

## Paul Graham

### The Seasons

February 28 – April 11, 2020

510 West 25th Street

New York

Opening Reception:

Thursday, Feb 27

6–8 PM



Images: Paul Graham, *SPRING (missing)*, *J.P. Morgan Chase, 270 Park Avenue*, 2018 © Paul Graham; Paul Graham, *Untitled*, From *Sightless*, 2005 © Paul Graham

New York — Pace Gallery is honored to present an exhibition of two bodies of work by Paul Graham: one recent and one vintage, never before exhibited. Marking our first photography presentation since Pace/MacGill merged with Pace Gallery, this large exhibition will be the third solo show of Graham’s photography at the gallery since joining in 2011. *The Seasons* will be on view from February 28 through April 11, 2020 at 510 West 25th Street with an opening reception held on Thursday, February 27.

The main gallery space features *The Seasons*—six large format photographs made in homage to Pieter Bruegel’s iconic works after which the series is titled. Commissioned in 1565 and depicting rural life in Northern Europe, Bruegel’s series consisted of a suite of six paintings spread across the year. At that time the seasons were divided into paired months, thus having six. Bruegel’s works, including *Hunters in the Snow*, *The Harvesters*, and *The Gloomy Day*, are some of the best-known paintings in the world.

Inspired by the financial crisis, Graham began photographing the major US bank headquarters on Park Avenue. After a year, he began to sense a connection between his images, with their panoply of activity spread across sidewalks and courtyards, to Bruegel’s iconic images. This inspired him to create his own *Seasons*, exchanging peasant life in 16th century Flanders for the finance world of 21st century New York.

Like all of Graham’s work, these photographs are direct from life—they are not staged or Photoshop composites. Each image in *The Seasons* examines the briefest fractions of time, just 1/1000th of a second, where humanity is revealed mid-step, walking, eating, talking, laughing, and gesturing. The photographs are large, and though made using the simplest of technique—a single exposure with a handheld camera—they are mesmerizing in their detail and color.



In the smaller gallery, Graham will show *Sightless*, a never exhibited series of portraits made fifteen years ago on 42nd Street, New York. In these images, each individual has their eyes closed whether from walking into low afternoon sunlight, from a musical trance, or simply a random blink. Inverting the convention of portraiture by embracing what would normally be rejected, Graham presents us with photographs of people walking through the city sightless. Embedded in deep Plexiglas mounts, these images continue an ongoing engagement throughout Graham's work with blindness both metaphorically and literally. He himself lost his sight in a childhood accident, before regaining it a few months later.

Graham embraces the artistic provocation inherent in both works: in choosing what would normally be rejected in the *Sightless* series, we see people not seeing; and in *The Seasons* his work transposes straight photography for studiously composed painting, contemporary life for historical longing, and clear eyed reality for wistful romanticism.

**Paul Graham** (b. 1956, United Kingdom) has played a fundamental role in fostering a new school of photography, connecting the perceived fissures between photography, cinematography, and contemporary art. Traditionally, black-and-white was considered the realm of art photography, while color was reserved for commercial and vernacular photography. At the beginning of his practice in the late 1970s, Graham's adaptation of color photography was considered a radical approach, marking a defiance of the unwritten rules of engaged photography and its conventions. Over the past four decades, Graham has travelled widely, photographing the texture of life to produce bodies of work in distinct series that are thought-provoking, informative, and conceptually compelling.

**Pace** is a leading contemporary art gallery representing many of the most significant international artists and estates of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Under the leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace is a vital force within the art world and plays a critical role in shaping the history, creation, and engagement with modern and contemporary art. Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy for vibrant and dedicated relationships with renowned artists. As the gallery approaches the start of its seventh decade, Pace's mission continues to be inspired by a drive to support the world's most influential and innovative artists and to share their visionary work with people around the world.

Pace advances this mission through its dynamic global program, comprising ambitious exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances and interdisciplinary projects through Pace Live, and curatorial research and writing. Today, Pace has seven locations worldwide: two galleries in New York—including its newly opened headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street—as well as galleries in Palo Alto, London, Geneva, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

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