



“SOUTH (JEFF’S OFFICE) SUPERIOR COURT LA”
2008

Matthew Brandt

GUM BICHROMATE PRINT WITH DUST FROM JEFF’S OFFICE
55" x 35"

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CARDWELL JIMMERSON CONTEMPORARY ART

LOS ANGELES

**Matthew Brandt: “Chocolate,
Bees, Dust, Sperm & Sprinkles”
at Cardwell Jimmerson**

For his first solo gallery show, the photographer Matthew Brandt has produced several series that highlight the process and materiality of photography through a strong conceptual framework: he links the subjects of his images to their representations through the materials used for their objectification. While light is often the essence of photography, Brandt goes one step further to focus on the liquid substances that are required to develop images. Techniques from the beginning of photography like salted paper, gum bichromate and lenticular printing help underscore the materials at work.

The liquid used to print each picture in his *Portraits* series is a bodily fluid that either came from the subject or from the subject’s family. Close friends and family are captured by their own DNA. *Jordan* features a young child, shirtless, cocking his head with just a bit of sly gumption and leaning on the shoulder of a figure to his left, only a small portion of whose arm and leg remain visible. Like all of the images in this series, it is only a few inches high and wide. The print was developed in his father’s sperm. Another feedback loop is created in his *Superior Court Los Angeles Dust* series. Dust from a friend’s office in the building forms the basis of the pigment used to print the picture: a bluish-gray hue which, viewed up close, reveals the tiny sticks and bits of crud you’d expect to see in a dustpan. The transformation is unexpected, yet commonsensical: if you’re going to represent something, why not use the actual *thing* in the process?

Other works, like *Unknown Lovers (Ikea Ribba Collection)*, confound and enrich questions about the link between subject and object. Backing paper from the six sizes of Ikea Ribba frames were photographed and developed in the liquid found in used condoms from a nearby church, and inserted back into their respective frames. The relationships between the uniqueness of what is inside a condom and the commonness of industrial manufacturing are indelibly bound together in the image. Brandt gives the inherent problematics of photography new articulations.

—ANDREW CHOATE