



PRESS RELEASE

TODD HIDO. BRIGHT BLACK WORLD

15 September - 17 November 2018

"It's been said that Inuits have many words to describe white. As the polar snow caps melt faster than we ever imagined, I wonder how long it will be before we have as many words to describe darkness." -- Todd Hido

Reflex Gallery is thrilled to present *Bright Black World*, a new exhibition by celebrated American photographer Todd Hido. This profoundly beautiful and arresting collection of 18 images – many of them unseen – are the results of Hido's exploration of the northern hemisphere in the impenetrable depths of winter. The realities of climate change lurk behind in these images – the threat of an eternal darkness looming large.

In a crepuscular forest scene, it is uncertain whether the faint blush of sun behind the strident firs is setting or rising. Dawn and sunset are one and the same in midwinter – the light bleeding through the clouds for a mere hour or so and then fading.

Above the leaden horizon of the Norwegian Sea, grey clouds billow and spiral into mysterious forms. In another image of land and sky, the heavy snow clouds bear down like a safety blanket.

A series of epic snowy vistas, devoid of human presence, are magisterial in their desolate beauty. Burrs of snowflakes cling to the camera lens.

Two starkly beautiful portraits of women remind us that this terrain is nevertheless home to some. In other scenes, streetlights, motel signs and a cemetery remind us of the life cycle of a community for whom the hardship of winter is rewarded by the endless light of summer.

After *Intimate Distance*, Hido's 2016 mid-career survey which explored his childhood in the United States, he felt ready to explore new horizons: "Having closed that chapter I was very open to shooting in different places. I followed the snow. There I began anew and was able to make a larger reflection about the times that we live in which clearly needs to be done on a global scale

Not just a political statement, *Bright Black World* is infused with Nordic mythology, Ragnarok, and the idea of *Fimbulwinter* – a winter that never ends.

These images fill the viewer with unease while simultaneously a profound sense of wonder. A vision, as Hido says, that "pushes the envelope of darkness". While he hopes these photographs will lead to some greater insight into the changing world that we live in, while providing the motivation and a moment to reflect on how we got here, he invites us to come to our own conclusions. "As an artist, my job is not to create meaning but to charge the air so that meaning can occur."

Bright Black World runs from September 15 to November 17 at Reflex Amsterdam. A special book of images, also titled *Bright Black World*, published by Nazraeli Press, will be presented at Unseen Photo Fair, 21-23 September 2018. A limited edition of two prints, and a copy of the book will be available at Reflex.