

ARTnews

Gary Schneider

P.P.O.W.

In these seven photographic works, Gary Schneider is again working big and small at the same time. Taking as his starting point a few elemental forms—a tree leaf and its seed, the human hand and face—he pieces his photographs into framed grids so that his faith in the power of photography to magnify a simple subject is writ large.

Schneider's technique, which he pushes to the limit, is anything but simple. *Four Seasons* consists of four left-hand palm prints. Each hand appears against a

translucent background toned in shades from pearly gray to peach, as though the five fingers were backlit by a light box. Both primitive and stylish, the piece updates the caves of Lascaux—dim, ancestral recesses of history where handprints are the earliest record of artistic presence. Schneider's smudgy photograms also manage to glow like a child's finger painting.

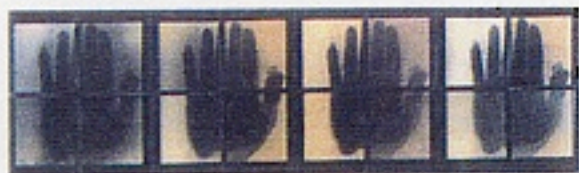
Like such disparate photographers as Adam Fuss, Todd Watts, Brian Wood, Ray Metzker, and Sally Mann, Schneider is testing the tonal extremes of the photographic scale. While more is sometimes covered up than revealed in blindingly dark or bright prints, Schneider isn't just playing mood music. An elegant reductionist, he sees the big picture in the bits and pieces of the world. Hitting his stride in mid-career, he has learned—as the coaches always urge—to stay focused.

RICHARD B. WOODWARD

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Gary Schneider, *Four Seasons*, 1997, toned gelatin-silver prints, 16 panels: 24" x 20" each.

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