

# David Schalliol

## Mining Basin (Hauts-de-France)

January 7 – April 22, 2018  
Cleve Carney Gallery & Gallery 2



Through his photography practice, David Schalliol invites us to renew and enrich our view of industrialized areas by looking at their populations and at how they inhabit such affected landscapes. Schalliol develops artistic research closely linked to his training as a sociologist. His primary areas of interest are the urban and social consequences of industrial crises; the reshaping of cities and their operations; the housing inequalities produced by these crises; transportation and the nature of work inside urban spaces; and finally the strategies that inhabitants implement to overcome them. Having previously developed photographic investigation in the Rust Belt and across the Great Lakes regions of the Midwest, *Resilient Images* gave Schalliol the opportunity to expand his study of post-industrial American cities in a new geographic and cultural area, Hauts-de-France. In this area, where the landscape and people were intensely exploited and impacted by the mining industry, he set out to understand the social and cultural dynamics at work today: How has human activity been reorganized in the cities and landscapes? How are inhabitants reinventing those lands for new use?

Schalliol's art practice cannot be reduced to a documentary and typological approach. Although his sociological studies inspire his photography, they do not define it. Schalliol does not assemble a collection of images to support a scientific demonstration. Rather, he gives special consideration to framing, scale, and light to construct images that impart the empathy he feels for his subjects. He is influenced by Chicago's sociological history and is a proponent of visual sociology, basing his work on this discipline as he engages with the world and its people.

The camera then becomes the mediator of Schalliol's meetings with people, and the image is the receptacle of the multiple, shifting identities of the subjects. In this regard, he is just as inspired by the writings of Steinbeck, Orwell and Zola, and by the history of documentary photography from Bernd and Hilla Becher to Joel Meyerowitz, as he is by contemporary photographers Jan Banning, Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, and Lauren Greenfield. He produces powerful work with open images that reveal people's connections and tensions with their environment.

Schalliol guides us through Hauts-de-France for an unusual summer and winter stroll, offering encounters with landscapes and people that testify to the multitude of cultures and counter-cultures in the region. Spaces haunted by emblems of the region's industrial past, heritage objects and sites reinvented for another purpose: slag heaps that have become wooded hills and playing fields, water towers serve as beacons for mobile home communities to gather, and coal carts repurposed into decorations are serially photographed like a recurrent totem. The diversity of the focus is brought out by changes of scale and shifts of perspective.

**Cover:**  
David Schalliol, *Derelict House (Denain)*, 2017, aluminum mounted digital print, 20 x 30 inches

**Inside, left to right:**  
David Schalliol, *From the Terril (Hénin-Beaumont)*, 2016, aluminum mounted digital print, 20 x 30 inches  
David Schalliol, *Gathering to Depart (Haillicourt)*, 2016, aluminum mounted digital print, 20 x 30 inches  
David Schalliol, *Le Wagonnet (Wallers-Arenberg)*, 2017, aluminum mounted digital print, 20 x 30 inches

A great deal of humanity is brought by the sites' inhabitants, shown in their wide-ranging appearances and occupations: hunters with their dog, children found playing their games or intensely staring into the lens, or off-road motorcyclists in the fields. All of the people are presented as immediately familiar. The images are a testament to the resilience of this area; its resistance to the shock of disappearing industries, its ability—like the material to which the term *resilient* was originally connected—to regain its shape. *Resilient communities* are those social or economic communities that have an intrinsic ability to find a new balance that enables them to function after a disaster. Creativity, initiative and relationships with each other are important mechanisms of resilience. These mechanisms are central to the strength of a region that David Schalliol's photographs give us another chance to admire.

**David Schalliol** earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Chicago. His work explores the transformation of urban centers through ethnographic, filmic and photographic projects. His writing and photographs have appeared in such publications as *Social Science Research*, *Places*, and *The New York Times*, as well as in numerous exhibitions including the inaugural Belfast Photo Festival and the Museum of Contemporary Photography's Midwest Photographers Project.

**Micro-Talks by *Resilient Images* Artists & Curators**  
Sunday, January 14, 2 – 3 pm

**Public Reception for the Exhibition supported by the French Consulate for the Midwest**  
Sunday, January 14, 3 – 5 pm  
Featuring a performance by Chicago artist FM Supreme at 4 p.m.

**Public Talk**  
Tuesday, February 27, 6 pm  
Featuring David Schalliol in conversation with urban designer and architect Marshall Brown.

## Resilient Images

In 2015, Hyde Park Art Center launched *Resilient Images*, an international residency exchange in collaboration with the Centre régional de la photographie Nord—Pas-de-Calais (CRP/) located in the North of France. Featuring lens-based artists David Schalliol (Chicago) and Justine Pluvinaige (Lille, France), *Resilient Images* is the result of immersive residencies for each artist between Chicago and France. The project culminates in a two-part exhibition *Amazons* and *Mining Basin (Hauts-de-France)*, which debuts new work produced from their experiences.

**THIS EXHIBITION AND RELATED EVENTS ARE SUPPORTED BY:**

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