

# Looking Back, Looking Forward: Part 5

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*by frieze*

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## **Barney Kulok at Nicole Klagsbrun**

Kulok's third solo exhibition at the gallery, which was accompanied by a handsome book published by *Aperture*, consisted of a collection of stunningly rich black-and-white photographs, taken during the construction of Louis I. Kahn's great unrealized monument to Franklin D. Roosevelt on Roosevelt Island. (In a cruel twist of architectural fate, Kahn died in the public toilets of reviled, then-recent reboot of New York's Pennsylvania Station, and is said to have had the plans for the monument in his briefcase.) However, Kulok's photographs, which, more often than not, take the form of horizonless details of building materials and surfaces, are not mere documentation; they take into obvious account the art historical precedents of Minimalism and Post-Minimalism, with a deftness that has had few parallels since the work of Lewis Baltz. Like Baltz, Kulok reminds us—in light of the recent vogue for self-reflexive investigations of photographic materiality and the emphasis placed on studio practice—that photographs made out in the world at large can still present novel aesthetic propositions, even as they speak, however modestly, of the life outside the darkroom and away from the glare of the studio lights.