

**ALTMAN SIEGEL**  
GALLERY S/F

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For Immediate Release:

**Devin Leonardi**

*SHALLOW BOWER*

May 29<sup>th</sup> - July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Opening reception May 29<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm

Altman Siegel Gallery is pleased to present the work of New York based painter Devin Leonardi. The exhibition will open on May 29<sup>th</sup> and run through July 11<sup>th</sup>.

Devin Leonardi has created a group of paintings that are based on American photographs from the 1860's through the turn of the last century. Each of these photos is a portrait, selected for its ability to depict an intimate view of the past that is also rich with the symbols that make American history legible. Because they provide all the details of a world that has vanished, old photographs offer evidence of both what we've lost to time and what we've gained from previous generations. In order to strengthen this link to the past, Leonardi works to change these representations from mere symbols to something with more than emblematic weight.

Using acrylic on paper, Leonardi transforms these images by combining two photographs or editing one down to its essential forms. With a limited palette of black, blue, violet and green the subjects are re-situated among the cool shades of night. Moving out of the bleached light common to old photographs, the paintings glow with the gentle radiance of moonlight and dawn. This is the kind of light that evades capture by the camera. By re-imagining these old black and white images amid the colors of night, Leonardi looks to make the frozen photograph more vibrant and real. He balances them between the vastness of a landscape lost in time and the close gaze of the camera that has preserved their likeness. In order to heighten this sense of transience, Leonardi has chosen pictures in which people move freely through a landscape still relatively unbound by industrialization.

Leonardi highlights an atmospheric impression of history by representing the nostalgia that colors our view of the past. This longing makes the past appear forever out of reach. Nurturing the awareness that the past lies just beneath the surface of the present, Leonardi works to provide a vision not so much of the world we have lost, but the one we have inherited.

Devin Leonardi has had several exhibitions at the former New York gallery, Guild and Greyshkul. His work is in prestigious collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY. This is his first exhibition in San Francisco.

For further information please contact the gallery at 415-576-9300 or [info@altmansiegel.com](mailto:info@altmansiegel.com).