

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

John Divola: *Three Acts*

November 30 – December 23, 2006



The Charles Cowles Gallery is pleased to announce our second exhibition of **JOHN DIVOLA's** work. From the series *Vandalism*, *LAX NAZ* and *Zuma*, these images represent some of the earliest photographs within **DIVOLA's** oeuvre in which the artist enters abandoned or condemned buildings and photographs the wreckage therein. Coming of age in Los Angeles in the 1970s, **DIVOLA's** first contact with art – both traditional and avant-garde – was through reproduction. Slide presentations in an art history class or ads in Artforum were his first introduction to classic masterpieces as well as performance art happening in New York and the earth works being produced in the desert. He came to think of art as existing only to be photographed and went on to make his *Vandalism* series spray painting site-specific, crude works with the cheapest materials available and then by photographing it apotheosizing them into ART.

In a subsequent series *LAX NAZ* (Los Angeles Airport Noise Abatement Zone) he discontinues his interaction with the space, but instead documents the forced entries by others into the houses that have been abandoned to make way for parking lots around LAX. He documents their actions used to get into the houses as appropriated performances. However, he revisits painting, this time in color, in his *Zuma* series where he enters a lone vacant house on Zuma Beach many times over the course of a year. The ocean viewed through the broken windows plays counterpoint to the painted and charred interior of the house that in between **DIVOLA's** sessions there was used for practice by the local fire department. Through the mechanics of photography **DIVOLA** truly reveals the nature of his subject, the stark flash of the camera lays bare all that is painted, in motion and burned against the background of ocean waves at sunrise or sunset.

JOHN DIVOLA has been professor at the University of California, Riverside since 1988. Over the last thirty years his work has been featured in more than fifty solo exhibitions in the United States, Japan, Europe, Mexico, and Australia. He was awarded National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships in 1973, 1976, 1979, 1990, and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship in 1986. His work is included in major public collections including Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Getty Museum, Los Angeles, California; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California; and Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland.

Three Acts, a monograph with an essay by David Campany and interview with the artist by Jan Tumlir, is available (Aperture Foundation, 141 pages, \$50).

The exhibition will be on view at the Charles Cowles Gallery at 537 West 24th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues in Chelsea. Hours are 10am- 6pm, Tuesday through Saturday.

For further information or photographs, please contact the gallery.