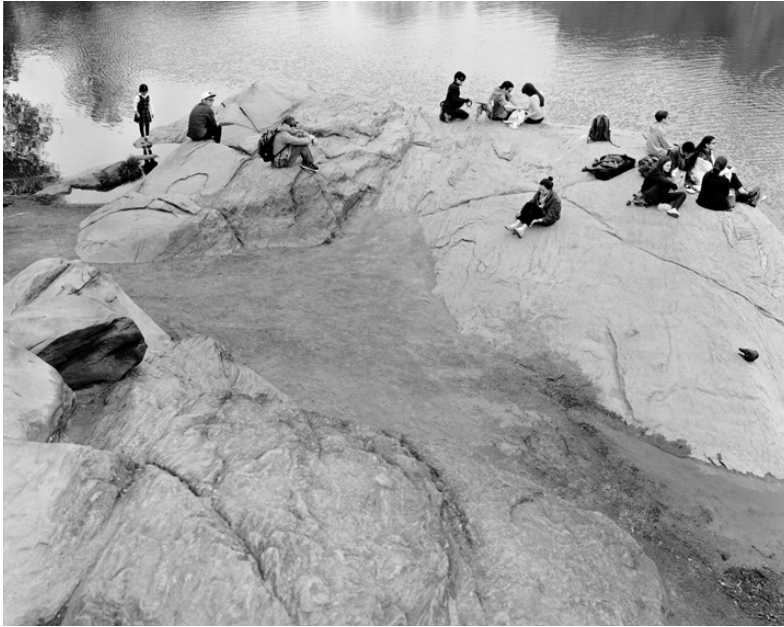


YANCEY RICHARDSON

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Mitch Epstein: *Rocks and Clouds*, Sept 7 – Oct 22, 2016



Mitch Epstein, *The Henshead, Central Park* from the series *Rocks and Clouds*, 2014

clouds. And there is something at least as primitive and essential about his rocks and clouds, even when juxtaposed with human artifacts.

Unlike Alfred Stieglitz, whose “Equivalents” use clouds as metaphors, Mr. Epstein is interested in clouds as things in themselves. The towering, swirling ones dwarfing the Manhattan skyline in “Clouds #33, New York City” (2014) are showing off their potency. Those in “Clouds #18, New York City” (2014) are shapeless, more like mist, but they are descending on lower Manhattan and obscuring it. The massive rock in “Central Park, New York II” (2014) is cube-like and balanced on an edge between two nearby steel rods, the rough texture of its surface a primal fact. A dozen people sit on “The Henshead, Central Park, New York” (2014), a rock outcropping in the Lake; subsumed by nature, they contemplate their surroundings. “Clouds #89, New York City” (2015) is just clouds and sufficient.

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Mitch Epstein gained prominence in the late 1970s with his color work, still rare at that time in art photography, and his reputation is for color. So it is a bit startling to see this gallery hung with 12 large-format black-and-white silver gelatin prints taken with an old-fashioned 8-by-10 view camera—it is as if he wanted to get back to the basics of the medium to shoot such basic elements of nature as rocks and