

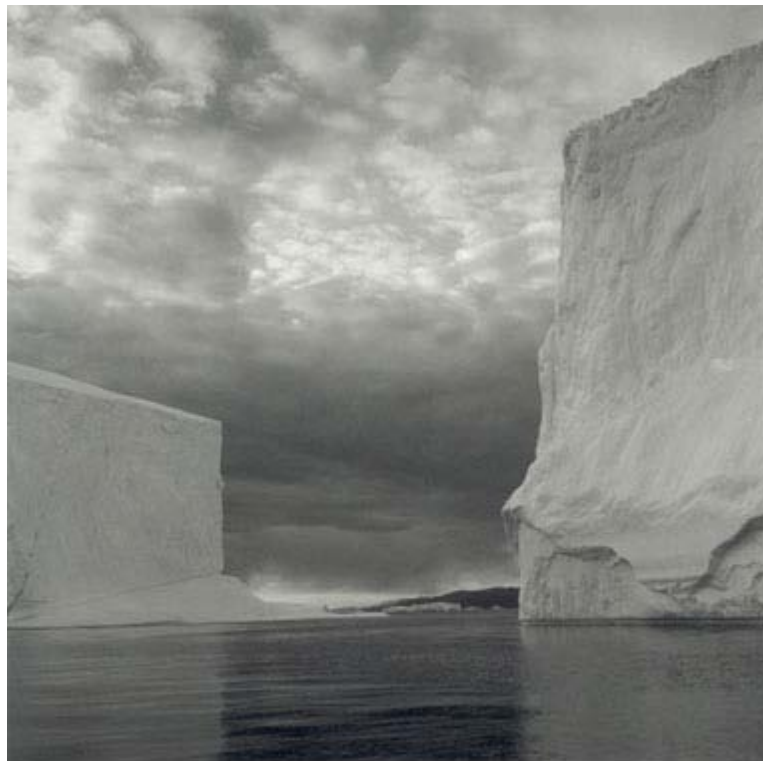
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Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza hosts Lynn Davis' ~ Iceberg and Ancient Persia



Lynn Davis, 2000, *Iceberg 23, Dysko Bay, Greenland*,
Gelatina de plata virada al oro,
101.6 x 101.6 cm, Cortesia
Galeria Karsten Greve

MADRID, SPAIN - *Iceberg* and *Ancient Persia*, two series created in 2000 and 2001 by the American photographer **Lynn Davis**, are the subject of the exhibition presented at the **Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum** as part of the 10th edition of the International Festival of Photography and Visual Arts, **PHotoEspa a**. Running to 29 July, the exhibition features 34 works: 18 from the series **Iceberg** and 16 from *Ancient Persia*. **Lynn Davis** (born Minneapolis, 1944) has been one of the key figures of American photography since the 1970s and her series ***Iceberg* and *Ancient Persia* are among the most important within her recent output**. Heir to a lengthy tradition of photographer/travelers that began in the 19th century and following in the footsteps of American landscape photography, **Lynn Davis** has traveled around America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Her images of these places capture the ruins and monuments of Antiquity as well as buildings by the great 20th-century architects with an almost encyclopedic intent to document exhaustively the heritage of the past. **Her style combines minimalism and the monumental**, focusing on the motif and eliminating the surroundings. **Lynn Davis** aims to capture the beauty of these places and the emotions aroused by their contemplation. We see neither figures nor signs of presence, or anything that provides a context: her photographs are **silent images of erosion and decay, conveying all the beauty and nostalgia of the passing of time**.

Lynn Davis works through series, using square formats on a large scale, generally in black and white with a distinctive use of tonality: intense greys, soft blacks and whites plus the frequent use of gold and selenium tones. Her carefully-organized compositions and a controlled modulation of light also define her style and give her work an impressive sense of grandeur. **Davis** creates her photographs without the help of additional devices, often using frontal compositions that suggest the impartiality of photographic inventories. Nonetheless, the final effect is quite the opposite, and these procedures are used to increase the geometry and monumentality of the landscapes and architectural structures depicted. Her careful work in the dark room, with its ideal combination of science and art, also accounts for the majestic tonality of these works.

Natural Landscape: *Iceberg*

In 1986 **Lynn Davis** traveled for the first time to **Greenland** to photograph the icebergs in **Disko Bay**. This trip would be crucial for her future development, marking a before and after in her artistic career. The icebergs were the starting-point that led her to subsequently focus her activities on landscape and to travel around the world in order to depict it. Davis's photography underwent a radical shift as she abandoned the representation of the human form to concentrate on the natural landscape and architecture.



Lynn Davis, 2000, *Iceberg 23, Dysko Bay, Greenland*, Gelatina de plata virada al oro, 101.6 x 101.6 cm, Cortesia Galeria Karsten Greve

Lynn Davis returned to the subjects of icebergs on numerous occasions between 1986 and 2004, achieving an ever greater refinement in her images while accentuating their sense of abstraction and timeless beauty. This series contains pictorial references to icons of Symbolism and Romanticism such as the painting of Caspar David Friedrich. In addition, the sculptural quality of the blocks of ice at times also suggests enormous abstract sculptures. The Romantic feel of her photographs and the elegance of the precise outlines is increased by the impressive scale of the natural phenomena depicted.

Architectural Landscape: *Ancient Persia*



Lynn Davis, 2001, *Zoroastrian Site, Towers of Silence, Yazd, Iran 45*, Gelatina de planta virada a sepia, 101.6 x 101.6 cm., Cortesia Galeria Karsten Greve

Lynn Davis had been interested in Iran and the remains of its ancient civilization for some time but it was not until 2001 and following a period of investigation and research that she traveled to the country to work on the series *Ancient Persia*. The architecture of that civilization had retained the marks of the numerous different cultures that had co-existed in that region since the times of Cyrus the Great, Darius and Xerxes. In her photographs **Davis** captures the feelings that she experienced in front of the remains of an

advanced civilization, from Pasargadae, the first capital of the Achaemenid Empire, to the impressive structures of the "ice houses", and in particular the fascinating Zoroastrian "towers of silence" in which the dead were placed to protect the land from their impure bodies and which notably moved the artist. Detailed compositions and highly striking viewpoints come together in these almost abstract works charged with a meditative force.

Born in 1944 in the city of Minneapolis (Minnesota, USA), **Lynn Davis** studied at the universities of Colorado (1962-1964) and Minnesota (1964-1966). In 1970 she was awarded a BA by the San Francisco Art Institute and in 1974 began to work as apprentice to the photographer Bernice Abbot. **Her first major exhibition was a joint show with her friend Robert Mappelthorpe held in 1979 at the International Center of Photography in New York.** In the same year she was awarded a Creative Artist Public Service grant and moved to New York.

In 1999 **Lynn Davis** held her first major collective and solo exhibitions in the US (New York, Chicago, San Francisco and elsewhere) and abroad (France, Sweden, Belgium). Particularly notable among these was the presentation of her work at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the solo exhibition *Africa*, held at the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson (Arizona).

Davis's most celebrated images are those created during her trips to Egypt, Australia, Cambodia, Thailand, Syria, Jordan, Turkey, the Yemen and Greenland. In addition she has traveled widely around the US taking photographs of different regions. Her work is represented in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art and the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, among others.