

**HUTCHINSON MODERN
& CONTEMPORARY**

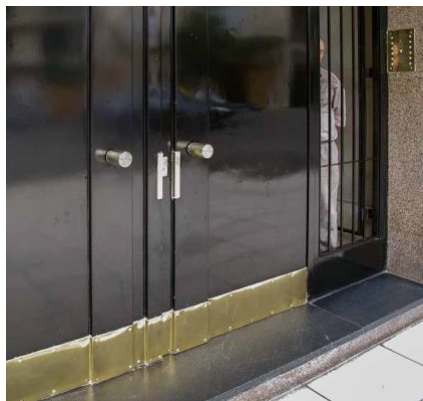
René Balcer: Forensics

Opening Reception: June 20th, 2024, 5-8 pm
47 East 64th Street, New York, NY 10065



From the "Desaparecidos" series, *Barrio Recoleta, Buenos Aires, 2009*

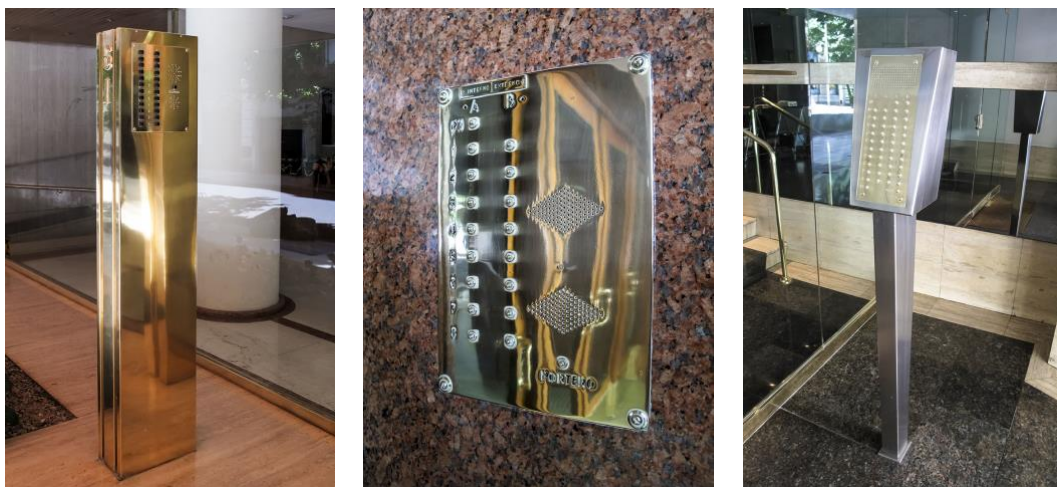
Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary is pleased to announce *René Balcer: Forensics*, a solo exhibition of René Balcer's photographs focusing on Argentina. The centerpiece of the show is Balcer's ground-breaking photo essay "Desaparecidos" consisting of 44 images made in Buenos Aires' exclusive Recoleta neighborhood.



Barrio Recoleta No. 1, Buenos Aires 2009; Barrio San Nicolas No.1, Buenos Aires 2009

In *Forensics*, Balcer's photos speak to the complicity of silence during the years of modern-day *caudillos* in Latin America and to society's willful blindness in the face of today's rising authoritarianism in the Americas. In making these images, Balcer was moved by his own experiences during Québec's 1970 October Crisis in his native Montréal.

In the photo essay "Desaparecidos," Balcer photographs the *porteros electricos*, the electric doormen or call boxes of exclusive residences in the Recoleta neighborhood. Argentinian photographer and writer Marcos Zimmermann commented on this body of work and references the historical context informing the images:



From the "Desaparecidos" series (*Barrio Recoleta, Buenos Aires 2009*)

"Balcer's photographic essay pushes us to wonder about the limits of art, and to explore the potential found in new conceptual forms of photographic expression. In a certain sense, it is an assertion that photography can still cast a light into mankind's darkest areas."



La Recoleta Cemetery No. 1, Buenos Aires 2009; Puerto Bemberg No. 2, Argentina 2009

Forensics furthers Balcer's continuing exploration of social justice issues through his photography and his work in other media. Balcer is an award-winning writer, producer and director of television series (*Law & Order*, *Law & Order Criminal Intent*) and documentaries. This is his first solo show at Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary.

"Balcer's most distinctive images participate in the grand historical and metaphorical tradition that joins photography with detective work; the flâneur's openness to a changing world with urban crimes; and 'seeing as' with eminently metaphoric meanings. Balcer's type of forensic aesthetic resonances with photography's history, with Barthes's assessment of its noeme, and with our preponderantly surveillant society in which even an innocent trip to a cash machine can potentially be viewed as a potential crime setting, making this aesthetic both ubiquitous in our time and especially relevant to it."

Robert Hobbs, *"René Balcer's 'Seeing As' and the Crime Scene Aesthetic"*

About the Artist:

Born in Montréal in 1954, René Balcer studied photography and visual representation at Concordia University. Inspired by such artists as Edward Hopper and Ed Ruscha and photographers Robert Capa, Leonard Freed and Liliane De Cock, Balcer began his photography work in 1968. Eschewing studio work and staged images, Balcer searches for natural compositions that suggest a sense of disquietude and an implied or hidden narrative, as well as images that engage his interest in social justice. While pursuing an award-winning career in film and television in Los Angeles, he has continued his photography practice, completing such photo essays as "Desaparecidos" and "Beleaguered Trees of Los Angeles." In 2023 ACC Art Books (UK) published *René Balcer: Seeing As*, a retrospective of his work. He has lectured widely about photography, writing and the duties of artists, notably at Columbia University, NYU, Harvard, UCLA, USC, UPenn, Central Academy of Fine Arts (Beijing), the Sorbonne, the Journalists Club (Moscow), The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Wolfsonian (Miami), and the Century Association (NY).

About Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary:

Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary was founded by Isabella Hutchinson in 2020. HM&C specializes in modern and contemporary art of the Americas, with a focus on Latin American, U.S. Latinx (o/a/e), and Caribbean art. Through their exhibitions and online Study Rooms, they aim to augment the visibility of work by their artists and foster critical engagement with their practices.

For more information about René Balcer, please visit hutchinsonmodern.com/viewing-room/23-rene-balcer/ For other inquiries contact info@hutchinsonmodern.com.

Media Contact for René Balcer:

Andrea Smith / Andrea Smith Public Relations

Cell: +1 646-220-5950

Email: andreasmith202@gmail.com