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(Images available on request. Go to: www.cityofpaloalto.org/artcenter to view exhibition images.)

The Palo Alto Art Center Presents...

"In the Bigger Picture: Richard Misrach"
- Landscapes by the Internationally-Acclaimed Photographer -

September 28 - December 21, 2008

~ Public Preview: September 28, 3 - 5 PM ~

PALO ALTO, CA – Majestic interpretations of landscape are presented in an exhibition of photographs by the internationally-acclaimed, San Francisco Bay Area-based photographer, Richard Misrach, at The Palo Alto Art Center, (PAAC), September 28 - December 21, 2008. "In the Bigger Picture: Richard Misrach," provides an overview of Misrach's almost 30-year career as a master of large format photography. The exhibition includes images from his well-known thematic segments in "Desert Cantos," including "The Terrain," "The Flood," "The Fires," "The War (Bravo 20)," "The Visitors," and events that include military testing in the desert. The exhibition will be presented in conjunction with "The Miniature Worlds of Bruce Metcalf," the premier of the first major, touring exhibition investigating the work of Bruce Metcalf, a leading art jeweler, essayist, critic and curator of contemporary craft. In these two exhibitions, The Palo Alto Art Center invites the viewer to consider two diverse approaches in scaling content with moral implication.

A public preview of the exhibition will be held at PAAC on September 28 from 3-5 p.m. Admission is free. In addition, docent-led tours, "Art Dialogues," will be offered on Saturdays at 2 p.m. Visit the PAAC website at: www.cityofpaloalto.org/artcenter or call (650) 329-2366 for more information.

About "In the Bigger Picture: Richard Misrach"

For nearly thirty years, the internationally-acclaimed photographer Richard Misrach has documented the great sweep of the American desert in a sublime light. A mercurial Salton Sea, a conflagration on dry land, slaked earth strewn with skeletal fish, and an incandescent red sky are among images that in the larger picture chronicle the terrible beauty that has been born following man's interventions in nature. While Misrach has generally used straight photo-documentation, he is a master in photographing moments of time, in which serene color and grand views seem a continuation of the majestic interpretations of landscape in the history of painting. He is equally adept in scaling content. Man's presence, if seen, is rightfully quite small, while natural vistas loom large to magnify the intensity of the desolation or serenity in the desert, or the luminous, crystalline expanse of the bodies of water, as exemplified in his "Swimmers, Pyramid Lake Indiana Reservation," 1987-1993. It is the sheer beauty of his work that allows the viewer to contemplate the larger implications of his images.

In the same way that the poet Ezra Pound compiled diverse sections in his epic poem *Cantos*—some of which do not have a definable connection—Misrach has segmented his epic exploration *Desert Cantos* into diverse themes. The exhibition also includes images from other thematic segments, including "The Terrain," "The Flood," "The Fires," "The War (Bravo 20)," and "The Visitors."

Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Misrach received his BA in psychology from the University of California at Berkeley. His first major photographic project, "Telegraph 3AM," documented Berkeley's homeless population and set the tone for explorations with political implications. His work is represented in major collections internationally, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Museum of Modern Art in New York, as well as the Musee National d'Art Moderne in Paris. His first major retrospective was organized in 1996 by the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.

Photographs in the exhibition have been loaned by the Bank of America Corporate Art Program, Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco, The Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College in Chicago, IL, private lenders and the San Jose Museum of Art.

About the Palo Alto Art Center

The Palo Alto Art Center (founded 1971) is a nationally acclaimed, regional visual art center whose exhibition program focuses on documenting – and celebrating – the art and artists of the San Francisco Bay Area. The Center's mission is to foster creative process and thought by forging a greater appreciation and understanding of the visual arts through exhibitions, studio experiences and related educational programs. The Palo Alto Art Center, Division of Arts and Culture, City of Palo Alto, is funded in part by support from the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation and the Arts Council Silicon Valley, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the California Arts Council. The Center is open to the public without charge from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday; 1-5 p.m. Sunday; and 7-10 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday. The Center is located at 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303. For further information: Phone: 650-329-2366 / E-mail: artcenter@cityofpaloalto.org / Website: www.cityofpaloalto.org/artcenter