MICHAEL WOLF
METROPOLIS

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"Without architecture there is no remembering." -John Ruskin

Bruce Silverstein is proud to present an exhibition dedicated to celebrating Michael Wolf's life and prolific photographic legacy.

Over his 40+ year career, Wolf intimately explored architecture and urban life from Paris to Hong Kong. He examined not only building facades as art objects themselves, but also the lives within these buildings. Bodies of work such as *Architecture of Density, Transparent City, Tokyo Compression,* and *Paris Rooftops* are all explorations of the realities of 21st century metropolitan life and the constant etching away of privacy.

For Wolf, photographing was also an act of preservation. Making images was a way to remember, not only physical structures, but also the fragile social constructs that bind humans together. Structures built in the closest of proximities do not necessarily translate into close neighbors, and Wolf's work poetically captured the tensions within these physical and mental boundaries. Shot with a large-format camera, Wolf exposed private moments among the multiplexes, and reminds us that isolation can be a hallmark of city living.

Born in 1954 in Munich, Wolf grew up in the United States, Europe, and Canada. He studied at the University of California, Berkeley and at the University of Essen in Germany. In 1995, he moved to China to study China's cultural identity and the complexities of its urban architecture. He won first prize in the World Press Photo Award competition in 2005 and 2010, and was granted an honorable mention in 2011. In 2010 and again in 2016, Wolf was shortlisted for the prestigious Prix Pictet.

Wolf's work was most recently the subject of a major international retrospective exhibition, *Life in Cities,* which debuted at Les Rencontres d'Arles, France, then traveled to Fotomuseum Den Haag, The Netherlands, Fondazione Stelline, Milan, Italy, and finally to House of Photography at the Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany. His work has also been exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego; Goethe Institute, Hong Kong; Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art; Museum Center Vapriikki, Tempere, Finland; Aperture Gallery, New York and the Venice Biennale of Architecture among many others.

Wolf's work is held in the permanent collections of distinguished institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Folkwang Museum, Essen, Germany; the Brooklyn Museum; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Nelson-Atkins Art Museum, Kansas City; and the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago.

Wolf published over 20 monographs including most recently, *Michael Wolf Works* (2017), *Tokyo Compression Revisited* (2011), *Real Fake Art* (2011), *Tokyo Compression* (2010), *Hong Kong: Inside/Outside* (2009), *The Transparent City* (2008), *Hong Kong: Front Door/Back Door,* (2005), and *Sitting in China* (2002).

October 24 - December 21, 2019
Reception: October 24, 2019, 6-8pm

Back Door #2, 2006
Digital c-print
27 x 34 in. (68.58 x 86.36 cm)
Edition of 9 + 2 AP
MWO-00060-SP

Architecture of Density 101, 2008
Archival pigment print
48 x 64 in. (121.9 x 162.6 cm)
Edition of 9 + 1 AP

Installation view
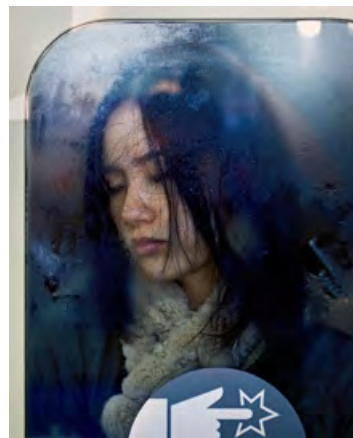
Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Les Recontres d'Arles, 2017

Architecture of Density #20, 2003
Archival pigment print
40 x 52 in. (101.6 x 132.1 cm)
Edition of 9 + 1 AP
MWO-00238-SP

Tokyo Compression, 2010
Digital c-prints
Each 10 x 8 in.

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, House of Photography at the Deichtorhallen, 2019

Tokyo Compression #55, 2010
Archival inkjet print
30 x 24 in. (76.2 x 60.96 cm)
Edition of 7 + 2 AP
MWO-00210-SP

Night #19, 2007
Digital c-print
48 x 64 in. (121.9 x 162.6 cm)
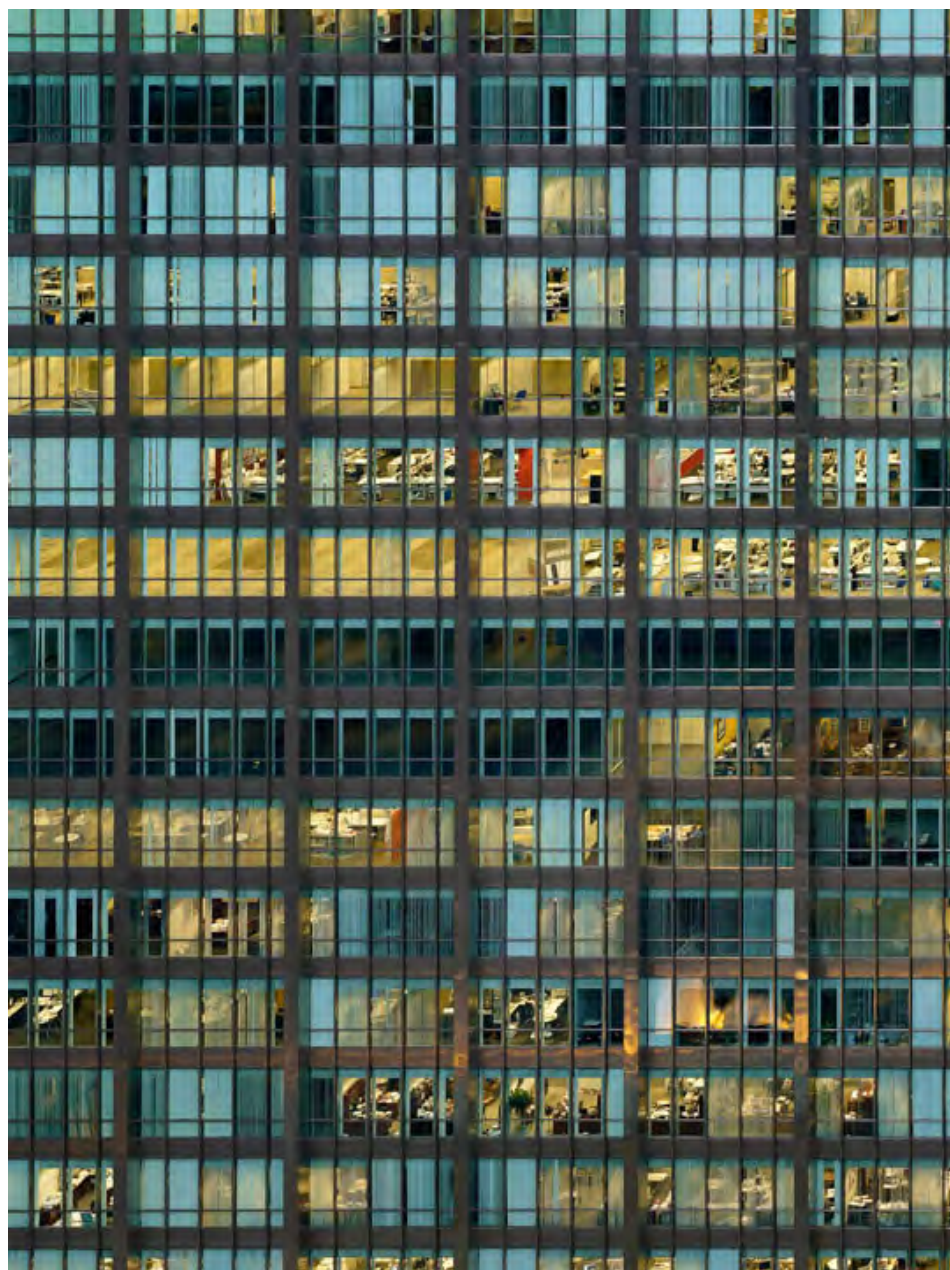Edition of 9 + 2 AP
MWO-00235-SP

By zooming in on details,
I manage to introduce a certain vernacular visual language
as well as balance the faraway with the up close.

-Michael Wolf, interview with Artforum, 2008

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Fotomuseum Den Haag, The Netherlands, 2018

Transparent City #95, 2007
Digital c-print
48 x 60 in. (121.9 x 152.4 cm)
Edition of 9 + 2 AP
MWO-00171-SP

Transparent City #12, 2007
Digital c-Print
70 x 93 1/5 in. (177.8 x 236.7 cm)
Edition of 3 + 1 AP
MWO-00162-SP

Michael Wolf, Reception for *i see you*, Bruce Silverstein Gallery, 2010

There are a lot of images which suggest a story
but you're not quite sure what story it is...
those are the images I'm interested in finding because
it just leaves a lot open for the imagination.

-Michael Wolf,
Interview with Foam Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam, 2012

Paris Street View #16, 2007
Digital c-print
48 x 60 in. (121.9 x 152.4 cm)
Edition of 3 + 1 AP
MWO-00016-SP

If you know this couple, please call: +33 465 1952. Michael Wolf

Detail
Paris Street View #16

Manhattan Street View #2, 2010
Digital c-print
40 x 50 in. (101.6 x 127 cm)
Edition of 5 + 1 AP
MWO-00065-SP

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Fotomuseum Den Haag, The Netherlands, 2018

Paris Rooftops #17, 2014
Digital c-print
48 x 68 in. (121.9 x 172.7 cm)
Edition of 9 + 2 AP
MWO-00195-SP

Michael Wolf, Paris, c. 2014

Paris Rooftops #7, 2014
Digital c-print
56 x 40 in. (142.24 x 101.6 cm)
Edition of 9 + 2 AP
MWO-00195-SP

Bottrop-Ebel, 1976

*In the case of Ebel, the photographer adopts the perspective of the
inhabitants who would like to preserve their island;
a niche where time stands still,
where the crisis in the outside world does not belong,
and where there is no more than a hint of an uncertain future.*

-Sigrid Schneider,
"Michael Wolf: Bottrop-Ebel 76", *Bottrop-Ebel,* 2012

Bottrop-Ebel, 1976

Real Fake Art #42, 2005
Gerhard Richter, $28
Archival pigment print
34 x 27 in. (86.36 cm x 68.58)
Edition of 9 + 1 AP

*Should Michael Wolf decide to regard his portrait photographs
as just one stage on the way to the final oil painting,
then these oil paintings would in the end even be originals.*

*Yet what is ultimately to be considered an authentic artwork
is something which the artist cloaks in secrecy.*

He lets the art community in search of the aura fall right into a trap.

-Boris von Brauchitsch,
"The Aura of the Copy", *Real Fake Art,* 2011

Real Fake Art #11, 2005
Ed Ruscha, $7.50
Archival pigment print
27 x 34 in. (68.58 x 86.36 cm)
Edition of 9 + 1 AP

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Fotomuseum Den Haag, The Netherlands, 2018

My Favorite Thing, 2015
Archival pigment print
10 x 8 in. (25 x 18.5 cm)
Edition of 9 + 3 AP

I see it a bit as my mission to document things in Hong Kong which are vanishing, which are disappearing, primarily through urban renewal.

-Michael Wolf, interview with *Arch Daily*, 2017

Back Door #35, 2003
Archival pigment print
27 x 34 in. (68.58 x 86.36 cm)
Edition of 9 + 1 AP

Bastard Chair #13, 2015
Archival pigment print
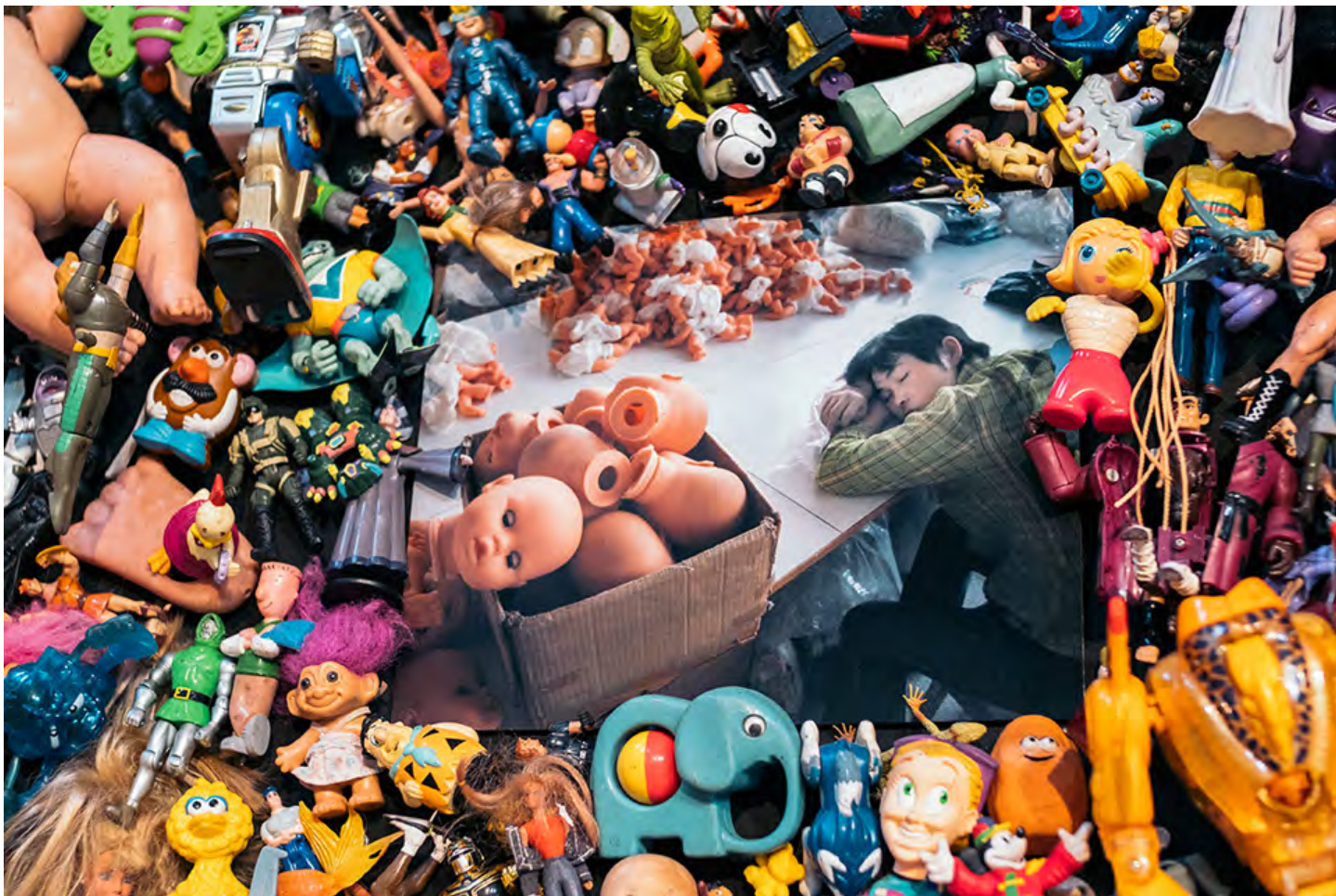34 x 27 in. (86.36 x 68.58 cm)
Edition of 5 + 1 AP

The Real Toy Story, 2007
Archival pigment print
34 x 27 in. (86.36 x 68.58 cm)
Edition of 9 + 1 AP

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Les Recontres d'Arles, 2017

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Les Recontres d'Arles, 2017

Corner House #34, 2011
Archival pigment print
27 x 30 in. (68.58 x 50.8 cm)
Edition of 7 + 2 AP

Corner Houses, an increasingly scarce specimen of the composite building genre, have now become a non-renewable species in Hong Kong's vibrant urban milieu. The predestined future of Corner Houses as a unique typology is foretold by their decreasing numbers as the city redevelops.

-Lee Ho Yin and Lynne D. DiStefano,
"Corner Delight: Hong Kong Composite Buldings of the 1950s and 1960s",
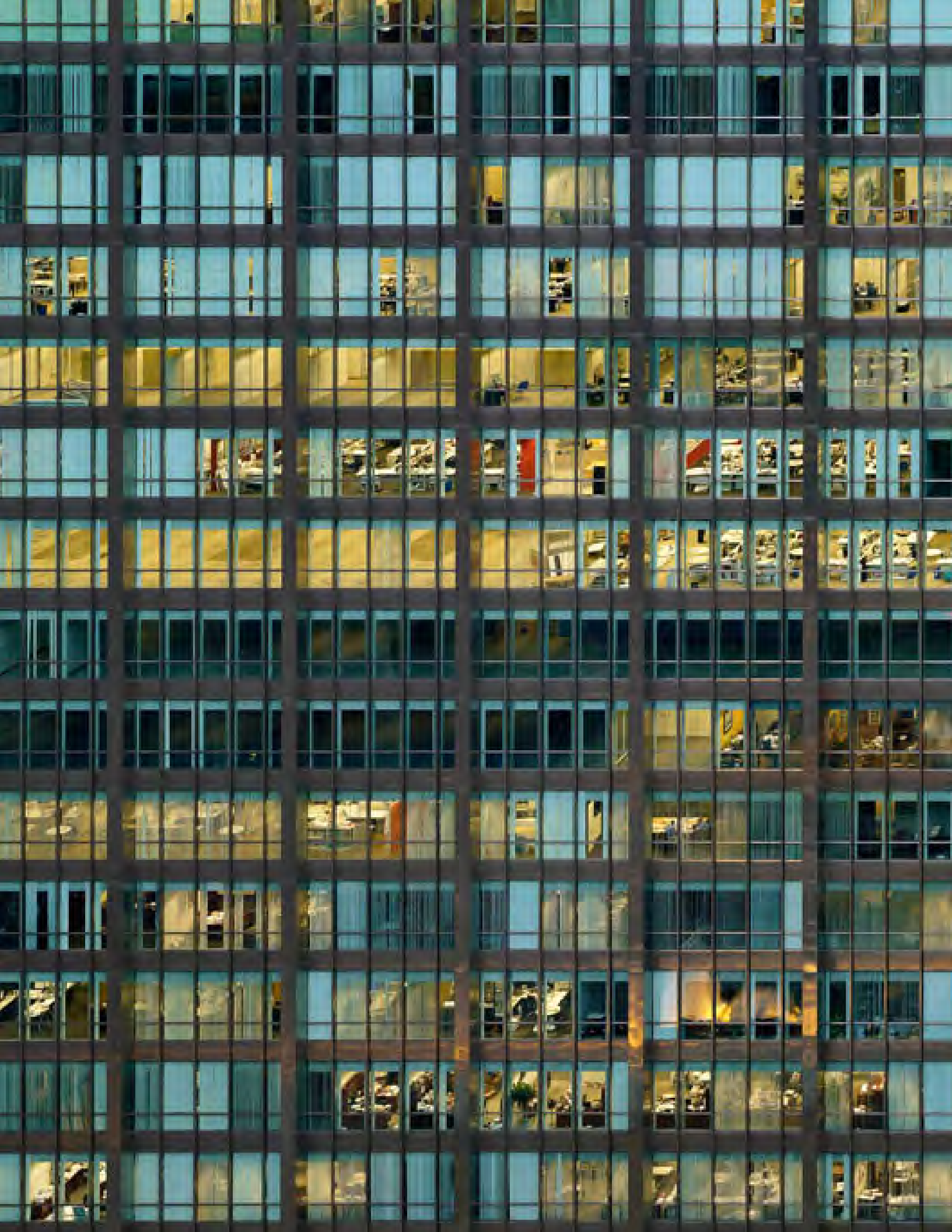*Hong Kong Corner Houses,* 2011

Installation view

Michael Wolf: Life in Cities, Les Recontres d'Arles, 2017
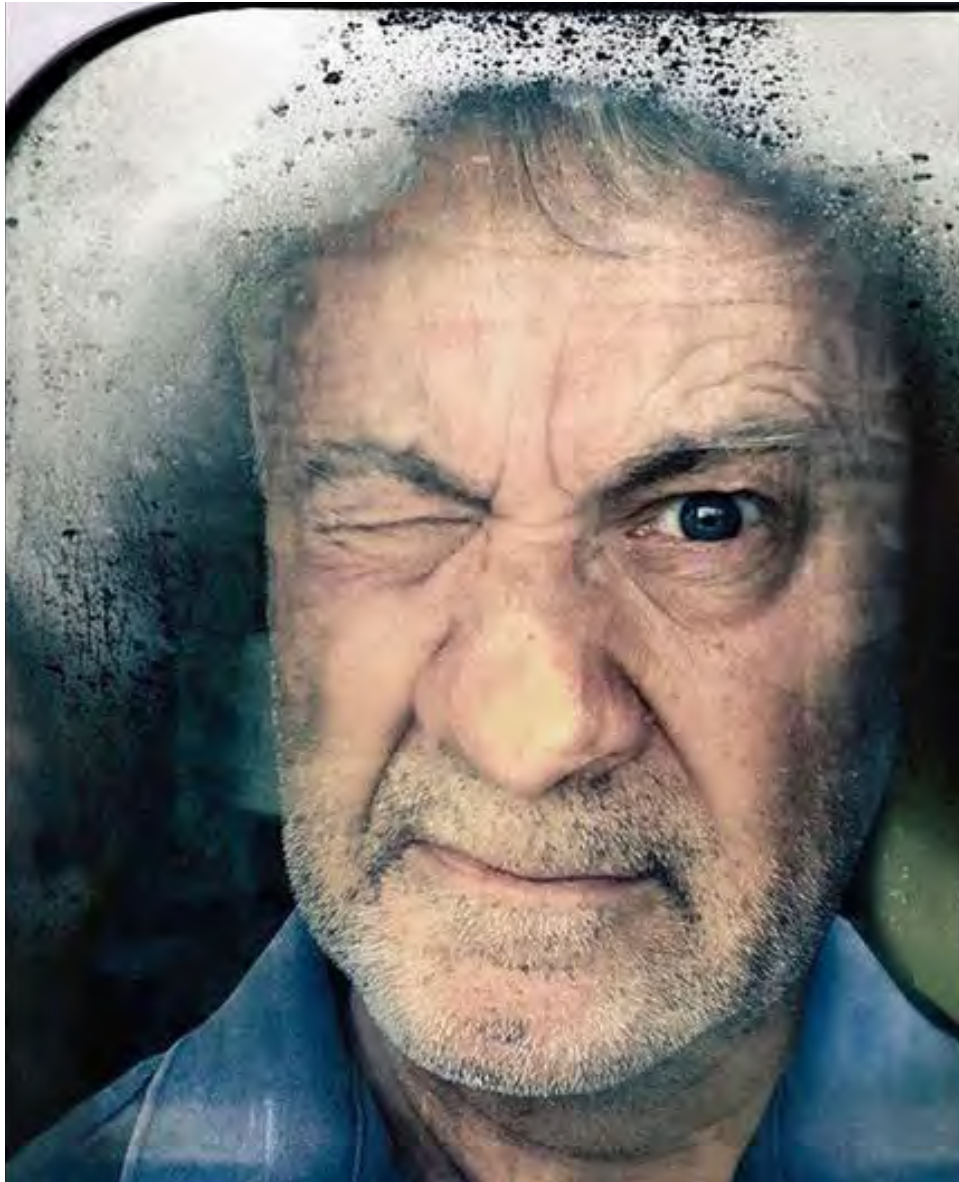
Self-portrait in Tokyo subway, 2018

In Memoriam
1954-2019

BRUCE SILVERSTEIN