



PRESS RELEASE

Grey Crawford

Finding Bones

Opening: 28 April 2017, 6 – 9 pm
Exhibition: 29 April – 24 June 2017

Finding Bones is more than just the introduction of a newly rediscovered body of work by Grey Crawford. It's an anthology of photographs that embody the creative spirit that was prevalent throughout the Los Angeles art scene at the time. Southern California in the early 1970's was an island of its own creation. A mixture of surf and sea, concrete highways winding around an ever-changing cultural climate that was challenging our assumptions of what art is. It was a moment of new beginnings in various medias. The Light and Space movement combined with Performance and Ceramic art ushered in a fresh rawness to a seemingly tired media lending artists new age materials and issues to fuel their innovative experimentations. With the commercial realities lagging far in the rear of their creative counter parts, artists found themselves in a position not to compromise their artistic integrity for the hope of selling something that wouldn't happen anyway. Conventional means for evaluating art no longer mattered as there was no script to follow. It was a time hiccup the art world would feel forever.

Los Angeles is a city with a sprawling suburban outlay that seemingly stretches forever. In its far eastern sector it hosts a small but culturally important city called Claremont. Home to five colleges and a graduate school it has been a mecca for artists of all disciplines since the 1920's. This is where I first met Grey Crawford who we commonly call "Bones" as we were both growing up in this liberal thinking community eventually reuniting while attending the Claremont Graduate University. However small the town might be, it was wealthy with former professors and alumni that included the hard edge painters John McLaughlin and Karl Benjamin. Both were considered locals and it wasn't unusual to see their paintings hanging in neighbourhood homes. Crawford who grew up with Benjamin's children was exposed to these various shapes and forms at early age and absorbed them into his subconscious.

This is most evident in Crawford's early black-and-white photographs that combine Benjamin's sense of construction with McLaughlin's zen-like capacity for reduction. By using the darkroom as his palette, Crawford chooses his selected backgrounds with a Lewis Baltz like sense of austerity as a means for introducing these hard edge shapes and using them as the building blocks for his own language.

Sometimes we find what we don't expect in the most unlikely places. As a boy I used to dig in my own backyard searching for buried treasures that I only dreamed were there. After forty years of searching, I finally found my "Bones."

Timothy Persons