

**communiqué /press release****For immediate release****LEWIS BALTZ: THE NEW INDUSTRIAL PARKS NEAR IRVINE,  
CALIFORNIA**

**Montréal, 17 April, 2002** – From **18 April to 29 September**, the Canadian Centre for Architecture presents **Lewis Baltz: The New Industrial Parks near Irvine, California** in the Octagonal Gallery. This exhibition spotlights the recent acquisition by the CCA of Lewis Baltz's work *The New Industrial Parks*. Here, the American artist has created a polished, nuanced piece, rich in visual interest, that gives food for critical thought on architecture, landscape and photography.

Fifty-one images, laid out in a three-row grid, reorganize space and allow the expression of new relationships between architecture, landscape and photography. Under the harsh light of a rectilinear universe full of the closed doors and enigmatic facades of the new industrial parks, the artist gives life to surfaces and textures, captures both the opaque and the transparent, and seems to project, beyond the deceptively banal frontal views, the buildings' entire life cycle. This tension between the difficulty of the subject and the formal beauty of the resulting images gives the work great visual power.

*The New Industrial Parks* is part of a monographic series developed in the 1970s (*The Tract Houses, Maryland, Nevada and Park City*) that deals with wide-ranging cultural and philosophical questions in a refined, allegorical language. By focusing his attention on an everyday aspect of the urban landscape, Baltz has created a powerful, radical work in his critical photographic approach to the built environment.

Born in 1945 in Newport Beach, California, Lewis Baltz is a leading figure in the *New Topographics* movement. These artists are interested in architecture, the changing American landscape and the contrast between culture and nature. They endeavour to revitalize photography by reducing the photographer's involvement through the adoption of a detached vision. "The ideal photographic document would appear to be without author or art," says Baltz.

The CCA's acquisition of *The New Industrial Parks* is important for the many links it establishes among different works in its collections. For example, the piece puts into context works by German artists Bernd and Hilla Becher, and their corpus of industrial typologies. It also relates to works by other *New Topographics* artists like Robert Adams and Joe Deal. Continuing a certain documentary tradition in vernacular American

architecture, it extends the vision of Walker Evans, Charles Sheeler and Robert Frank through to the conceptual photographic works of Edward Ruscha. This piece can also be compared to works by the new generation of photographers, including Catherine Wagner and John Divola, who reacted against the *New Topographics's* approach but were also influenced by it.

**Meet the artist at the CCA, Thursday, 16 May at 7 p.m.**

Lewis Baltz will be at the CCA on Thursday, 16 May at 7 p.m. He will discuss his work with the guest curator of the CCA's Photography Collection, Hubertus von Amelnunxen. Their conversation will take place in English, with simultaneous translation.

*This exhibition is presented in conjunction with the LABORATORIES exhibition that will run from 18 April to 15 September 2002.*

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