

# william wylie

## carrara

november 6 – december 6, 2008

### Jenkins Johnson Gallery

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Hours: Tuesday-Friday 10-6p; Saturday 10-5p



#01-83, Carrara, 2006, archival digital pigment print, edition 15, 29 x 36

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Jenkins Johnson Gallery announces a solo exhibition of acclaimed photographer William Wylie's latest series, *Carrara*, for which he was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship to continue exploring in 2005. An opening reception for the artist will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, Thursday, November 6, 2008.

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A photograph from the *Carrara* series by William Wylie appears immediately straightforward yet subtly complex. Striking 'portraits' of large marble blocks freshly excavated from the legendary Carrara quarries in Italy look at us as if to tell their own story. Formed and cut from the steep cliffs with simple machinery and human ingenuity, the presence of these massive rocks looms before us, forcing the viewer to try and comprehend the sheer scale and magnitude of the subject as well as understand what it is they are seeing. The observer is confronted with the same raw materials that built the Pantheon, exposed Michelangelo's genius and peer at us now as if to present itself all over again in the minimalist beauty of a raw, and as yet, unrefined object.

Wylie has captured an immense amount of detail in his photographs and the subtle yet extensive value gradations bring a painterly tone to the prints. Angles and edges contrast with shadows and lines throughout the *Carrara* series, adding dynamism and depth to the subject's flat surfaces. Textures and patterns play with balance and weight as these elements evolve into the complex structure of the image. While Wylie's *Carrara* work has certain visual connections to critic Clive Bell's view that "form creates an aesthetic experience", formal properties alone cannot account for the strength of Wylie's images. There is a strong connective narrative to the land and the workers that is indivisible from these images. The human presence in the marble block photographs is not obvious but neither is it concealed.

The lingering effect of these photographs is the sublime. Wylie's untitled blocks transcend beyond the grasp of the ordinary and allow the viewer to see into the history of the world, both geologically and culturally, from its building blocks. The sublime is presented to us not through a vast expansive vista but through a much more startling and physical display, one that the viewer must confront in consideration of the inexplicable objects of William Wylie's *Carrara*.

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William Wylie is a professor of art at the University of Virginia. In 2005, he was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship for his work in the Carrara, Italy marble quarries. Additional awards include: The Center for Land Use Interpretation Artist Residency, City of Denver Public Art Commission, UVA Mead Honored Faculty Award, Colorado Book Award, and the Kodak Professional Development Grant. Wylie has had solo exhibitions at Second Street Gallery, Charlottesville, VA; Page Bond Gallery, Richmond, VA; University of Virginia Art Museum, Charlottesville, VA; Foiano Fotografia, Foiano, Italy; Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO; The Print Center, Philadelphia, PA; Colorado Center for the Book, Denver, CO; and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC. Moreover, he has been included in group shows at: Amon Carter Museum, Ft. Worth, TX; Museum of Contemporary Art, Ft. Collins, CO; The Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ as well as others. He is featured in the collections of: Amon Carter Museum, Ft. Worth, TX; Capitol One Corporation, Richmond, VA; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, IL; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO; and Yale University Art Museum, New Haven CT.