

# Photography News

## Flowers Gallery to show Edward Burtynsky Salt Pans

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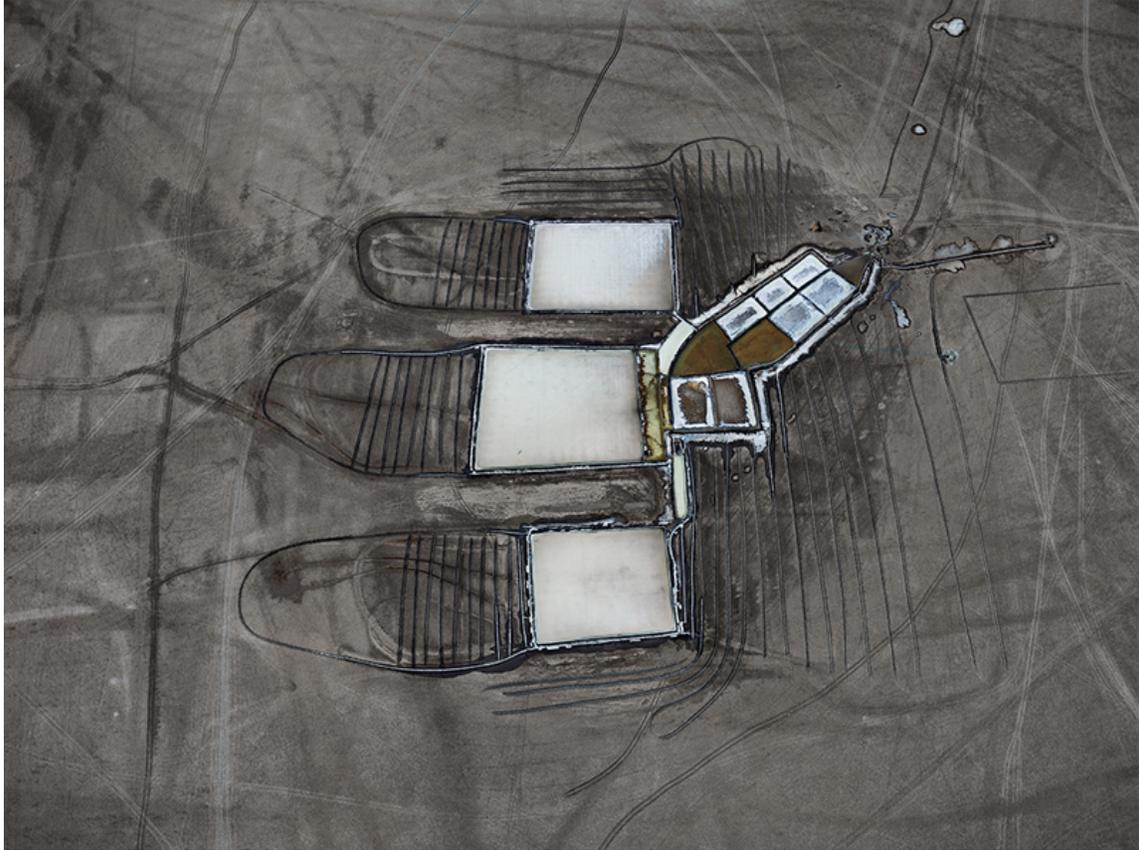


Salt Pans #18 Little Rann of Kutch, Gujarat, India, 2016 copyright: Edward Burtynsky; Courtesy - Flowers London, Nicholas Metvier Gallery, Toronto

Flowers Gallery will show a solo exhibition featuring a new series of abstracted aerial photographs by Canadian artist Edward Burtynsky. Salt Pans by Burtynsky conveys both the sublime aesthetic qualities of the industrialised landscape and the unsettling reality of depleting resources on the planet, through a series of geometric compositions photographed from the air above the Little Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, India.

The Little Rann of Kutch is home to more than 100,000 salt workers, presently extracting around one million tonnes of salt a year from the floodwaters of the nearby Arabian Sea. With a future currently under threat from receding groundwater levels and declining market values, the salt pans are likely to disappear without trace, along with a traditional way of life that has been sustained for the past four hundred years.

Burtynsky's images of the salt pans are composed from a topographical perspective, with a dizzying frontal aspect that flattens the grid-like network of wells, pans and vehicle tracks into equally weighted pictorial elements of line, form and space. Burtynsky refers to this abstracted all-over composition as "the democratic distribution of light and space across the whole field", drawing the eye to the surface, and immersing the viewer in its detail. Possessing distinctly painterly qualities, the photographs explore subtle modulations of tone and compositional balance, structured by a calligraphic network of vehicle tracks running across the horizontal and vertical aspects of the picture plane. Through their documentation of a disappearing landscape, the photographs are palimpsests, tracing evidence of former pans as they eventually dry out and leave fading scars. Both formalist and elegiac, they explore, as Burtynsky sees it, an "ancient method of providing one of the most basic elements of our diet; as primitive industry and as abstract two-dimensional human marks upon the landscape."



Salt pans #27, Little Rann of Kutch, Gujarat, India 2016 (c) Edward Burtynsky courtesy of Flowers gallery London / Nicholas Metivier Gallery Toronto

Mounted in the upper gallery Essential Elements comprises of a selection of photographs weaving an evocative journey through Burtynsky's past projects, China, Manufactured Landscapes, Quarries, Oil and Water, drawing together the visual and thematic threads that connect throughout his oeuvre. The exhibition will coincide with the publication of a major new monograph, Edward Burtynsky: Essential Elements, edited and curated by William A. Ewing. The book provides an overview of Burtynsky's work across four decades, including iconic images and many previously unpublished photographs.

Exhibition Opening Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10am – 6pm