

Catherine Yass

Lighthouse

February 3 – March 17, 2012

opening reception: Friday, February 3, 2012

Galerie Lelong is proud to present the U.S. debut of British artist Catherine Yass's new film *Lighthouse* (2011), a dynamic portrait of the Royal Sovereign lighthouse located off the coast of East Sussex, England. The single large-scale projection offsets the sense of equilibrium as the camera circles, soars, plunges, and hovers over the anomalous structure set in the vast expanse of sea and endless horizon. Complementing the film are a series of atmospheric lightboxes depicting the lighthouse and its surroundings. *Lighthouse* is Yass's second solo exhibition at Galerie Lelong and will open to the public on Friday, February 3rd from 6 to 8pm. The artist will be present.

Five miles out to sea, the Royal Sovereign lighthouse perches at the edge of a massive square platform balanced over a 108-foot concrete column. Yass describes it as "a magnet or siren attracting you in, but also signaling dangerous waters." The film begins at water level, moving out to sea with the waves, then slowly soaring up and falling down each side of the lighthouse, and finally circling the platform. Eventually, the camera dives down into the sea through the dark, hazardous waters, inducing a sense of drowning. Yass disorients the viewer and captures these different perspectives by filming from boat, helicopter and underwater. The muted sound and slowed pace also contribute to Yass's aim of displacing the viewer to "somewhere slightly different, either physically or somewhere in their mind."

Equally captivating and alluring, Yass's series of surreal lightboxes draw the viewer into abstracted images of the structure. In this new lightbox series, Yass continues her signature technique of laying a photographic color transparency over a blue negative transparency, taken about 5 seconds apart. As a result, the areas that reflect light come out in vivid blue and the intensity of the sun is shifted to black, as seen in *Lighthouse (East)*, 2011. The line between reality and illusion is blurred, giving the works a disturbingly calm and powerful presence.

Lighthouse is Yass's first major film since *High Wire* (2008) and joins the ranks of her other critically-acclaimed films, *Lock* (2006) and *Descent* (2002). In each of these works, Yass's focuses on a well-known structure and explores both the physical and psychological effects of architectural space. Yass first became fascinated with the Royal Sovereign lighthouse while visiting the De La Warr Pavilion, and thus, chose it as the subject of the film commissioned in conjunction with her mid-career retrospective there in 2011.

In addition to Yass's recent retrospective at De La Warr, other major solo exhibitions include *The China Series* at the Stedelijk-Hertogenbosch Museum, The Netherlands in 2009; *Descent* at the Saint Louis Art Museum in 2009; and *High Wire* commissioned by Artangel and Glasgow International Festival and exhibited widely internationally in 2008. Yass was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2002, and has exhibited in international exhibitions such as the Shanghai Biennale in 2006 and the Indian Triennale in 2001. Her works are in numerous public collections including the Tate Collection, London; The Jewish Museum, New York; and The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. Yass lives and works in London, where she was born in 1963.

***Lighthouse* was commissioned by De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, and was produced with Funding from Arts Council England, Alison Jacques Gallery and Galerie Lelong. The exhibition will also be shown at Alison Jacques Gallery, London, January 13 – February 11, 2012.**

Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm

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