

*Dream States: Contemporary Photographs and Video*

May 16, 2016 - October 30, 2016

Joyce and Robert Menschel Gallery 851

The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Sarah Anne Johnson, *Glitter Bomb*, 2015, glittler on chromogenic print, 48 x 90", ed. of 3

Artists have always turned to dreams as a source of inspiration, a retreat from reason, and a space for exploring imagination and desire. In the history of photography, dreams have been most closely associated with the Surrealists, who pushed the technical limits of the medium to transform the camera's realist documents into fantastical compositions. Whereas their modernist explorations were often bound to psychoanalytic theories, more recently contemporary photographers have pursued the world of sleep and dreams through increasingly open-ended works that succeed through evocation rather than description. This exhibition takes a cue from the artists it features by displaying a constellation of photographs that collectively evoke the experience of a waking dream. Here, a night sky composed of pills, a fragmented rainbow, a sleeping fairy-tale princess, and an alien underwater landscape illuminate hidden impulses and longings underlying contemporary life. Drawn entirely from the Metropolitan's collection, the installation will feature approximately thirty photographs and video works primarily from the 1970s to the present.