

UCSD's UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION EXTENDED UNTIL JANUARY 10, 2004

Mario Algaze: Cuba 1999-2000 In Residence: The Photographs of Stéphane Couturier and Edward Burtynsky

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Cuban-born photographer **Mario Algaze** identifies with the spiritual essence of Latin America by distilling it through the scenes of everyday life. His photographs pay respect to the magical light in which he shoots and capture the essence of what it is to live in the Latin world. His photographs **Cuba: 1999-2000** are on view in the gallery.

"Sometimes, refugees in exile never shed the yearning for their homeland," says Neil Kendricks in an October 23 San Diego Union Tribune review. "As a photographic diary of Algaze's brief visit back to Cuba, these pictures offer the visually rich bounty of an artist returning to his roots with a fresh perspective discovered behind his camera's viewfinder."

Algaze has developed his version of "magic realism," a combination of both the real and the surreal, from studying the images of legendary photographer Manuel Alvarez Bravo and from reading the works of several of Latin America's eminent writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Octavio Paz, and Carlos Fuentes. Although his photographs contain the people that he sees, Algaze's subjects are more often the environment surrounding the people. Overall, Algaze's images are peaceful, as the artist prefers to catch a moment filled with quiet contemplation, eschewing the bustle of industry or the terrors of guerilla fighters. Algaze is able to achieve an order and harmony in his photographs by paying respect to the light in which he shoots.

"The most important ingredient in my photographs is a very early morning light, a magical light, which on most days only allows you about an hour to work," states Algaze "so you'd better be keen and able to identify that light. Wait until midday, and landscape is so drenched by the sun that subtle expressiveness and dark, long shadows are lost. Drenching it is an overkill. It doesn't give you that feel of profundidad-it doesn't give you depth."

Born in Havana, Cuba in 1947, Algaze moved to Miami in the 1960's as a teenager. His career has since consisted of documenting the life and mood of the streets and surrounding countryside of Panama, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, and Mexico.

Also on view in the gallery is the work of **Stéphane Couturier** and **Edward Burtynsky** who were in-residence at the University Art Gallery. "With their respective large-scale prints," continues Kendricks, "these photographers scrutinize oil fields and the bland façade of cookie-cutter housing tracts where life seems to be absent."

French photographer Stéphane Couturier spent one month photographing the urban landscapes of San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico at the invitation of the Gallery in November of 2001. Fascinated with areas in the process of transformation and cities that possess a strong architectural and cultural history, Couturier comments, "these new large-scale color prints challenge the viewer to identify layers of history, the meaning of architecture as monument, and the impact of urban sprawl on the surrounding natural environment. The multi-panel works further question reality itself, where the viewer cannot discern whether the architecture represented is actual or

existing only within the artwork." Couturier's photographic series entitled **Landscaping** are the result of the artist's residency with the University Art Gallery.

Edward Burtynsky is enthralled by the way that technology and manufacturing sites have inadvertently created captivating landscapes. In the winter of 2002, the University Art Gallery provided support for Burtynsky to undertake his first project in California, which is inspired by the oil fields in Belridge and McKittrick, California (near Bakersfield). Burtynsky produced eleven photographs of the Southern California landscape exploring oil refineries and the environs of north San Diego County. While Burtynsky's work reveals his political awareness, it also demonstrates his intense interest in the craft of photography - color, composition, texture and light.

Stéphane Couturier resides in Paris, France. His work has been the subject of many solo and group exhibitions worldwide including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Strasbourg, France; the Cleveland Art Museum, Cleveland, Ohio; École Nationale des Beaux-Arts and Centre George Pompidou, Paris, France; Städtisches Museum, Zwickau, Germany; and Portalen Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark. His works are part of public and private collections that include Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, France; Randstad Nederland, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Lowe Art Museum, Miami, Florida; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California.

Edward Burtynsky is a native of Ontario, Canada. His photographs have been featured in over twenty-five solo exhibitions at galleries and museums in North America and Europe, including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa; the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, Quebec; Castellani Art Museum, Lewiston, New York; and Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada. The private and public collections that contain his work include the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa, Ontario; Bibliothèque National, Paris, France; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, and the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

University Art Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. or by appointment. The gallery will close for the holidays on December 14 and will re-open on January 5, 2004; however, appointments to visit the gallery may be made during this time. As is the usual practice, the University Art Gallery will be open and host a holiday reception on Friday, December 26th from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. For more information about the exhibitions call (858) 822-3547 or go to www.universityartgallery.ucsd.edu.

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