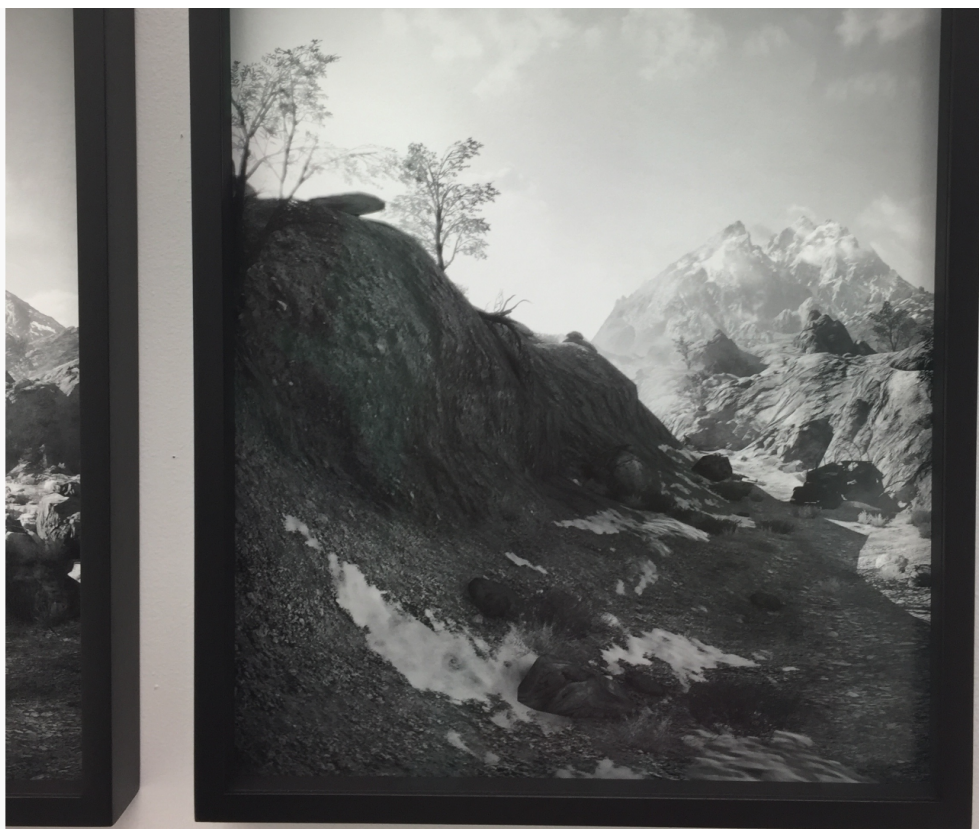




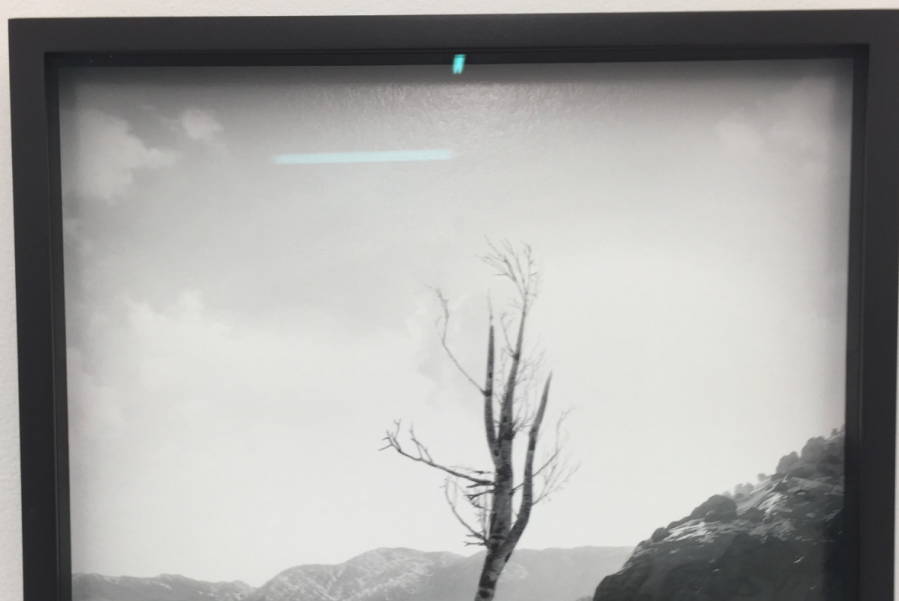
Justin Berry  
Full Cast (Detail)  
2017  
Inkjet on Baryta Paper  
12×15 in

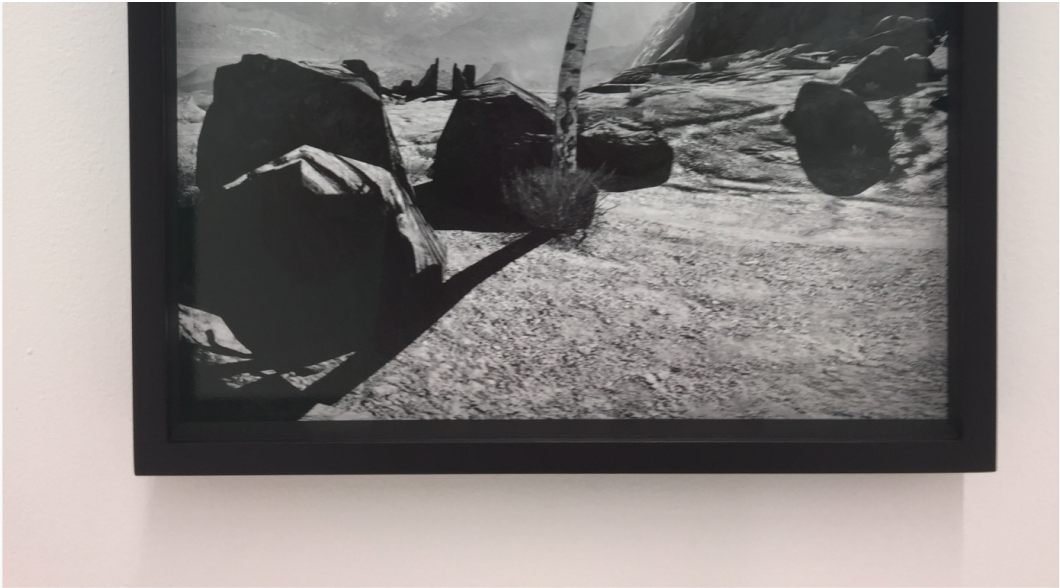






Justin Berry  
Cold Shadow  
2017  
Inkjet on Baryta Paper  
12×15 in





Justin Berry  
Spry  
2013  
Inkjet on Baryta Paper  
12×15 in

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