

Silvio Wolf: *Us*

January 10th – February 16th, 2013



Bruce Silverstein Gallery is pleased to present *Us*, a site-specific installation by the artist Silvio Wolf. For the past twenty years, Wolf has explored the limits of photographic representation through an interest in the abstract, the fleeting, the visible and invisible, challenging the indexical nature of the photograph and questioning our notion of self. This installation, designed as a cohesive experience for the viewer, is comprised of the artist's newest works—his first images to depict the human figure.

Signaling the entrance to a show for and about 'us', a photographic mural of two figures passing through a curtain covers the rounded wall defining the entrance to the gallery. This piece guides the viewer toward a room of mirrored portraits reduced to positive and negative shapes, the viewer's image reflecting onto a grid of unidentifiable faces. A final reflective portrait shows a shadowy, abstract self-portrait of the artist created by photographing himself reflected in another artwork. Wolf's latest series, *Us*, displayed in the main gallery, consists of larger-than-life sized images of the silhouettes of gallery goers as viewed by the artist through the opaque frosted-glass windows of Chelsea galleries. These scroll-like images of elongated walkers take on an ephemeral yet iconic status at this scale, inverted shadows of what they depict. Lastly, the viewer encounters a darkened space illuminated by black, backlit chromogenic mirrors—photographs that have become black mirrors after layering an innumerable number of exposures. These works radiate a sound component: children's voices reciting names—potentially the viewer's own. It is the viewer's presence, his/her reflection in the mirrored surfaces or absorption of the sound emitted that forms a crucial, ever-changing component of these images and drives Wolf's interest in art making. Wolf's works are thresholds, spaces of presence and absence where light and information pass that are designed for us to interpret and incite with meaning.

Silvio Wolf (b.1952) lives and works in Milan and New York. He studied philosophy and psychology in Italy and photography and visual arts in London, where he received the Higher Diploma in Advanced Photography at the London College of Printing. He has had numerous exhibitions of his work in the United States and abroad. Notably his work was included in *Aktuell* (1983), *Documenta VIII* (1987), and in 2009 at the 53rd Venice Biennale. His most recent solo exhibition was held in 2011 at Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan. Wolf teaches photography at the European Institute of Design in Milan, and is a visiting professor at the School of Visual Arts, New York.