

## Art in America



### Miles Coolidge at Peter Blum, through Feb. 4 20 West 57th Street

Five large black-and-white photographs greet visitors to “Coal Seam *redux*,” Miles Coolidge’s first solo show at Peter Blum, immersing viewers in the shimmering, textured abyss of a coal mine. The large scale of the images conjures the mine’s crushing depth. The long-exposure photographs, from the 2013 series “Coal Seam, Bergwerk Prosper-Haniel,” were shot in the Ruhr Valley in Germany, at a site that lies beneath an industrial structure once captured by Bernd and Hilla Becher. Coolidge, who currently lives and works in

Los Angeles, studied under the Bechers, best known for their black-and-white typologies of disappearing industrial buildings.

In a second gallery are Coolidge’s “Chemical Pictures,” paper chromatographic experiments based on written instructions by nineteenth-century German scientist F.F. Runge. The various combinations of chemicals create rings of color on the saturated off-white paper, the small, gemlike images seeming to suggest precious minerals. Coolidge adopts the role of artist as scientific explorer; continuing his teachers’ work, he digs further. —*Julia Wolkoff*

Pictured: Miles Coolidge: *Coal Seam, Bergwerk Prosper-Haniel #4*, 2013, pigment inkjet print, 57 by 50 inches. Courtesy Peter Blum, New York.