



James Richards, *Raking Light*, 2014, still from digital video with sound, 7 minutes 5 seconds.



Brent Wadden, *No. 1 (Dominion)*, 2014, handwoven fibers, wool, cotton, and acrylic on canvas, 106" x 82 $\frac{5}{8}$ ".

JAMES RICHARDS

CABINET, LONDON
OCTOBER 11 - DECEMBER 6

PERES PROJECTS, BERLIN
NOVEMBER 22 - JANUARY 10

A foreboding atmosphere permeates James Richards's powerful seven-minute video, *Raking Light* (2014), the sole work in this show. Alternating positive and negative images of fire, water, and smoke are set to a portentous soundtrack, evoking a mood that verges on the apocalyptic, while the film's more mundane passages—flocks of starlings, water fizzing in a glass, reflections in a puddle—have a quiet poetry.

Crisply edited, the video combines found footage and passages filmed by the artist into a harmonious, abstract whole. We see a tree standing alone in a flooded field, windswept waves, and, most strikingly, flares or fireworks exploding in a forest. The sparks scintillate like diamonds before the scene is obscured by thick smoke.

The video is shown on a continuous loop, so the viewer perceives no beginning or end. Yet it seems to build toward the only vaguely narrative element—a sequence showing tourists aboard a Maid of the Mist boat at Niagara Falls. Seen through the spray, their hooded raincoats gleam a sickly, chemical orange.

From here the film cuts to shots of churning water and of seagulls flying upside down. Could Richards be suggesting a mass drowning? There is no single reading to this production, but it gives you plenty to ponder and admire.

ROGER ATWOOD

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