

SAM LEE | GALLERY

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Previews of Exhibitions
By Rebecca Niederlander

Pipo Nguyen-duy
The Garden

Albert Einstein once quipped that he didn't know what the Third World War would be fought with, but the fourth would be fought with sticks and stones. Modern war will decimate, but it will not annihilate. Vietnamese-born Pipo Nguyen-duy's new body of photographs resonates with a similar sensibility. These large color Lightjet prints (45" x 60" and 30" x 40") of abandoned greenhouses allude to a history of once-flourishing agricultural enterprise; and by metaphor and implications a far larger one. Sadness and ruin are very much present. Nguyen-duy emigrated to American in 1975 at age thirteen (just days before the fall of Saigon), and not surprisingly loss has been present in much of Nguyen-duy's previous projects. All the same, in this series the spaces are teeming with rampant Nature. Decay and abandonment are easier narrative targets, but what makes these images so particularly effective is their ability to introduce Hope. These are full fairy tale narratives that infer that after a haunting Winter must come Spring (Sam Lee Gallery, Chinatown).