

SEANKELLY

Max Norman. "Photography Takes Over New York Galleries," *Art in America*. January 31, 2025.

Art in America

Photography Takes Over New York Galleries

Photographs are made with light, but also with darkness. An extraordinary array of shows in New York mark the medium's return to focus on the gallery scene after years dominated by figurative painting. In lieu of representation, they offer scenes of the unseen.

In "Stony the Road" at Sean Kelly, Dawoud Bey also reads what's inscribed in the ground in 14 oversized exposures of dense foliage in a shadowy wood, and a slow-motion film moving through the same environment. The pictures, which evoke Atget's and Adams's documents of trees and roots, were made in 2023 along the Richmond Slave Trail in Virginia, part of the Underground Railroad; the film is titled 350,000 for the number of people sold at Richmond's slave markets from 1830 to 1860. Bey first turned toward landscape in "Night Coming Tenderly, Black," a 2017 series depicting real and imagined locations along the Railroad in Ohio. This newer photographic inquiry continues to point to meaning hidden in plain sight, underground.