

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: Lynne Cohen *Occupied Territory* 1971 – 1988

Date: November 10 – December 8, 2012

For the first time since its 1988 debut in New York at P·P·O·W, Higher Pictures presents the exhibition *Occupied Territory, 1971 – 1988* by Lynne Cohen. The show will include a selection of vintage, 8 x 10 inch contact prints (not originally exhibited) and early, 30 x 40 inch gelatin silver prints.

Lynne Cohen has been photographing environments we have built for ourselves (family rooms, offices, and laboratories) since the early 1970s. Cohen is driven by the question: What are these places without people in them? Curator Britt Salvesen writes:

Although Cohen's photographs never include human beings, they are clearly about human behavior and our compulsion to observe it under controlled circumstances. This is a key implication of Cohen's title, *Occupied Territory*: her photographs mark out spaces populated by the viewer's imagination rather than physical bodies. ("Real people have no place in these rooms," remarked William Ewing.¹) We see more than is actually there; we see ourselves. This shock of recognition was unsettling when the photographs were newly made. It is even more uncanny to inspect these same rooms twenty five-years later, convinced they still exist, unchanged, and wondering what other tricks time is playing on us. Comparing the interpretive possibilities for Cohen's photographs at two points in time, we can pause – if only momentarily – the ceaseless flow of art-world trends and critical vocabularies; social, economic, and political concerns; and ever-evolving cognitive habits. In such an exercise, the images in *Occupied Territory* are fixed in their formal perfection, but capable of carrying various meanings. The more things change, the more they stay the same.²

The exhibition accompanies the reissue of *Occupied Territory* by Lynne Cohen, published by Aperture in 1987 and 2012.

Born in Racine, WI, Lynne Cohen currently resides in Montreal, Canada. She has had major exhibitions in Canada and France accompanied by books (*Lost and Found, No Man's Land, Camouflage and Cover*) as well as numerous one-person shows in the US, Germany, France, Spain, Cuba, Switzerland, Belgium and Austria. New publications in 2012 include *Nothing is Hidden* by Steidl and Aperture's reprint of *Occupied Territory*.

For further information contact Kim Bourus at 212.249.6100.

¹ William A. Ewing, "Lynne Cohen: Room Reading," *Aperture*, no. 106 (spring 1987), p. 24. Brian O'Doherty said much the same about the modern gallery space in 1976; see *Inside the White Cube* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p.15

² Britt Salvesen, "Speaking to the Present: The Early Photographs of Lynne Cohen," in Lynne Cohen, *Occupied Territory* (New York: Aperture, 2012).