



James Welling

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Title

Cellar Door

Medium

Archival inkjet print on rag paper

Date

2012

Catalogue Number

2016.3.2

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Credit Line

Gift of the artist, 2016

Web Description

In 2010, Los Angeles-based artist James Welling began taking a series of color photographs inspired by the painter Andrew Wyeth. Welling started the Wyeth series as an examination of the artist's influence on his own career. This project represents one artist entering the creative mind of another artist. Welling was fascinated and challenged by what he saw in Wyeth's work. In order to experience the physicality of Wyeth's world, Welling went on location in Pennsylvania and Maine and photographed in the same areas where Wyeth painted throughout his life. His goal was not to make a literal record of these subjects, but rather to reference aspects of Wyeth's style, technique and palette. Welling's investigations led him to a greater understanding of the degree of painterly license found in many of Andrew Wyeth's works. In response, Welling digitally manipulated elements of many of his photographs in the studio in order to capture the moods and atmosphere of Wyeth's paintings. "Cellar Door" is a color photograph of a predominantly black and white scene outside Andrew Wyeth's studio. The white washed woodwork and stucco contrast sharply with the black iron fixtures and the emptiness behind the window. Welling was very aware of the importance of the color white in Wyeth's work—both in the paper left unpainted and the observation of the variety of subtle shades of white in his watercolors. Wyeth's studio building, inside and out, was also a frequent subject in his work. Welling pays tribute to this important artistic space as a source of inspiration in "Cellar Door".