

## JACK PIERSON

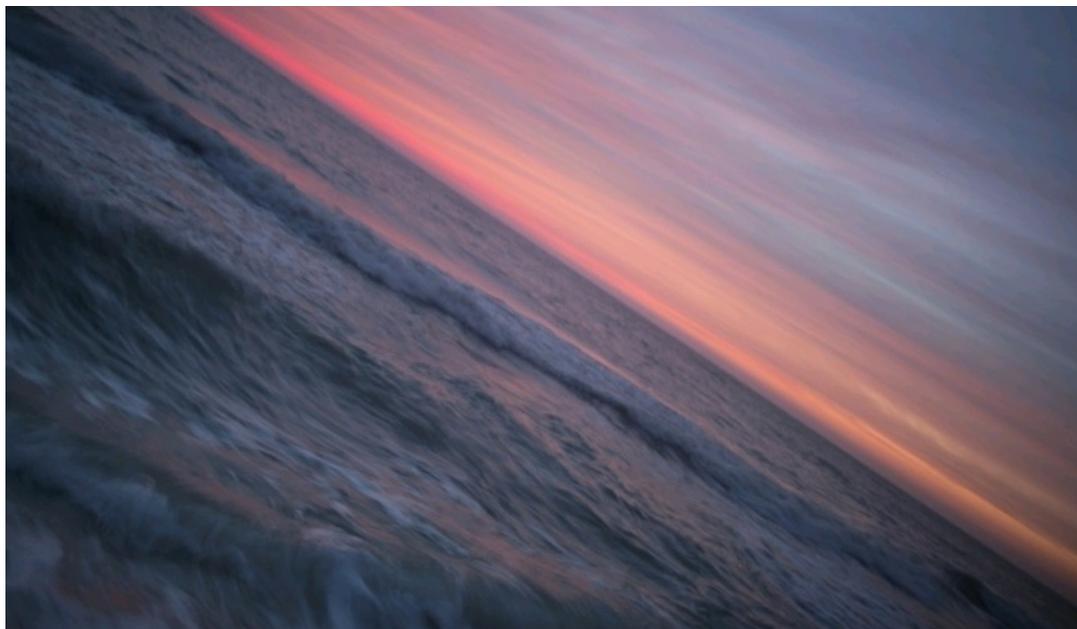
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### WALKING AROUND

PARIS PANTIN

02 Apr 2017 - 13 May 2017

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Opening: Sunday 2 April 2017: 1-5 pm

Exceptionally open on Sunday 9 April: 12 noon - 5pm

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to announce *Walking Around*, an exhibition of new photographs by American artist Jack Pierson. Jack Pierson's photographic work has often been compared to the imagery in road movies; this particular film genre has shaped our conception of the American landscape. In his most recent body of work, created on North Captiva Island, off Florida's Gulf Coast, the artist explores the emotional undercurrents of our daily lives, from the intimacy of romantic attachment to the distant idealization of escape. As he recently stated: "Most of my work is very temporary, very provisional. You can take it with you or you can leave it. Although part of what art is supposed to do is make you immortal, either by making it or owning it."<sup>1</sup>

The title evokes the idea of *Wanderlust* (the strong desire to travel), a concept strongly influenced by German Romanticism. The landscapes presented in the exhibition express the inner urge to experience nature and the world far from home.

Imbued with the nostalgia of summer, the seascapes, with their atmospheric and almost abstract qualities, trigger contemplation. Yet, they are less records of a past moment than a starting point to unravel a thread of fiction. "Pierson is more intent on reflecting the fictional rather than the documentary qualities of the medium. As such, photography becomes a medium to escape from the world, a medium for stylization and for fiction and lies. As much as the authenticity of photography is repeatedly emphasized, Pierson uses it as a means of transforming real circumstances into a state of glamour."<sup>2</sup>

Pierson's work is moored by melancholy and introspection, yet his images are often buoyed by an aura of seduction. Far from simply seeking to create traditional variations on the American Dream, the artist seeks instead to explore the flip side of the concept, searching to express what he calls "the tragedy inherent in the pursuit of glamour." Fueled by memory, obsession and absence, his subject remains, as he states, hope. Jack Pierson was born in 1960 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston in 1984. He lives and works in New York and Southern California.

His practice spans a broad range of media including wall-drawings, word-pieces, installations, drawings, paintings and photography. He is considered to be part of a group of photographers that emerged in the early 1980s known as the Boston School. This movement includes artists David Armstrong, Nan Goldin, Philip-Lorca diCorcia and Mark Morrisroe amongst others.

Jack Pierson's work is part of the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, among other museums worldwide. An exhibition of his works from the 1990s is currently on view at the Aspen Art Museum until 28 May 2017.

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Eileen Myles, *Interview Magazine*, February 2017

<sup>2</sup> Peter Weiermair, 'Photography as Fiction' in Jack Pierson, *The Lonely Life*, Edition Stemmler, 1997