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Water Towers Statement

Building on techniques and themes that first emerged in my series *The Decisive Moment*, my newest body of work, *Water Towers*, deepens my exploration of virtual processes as a way of offering new understandings of the photographic image. In this project, I use 3-D rendering software to create digital simulations of a series of water towers that were originally photographed by Bernd and Hilla Becher. I diverge from the original only in that, in my version, the towers are shown bursting from within, gushing simulated water onto the surrounding landscape.

I'm continually fascinated by the ways in which our basic expectations for what a photograph should *do* -- especially in terms of its ability to indexically record time and space -- are met with contradiction in a virtual context. Whereas the Bechers' project put photography to use as a way of documenting European industrial architecture that was slowly decaying, the simulated architecture in these images exists outside of ordinary time altogether, meaning "decay" is an impossibility. Instead, they turn in an opposite direction, toward fantasy, opening onto a range of potential meanings and connotations, from references to the body to the exploration of the intersection of photography and sculpture.

At the broadest level, my work shifts between actual objects, the photographic image, and digital screen space as a way of exposing the ways in which images circulate between physical and virtual realms. In a final step, the *Water Towers* images are physicalized as prints using the gelatin silver process, capping a maze-like chain of images that ultimately traces back to the real structures that the Bechers documented, even as that relationship is repeatedly challenged and reframed. I'm interested in all the shifts -- from object, to image, to model, to photograph -- and how new meaning is created in the spaces between them, challenging viewers' senses and suggesting new ways of approaching the photographic image.