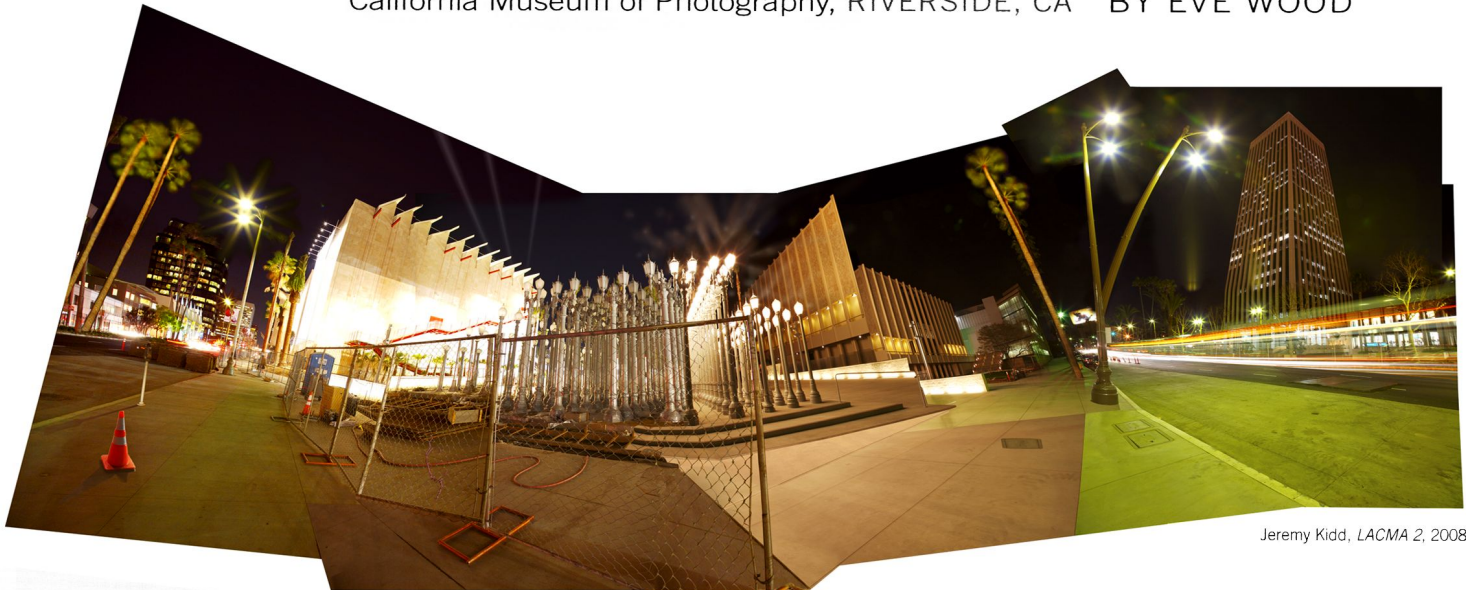


JEREMY KIDD: HYPER ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGIES

California Museum of Photography, RIVERSIDE, CA BY EVE WOOD



Jeremy Kidd, LACMA 2, 2008

Much like the Futurist architect Antonio Saint Elia, photographer Jeremy Kidd ascribes to the manifesto of technological triumph, espousing a love of speed, light and pure architectural forms. Kidd's newest exhibition, wryly entitled "Hyper Architectural Typologies," investigates beauty on a grand scale, displacement and constructivism. Choosing urban scenes as his subjects, he employs several different elements including time-lapse photography, panoramic vantage points and computerized alterations to create a spectacle of light and form. As with the Futurists, Kidd's images defy imagination on many levels simultaneously, yet retain a close approximation of reality that both confounds and amazes. His "hyper modernist constructions" invite the viewer in while making it all too clear that one would have to defy gravity and the basic laws that govern our universe to realize these worlds as factual and real, yet the seduction is impossible to resist.

Seeking the "truth" within any photographic image, whether manipulated or not, is always a dubious undertaking in that every image functions firstly as what it appears to be on the surface, and secondly as an extension of the viewer's own psyche. Kidd is keenly aware of the process by which an image is consumed, manipulated and ultimately understood, and these images mirror the process by which the viewer sees them. It is a multi-layered effect that defies the quick and easy answer, and instead embraces the various inherent complications that follow the act of seeing, which can at times be fractured and mysterious.

Kidd utilizes color and motion to achieve a divine sort of hysteria within the image. Works like *LACMA 2* appear nearly interactive in that the image breaks the traditional picture plane, coming

forward in space and time. The fence becomes both a border framing the image as well as an intrusion bisecting the landscape. Kidd began by making a series of photographs of the LACMA construction site, starting a week before the completion of the site on the left and the day of the completion on the right. He recorded the transition of time and the evidence of construction. We see un-poured areas of molding waiting for cement; the detritus of building materials and tools, glorified in their photographic arrest. While the un-lit portion of Chris Burden's light sculpture is on the left-hand side, it is shown ablaze on the right-hand side. But Kidd has also taken architectural license into his own hands by sliding a façade of the old LACMA structure up into the air, perhaps feeling a need for its modernization in reference to the Broad's new sister building.

Kidd reconstructed these images into a strangely disorienting space that reflects both the literal nature of the surroundings as well as the psychic and psychological resonances that exist within the space. The fence at once keeps the viewer out while also allowing for a break in the scene where the viewer can enter and leave at will.

These are strange brave new worlds that have an anthropomorphic presence, transforming into "autonomous spaces, disorienting constructions, and dramatic expressionistic cityscapes" all at once. Kidd marries the camera's discreet objectivity with the subjectivity of personal vision where these images then become "romanticized environments leavened by actual observation." In *Chrysler 2*, Kidd sustains a nearly overwhelming narrative of communication, light, shape, shade

and shadow. In this image, the heavens appear to have parted, and perhaps an occasional angel or two has made its way down to earth infiltrating one of the gorgeously lit buildings for celestial communion. In the foreground is a concrete catwalk that could very well lead into the rest of the city. Kidd suggests here that despite their shape-shifting, and the insanely claustrophobic terrain, these buildings are sound, perhaps even welcoming, and that there is still a way to get back home.

Kidd implies a narrative, albeit fractured and mysterious, in each of these works. In the work *Exploratorium 1*, the body of water at the center of the picture plane could be a moat leading into a castle, or a picture postcard directly sprung from the Renaissance. Kidd conflates history through the manipulation of images creating a verifiable psychological space.

Other works by Kidd are less mythic in tone, and more obviously modernist, opening out into multiple causeways, highways and jetties, all of which seem to lead into a futuristic space in the far distance. *Times Square 1* is another work that propels the viewer, in Oz-like fashion, down a newly hybridized road. As with "LACMA" series, this piece concerns itself with time and the evolution of shifting light. It was shot over a week, both at night and day, then reconstructed over the period of a year. The work encompasses multiple viewpoints with every angle of "Time Square" represented. There is a sense that a year's worth of light, form and perspective is being experienced in a simultaneous visual cacophony. Clearly this is no place for little Dorothy and her dog Toto. She might very well get lost in the richly contextualized hubbub of city life, but she would certainly never get back to Kansas. ■