MATTHEW PORTER

Press Pack

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MATTHEW PORTER

Matthew Porter (b. 1975, State College, PA) received his BA from Bard College and his MFA from Bard-ICP. His work has been included in the recent thematic exhibitions *Autophoto* at the Fondation Cartier, Paris; *Matter of Memory: Photography as Object in the Digital Age* at the George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY*; Polaroids: The Disappearing* at Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York, *After Photoshop* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and *Perspectives* at the International Center of Photography Museum, New York. The artist's work is held in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio; The Sir Elton John Photography Collection; and the UBS Art Collection, New York, among others. Porter's curatorial projects include *Soft Target,* organized with Phil Chang at M+B, Los Angeles; *Seven Summits* at Mount Tremper Arts, New York; and *The Crystal Chain* at Invisible Exports, New York. He is the co-editor of *Blind Spot* magazine Issue 45 and his writings and interviews have been featured in *Triple Canopy*, *Blind Spot*, *Artforum* and *Canteen*. MACK Books recently published his first monograph *Archipelago*. Matthew Porter lives and works in Brooklyn.

MATTHEW PORTER

BORN 1975, State College, PA
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

EDUCATION

2006 MFA, The International Center of Photography/Bard Program for Advanced Photographic Studies, New York, NY

1998 BA, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019 *The Sheen, The Shine*, Galerie Xippas, Geneva, Switzerland

2018 *News From Nowhere*, M+B, Los Angeles, CA
The Links Are Joined and Form a Ring, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France

2016 *Sunclipse*, Invisible Exports, New York, NY
Four False Starts, M+B, Los Angeles, CA

2014 *High Difference*, Invisible Exports, New York, NY

2013 *Greet the Dust,* M+B, Los Angeles, CA

2012 *Pale Subtropical Light*, M+B, Los Angeles, CA

2011 *The Undefeated*, Invisible Exports, New York, NY

2009 *High Lonesome*, M+B, Los Angeles, CA
High Lonesome, Marty Walker Gallery, Dallas, TX

2007 *Somerset County*, Jack The Pelican Presents, Brooklyn, NY

2006 *Sun City*, Marty Walker Gallery, Dallas, TX
We Ride At Dawn, ICP/Bard Gallery, Long Island City, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2017
Autophoto, Foundation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France
Polaroids: The Disappearing, Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York, NY
Where Does the Future Get Made?, Lishui International Photography Festival, Lishui, China
Victory Over the Sun: The Poetics and Politics of the Eclipse, KMAC Museum, Louisville, KY
Endless Summer, Meyer Vogl Gallery, Charleston, SC

2016
A Matter of Memory: Photography as Object in the Digital Age, George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY
A Verdant Summer, Taymour Grahne, New York, NY
High Summer, Foley Gallery, New York, NY
Entry Point, Daniel Arts Center, Great Barrington, MA
What's Up, Soho Revue, London, UK
Arturo Bandini, Los Angeles, CA

2015
Russian Doll, M+B, Los Angeles, CA
Under Construction – New Positions in American Photography, Pioneer Works Center for Art and Innovation, Brooklyn, NY

2014
Altarations: Built, Blended, Processed, University Galleries, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL
Of My Affection, Anonymous Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico
Me and Benjamin, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France
Stills, Michael Lowe Gallery, Cincinnati, OH
Under Construction – New Positions in American Photography, Foam, Amsterdam

2013
House of Vetti, Koenig & Clinton, New York, NY
Spook Rock Road Josephine Meckseper, Steven Parrino, Matthew Porter, Richard Prince, Blair Thurman and Kaz Oshiro, Galerie Frank Elbaz, Paris, France

2012
After Photoshop, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY
There's Something Happening Here, Brancolini Grimaldi, London, UK

2011
Brooklyn to Nashville, curated by Soo Kim, ZeiherSmith pop-up gallery, Nashville, TN
US EST, Pepin Moore, Los Angeles, CA
On Wheels, brand 10 art space, Fort Worth, TX

2010
Perspectives 2010, International Center of Photography Museum, New York, NY
New Work New York, curated by Tim Barber, Levi's Photo Workshop, New York, NY
The Exquisite Landscape, ICP Educational Gallery, New York, NY
Unframed, curated by Neville Wakefield, ACRIA Benefit Auction, New York, NY

2009
Blind Spot Magazine Benefit Auction, X Initiative, New York, NY
(super)natural, New York Photo Festival, Brooklyn, NY (catalogue)

The Noble Savage and the Little Tramp, curated by Hannah Whitaker, Mount Tremper Arts, Mount Tremper, NY
Meet & Cake, Roos Arts, Rosendale, NY

2008 *The World Is All, That Is The Case*, curated by Arthur Ou, Hudson Franklin, New York, NY
The Allegory of the Mountain, Mahan Gallery, Columbus, OH
Things Are Strange, New Century Artists, New York, NY
Group Hug, Marty Walker Gallery, Dallas, TX

2007 *The Interactive Landscape*, Mount Tremper Arts Festival, Mount Tremper, New York, NY
UNSEEN, Arnhem Mode Bienniale, Arnhem, The Netherlands

2005 *Art + Commerce Festival of Emerging Photographers*, curated by Charlotte Cotton, The Tobacco Warehouse, Brooklyn, NY
MFA Group Show, The International Center of Photography, New York, NY

CURATORIAL PROJECTS

2014 *Soft Target*, organized with Phil Chang, M+B, Los Angeles, CA

2013 *X+1,* At Large Magazine, December

2012 *The Crystal Chain*, curator, Invisible Exports, New York, NY
Blind Spot Magazine, Issue 45, co-curated with Hannah Whitaker

2010-11 *Bedtime for Bonzo*, curator, M+B Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2010 *Seven Summits*, curator, Mount Tremper Arts, Catskills, NY (catalogue)
"Photo Contest," *Canteen Magazine*, Issue 6, an open forum curatorial project in collaboration with the Brooklyn Museum's Arnold Lehman

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2018 "Matthew Porter's Solo Debut at Galerie Xippas, Paris," *ArtInfo*, April 8

2016 Lehmann, Claire. "Matthew Porter: Invisible-Exports," *Artforum Critics' Picks*, December 2
Wagley, Catherine. "Four False Starts at M+B," *Photograph Magazine*, May/June
Zellen, Jody. "Recommended Exhibitions," *ArtScene*, March
Samson, Jonah. "Matthew Porter's 'Four False Starts' Exhibition," *Cool Hunting*, February 9

2015 Cotton, Charlotte. Photography is Magic. *Aperture Books*
Brown, Jane and Marla Hamburg Kennedy. Both Sides of Sunset: Photographing Los Angeles. *Metropolis Books*

"Paradoxical Abstraction," *Artpress*, March
Colberg, Jorg. "Matthew Porter's Archipelago," *Conscientious Photography Magazine*, August
W. Rod Faulds and Jeanie Ambrosio, "Altarations," Florida Atlantic University (catalogue)
"Sunshine Noir," *At Large Magazine,* Vol. 2

2014 Mizota, Sharon. "The Focus Cleverly Blurs in 'Soft Target' at M+B," *Los Angeles Times*, August 22
Fiske, Courtney. "Matthew Porter," *Artforum Critics' Picks*, April 5
Heinrich, Will. "Matthew Porter: High Difference at Invisible-Exports," *Gallerist*, April 2
Bareman, Karin. "Under Construction," *Foam Magazine*, issue #38

2013 Balhetchet, Sophie. "Pale Subtropical Light," *HotShoe*, Winter
"500 Words," interview with Ian Svenonius, *Artforum.com*
X+1, *At Large Magazine*, December
Wagley, Catherine. "Matthew Porter: Greet the Dust," *Photography*, October
"Still Life Comparison," *IMA Magazine*, Winter, Volume 6
Rosenberg, David. "Avoiding Pigeonholes: From Muscle Cars to Jane Fonda Recreations," *Slate*, July 18
Segal, David. "ART: Hot Wheels In Hot Pursuit Of Artifice," *The New York Times*, January 13

2012 "All That is Solid Melts Into Air," *Conveyor Magazine*, Issue 3
"500 Words," interview with Robert Buck, *Artforum.com*, February 7

2011 Paddle8 blog, guest contributor
"Studio with Red Bag: Various Interviews," *Triple Canopy*, Issue 12
Diehl, Travis. "Critic's Pick: Bedtime for Bonzo," *Artforum*, January

2010 Johnson, Ken. "Riffs on Photography (I Am Not Always a Camera)," *The New York Times*, July

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND POSITIONS

2010-15 Part-time faculty, Parsons the New School for Design, New York, NY

2010-11 Visiting Instructor, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

2009-11 Faculty, International Center of Photography, New York, NY

2009 Adjunct Faculty, University of Maine, Orono, ME

ARTIST TALKS AND LECTURES

2016 Artist Lecture, University of California, Los Angeles, CA

2015 Artist Lecture, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH
Artist Lecture, Bard College at Simon's Rock, Great Barrington, MA
Artist Lecture, Parsons the New School for Design, New York, NY

2014 Panelist, *Under Construction*, Unseen Photo Fair, Amsterdam, Netherlands

2010 Artist Lecture, NYU Steinhardt, New York, NY

2009 Workshop, Otis College of Art & Design, Los Angeles, CA

2008 Artist Lecture, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

MONOGRAPHS

2015 Porter, Matthew. Archipelago. London: MACK Books

COLLECTIONS

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio
The Traina Collection, San Francisco
The Sir Elton John Photography Collection
UBS Art Collection, New York
Statoil Art Collection, Norway

M+B

MATTHEW PORTER

Selected Portfolio

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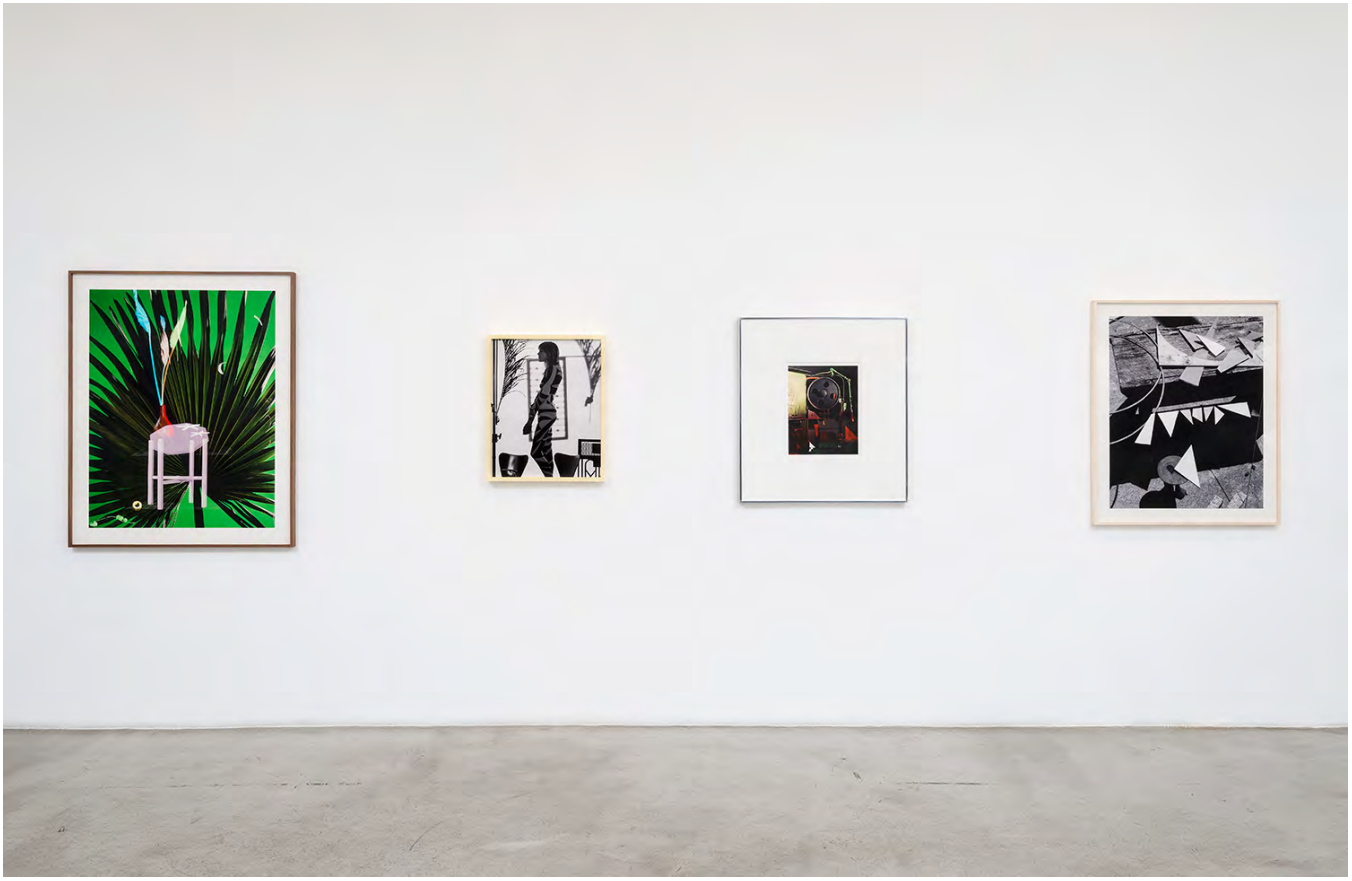
M+B



Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Four False Starts* at M+B, Los Angeles
January 23 – March 12, 2016

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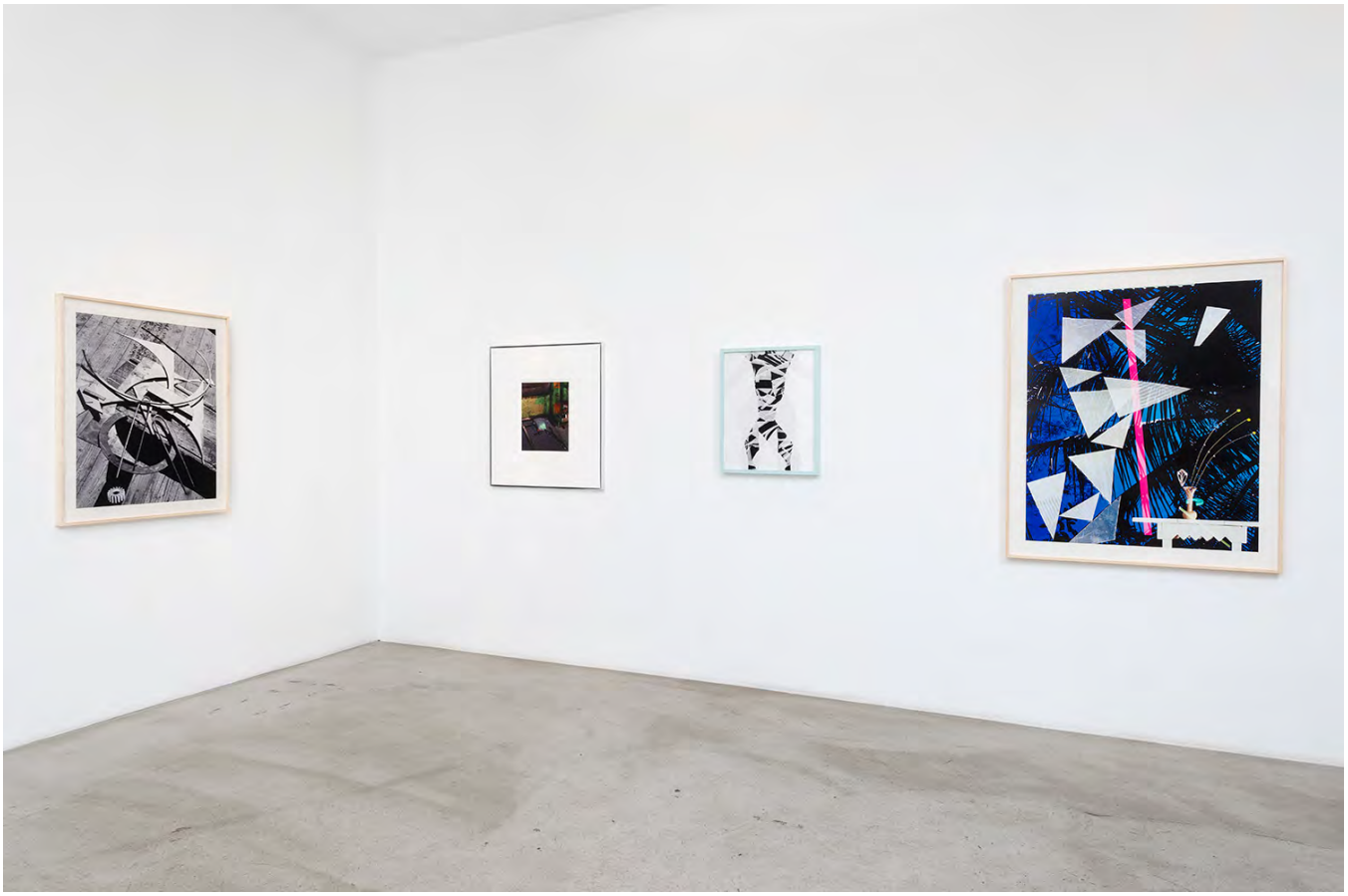
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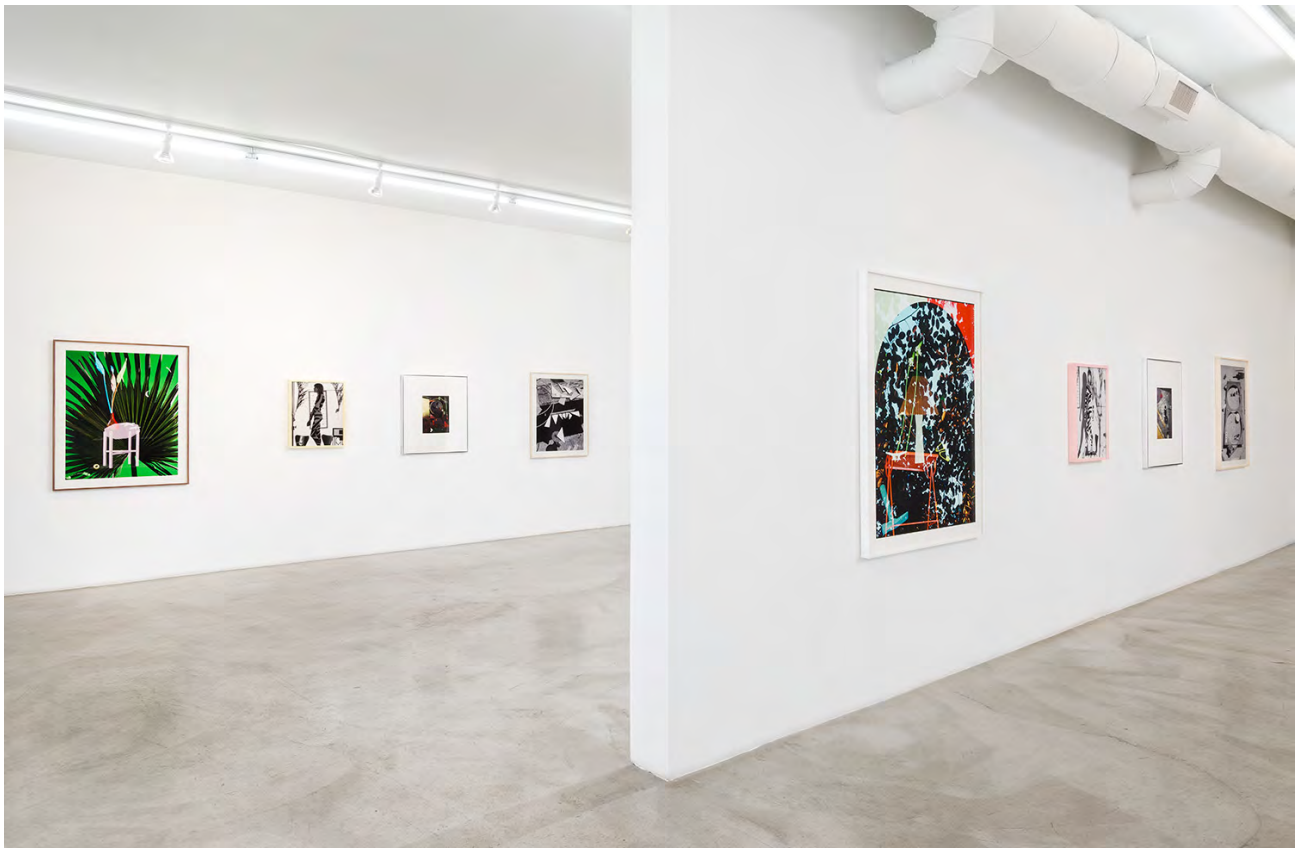
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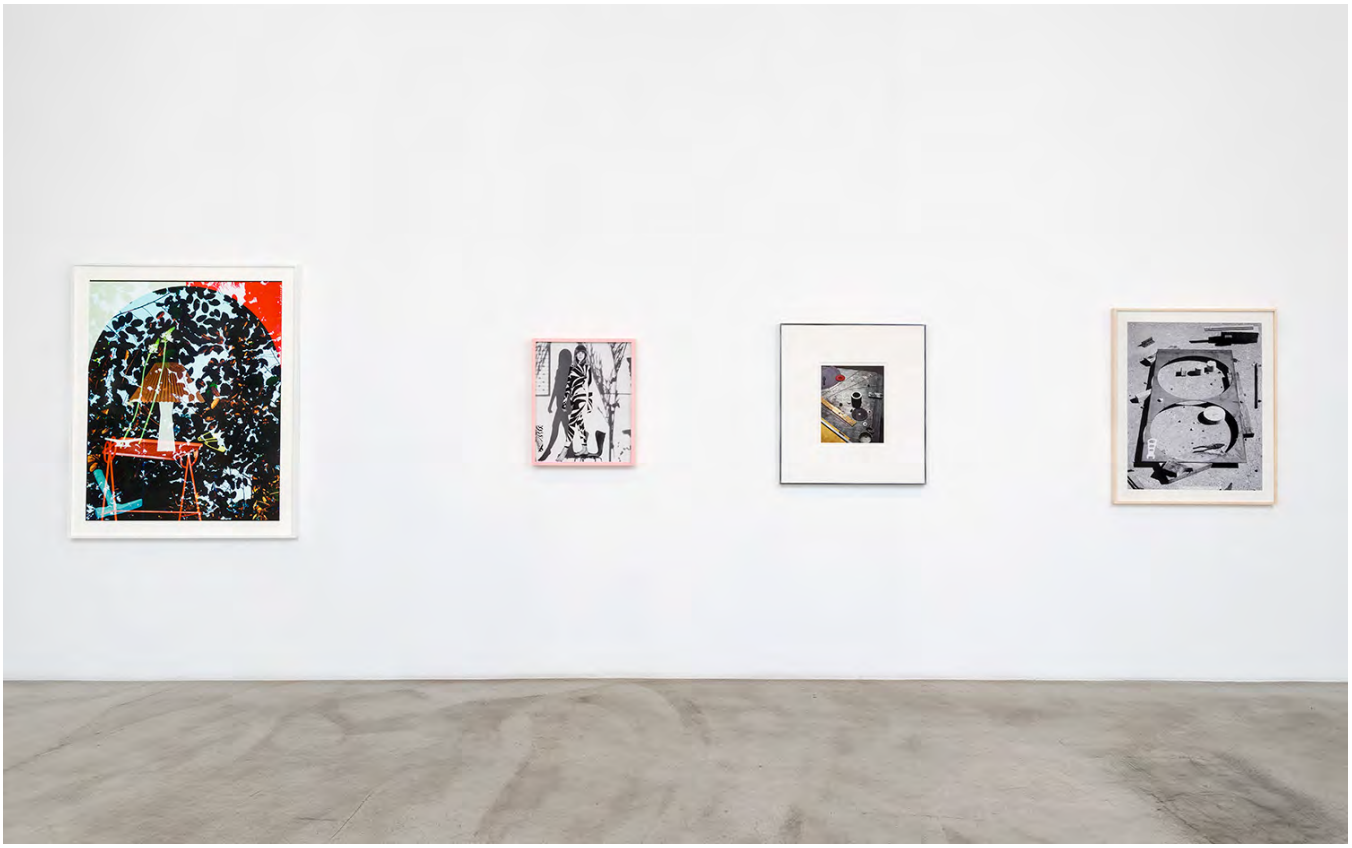
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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Four False Starts* at M+B, Los Angeles
January 23 – March 12, 2016

M+B



Matthew Porter
Shoreline, 2015
archival pigment print
image size: 42 x 32-1/2 inches (106.7 x 82.6 cm)
frame size: 48-1/2 x 39 inches (123.2 x 100 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPo.15.012.48)

M+B



Matthew Porter
Dynamic of the Dark, 2015
archival pigment print
image size: 43 x 34-1/4 inches (109.2 x 87 cm)
frame size: 49-1/2 x 40-3/4 inches (125.7 x103.4 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPo.15.010.49)

M+B



Matthew Porter
Vorticist Studio, 2015
archival pigment print
image size: 25 x 20 inches (63.5 x 50.8 cm)
frame size: 26 x 21 inches (66 x 53.3 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPo.15.017.26)

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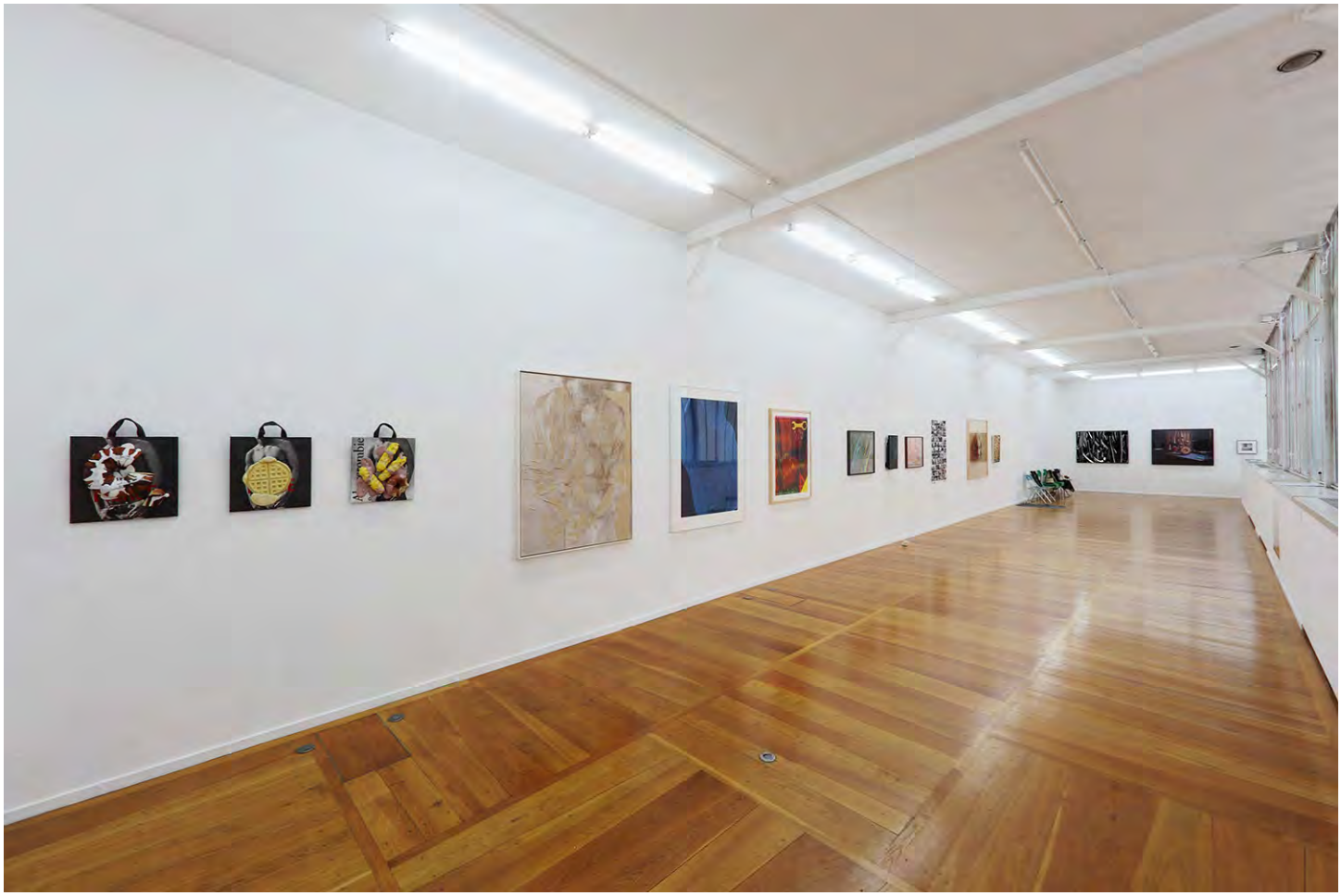
Matthew Porter
Curves, Floor, Gear, 2015
archival pigment print
image size: 34-1/2 x 27-5/8 inches (87.6 x 70.2 cm)
frame size: 40 x 33-1/8 inches (101.6 x 84.1 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPo.15.016.40)

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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Of My Affection*, group show at Anonymous Gallery, Mexico
November 28, 2014 – January 4, 2015

M+B



Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Me and Benjamin*, group show at Galerie Xippas, Paris
November 14, 2014 – January 10, 2015

M+B



Matthew Porter
Speed Square, 2014
archival pigment print
36-½ x 28 inches (92.7 x 71.1 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.14.014.36)

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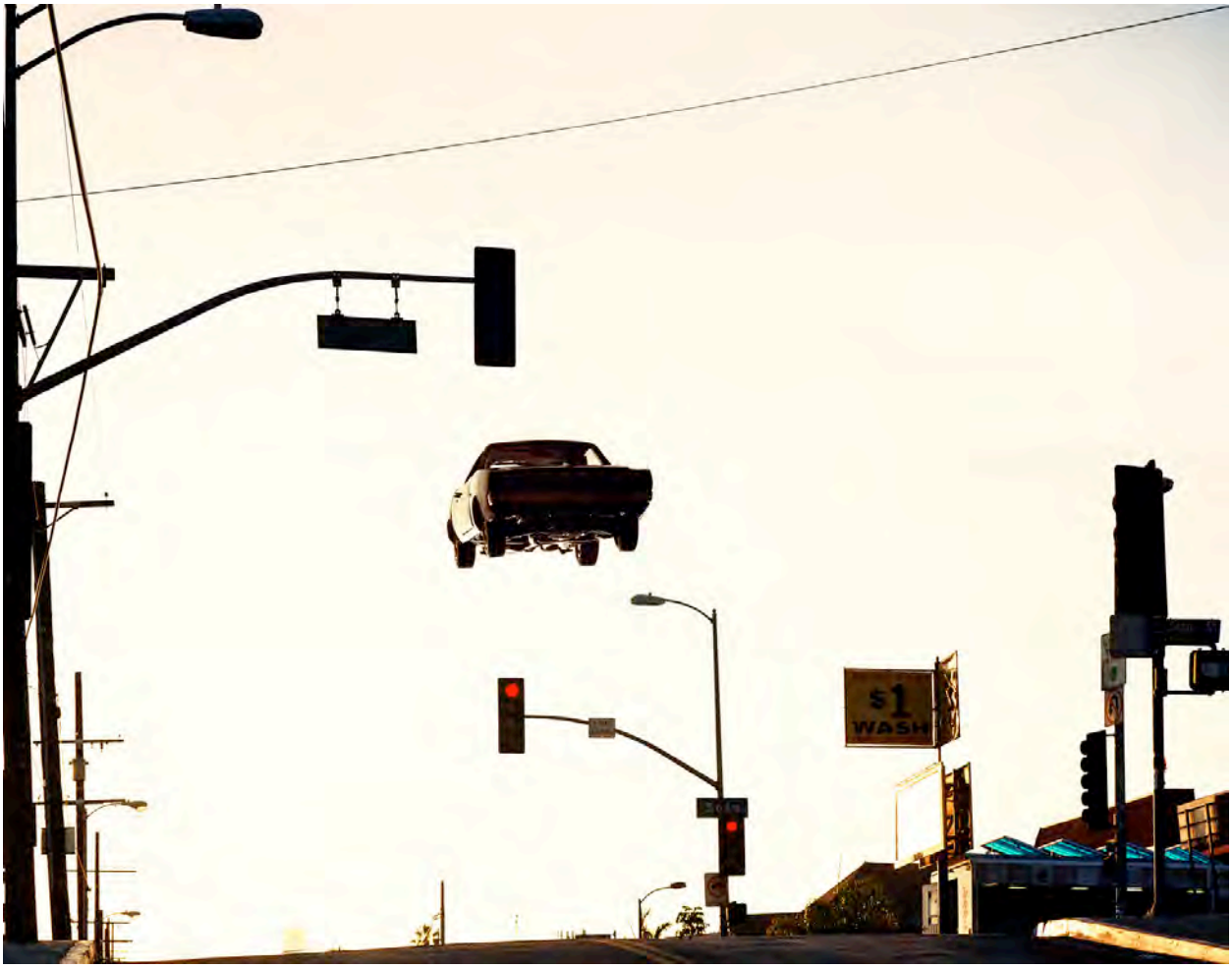
Matthew Porter
Installation view of *Stills*, group show at Michael Lowe Gallery
in conjunction with FotoFocus Biennial, Cincinnati
September 26 – November 1, 2014

M+B



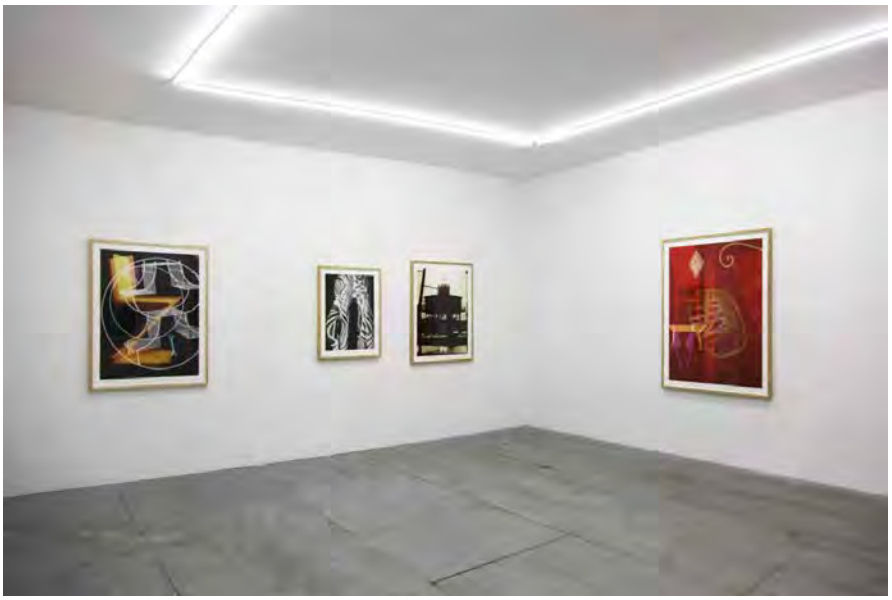
Matthew Porter
Airport Road, 2009
archival pigment print mounted to plexi with satin laminate in white frame
signed, dated, numbered, titled verso
15 x 19 inches (38.1 x 48.3 cm)
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.09.001)

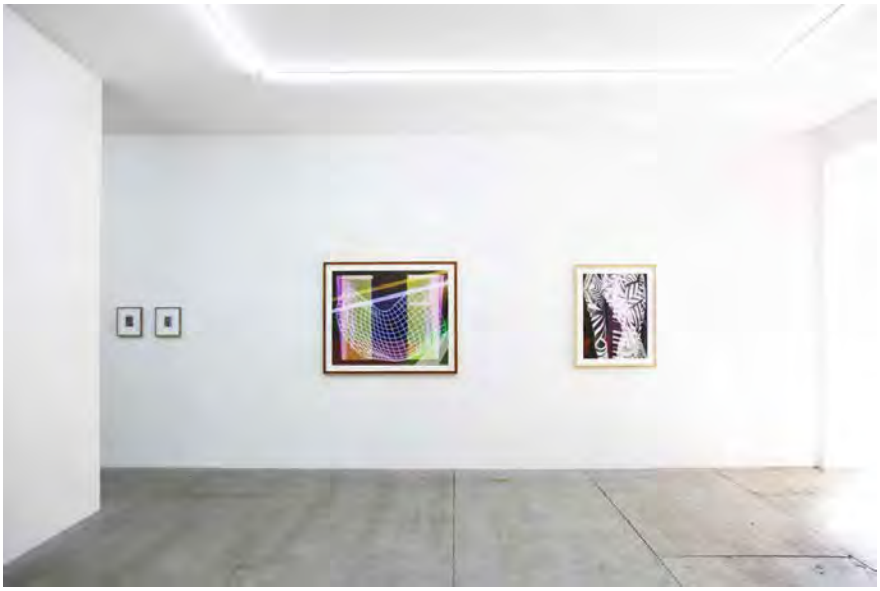
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Matthew Porter
Highland Park, 2010
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated, titled and numbered verso
25 x 32 inches (63.5 x 81.3 cm)
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

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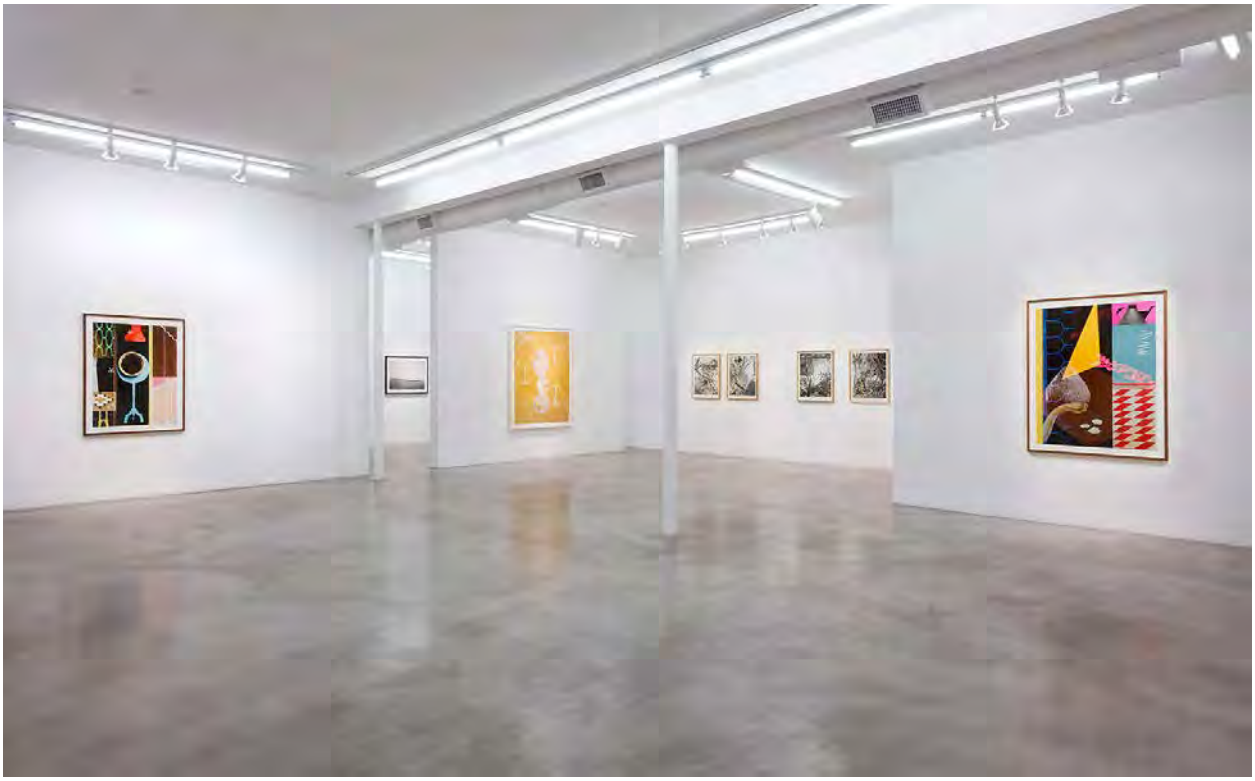
Matthew Porter
Installation View of *High Difference* at Invisible-Exports
March 7 – April 13, 2014

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Matthew Porter
High Difference, 2014
archival pigment print
signed, titled, dated and numbered verso
49-½ x 40-½ inches (125. 7 x 102.9 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.14.002.49)

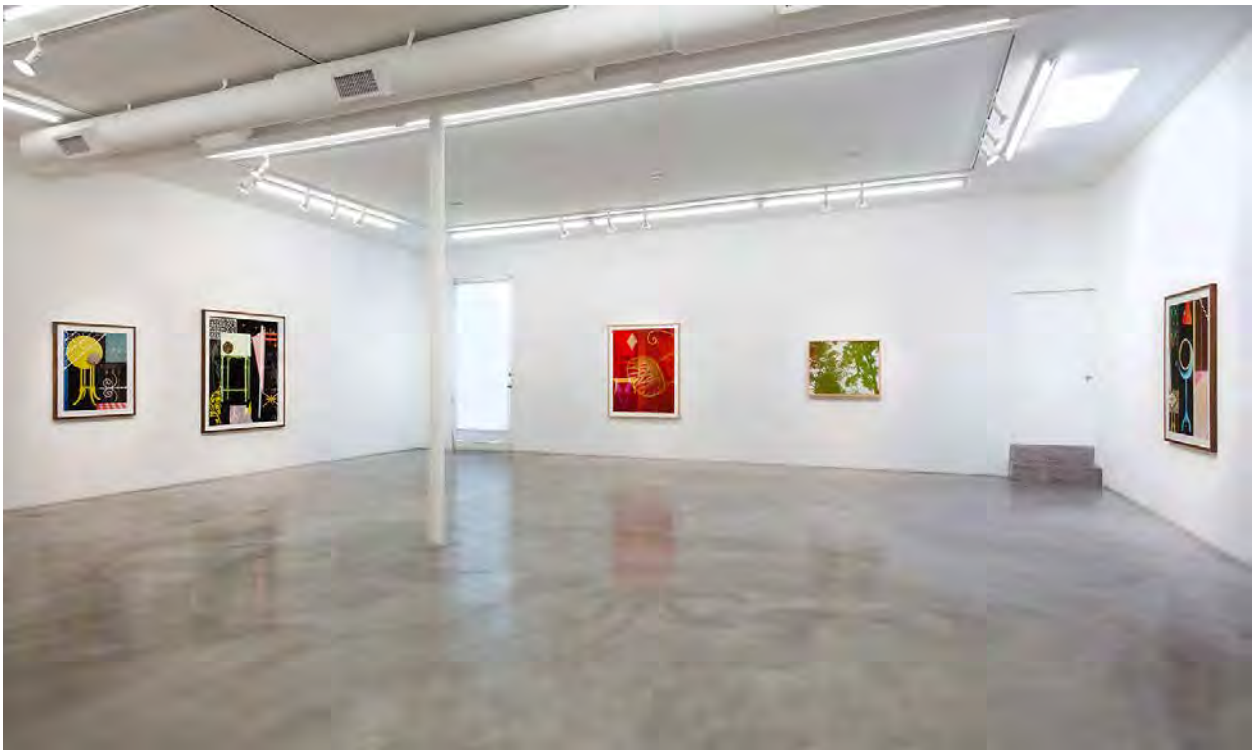
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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Greet the Dust* at M+B, Los Angeles
September 21 – December 7, 2013

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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Greet the Dust* at M+B, Los Angeles
September 21 – December 7, 2013

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Matthew Porter
This is Tomorrow, 2013
archival pigment print
signed, titled, dated and numbered verso
57 x 46-½ inches (144.8 x 118.1 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.13.005.57)

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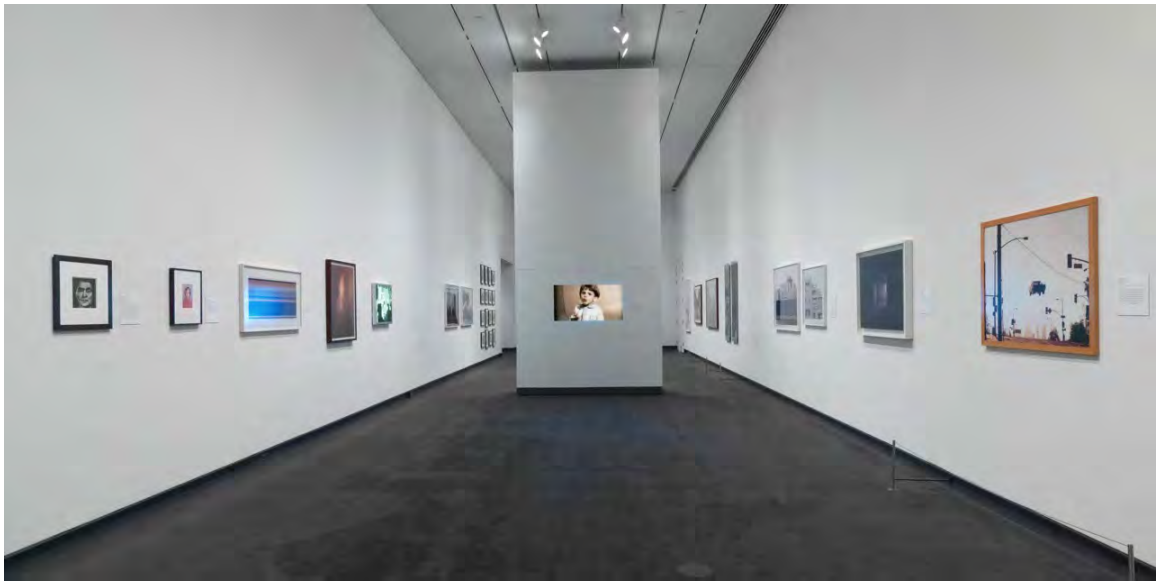


Matthew Porter
Plastic Form, 2013
archival pigment print
signed, titled, dated and numbered verso
58-½ x 47-½ inches (148.6 x 120.7 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.13.009.52)



Matthew Porter
Figure 1, 2013
archival pigment print
signed, titled, dated and numbered verso
32-¼ x 25-½ inches (81.9 x 64.8 cm)
edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.13.011.29)

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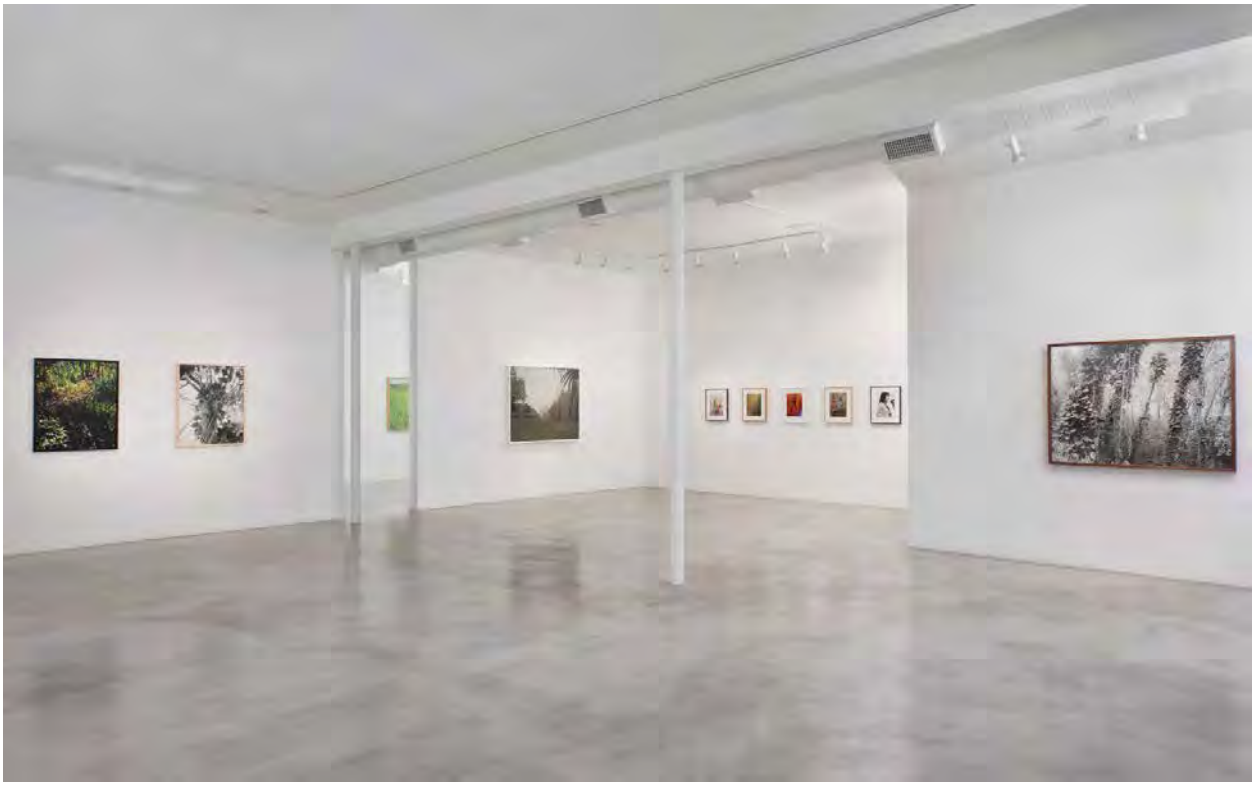
Matthew Porter
Installation View of *After Photoshop: Manipulated Photography in the Digital Age* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
September 25, 2012 – May 27, 2013

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Matthew Porter
110 Junction, 2010
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated, titled and numbered verso
32 x 40 inches (81.3 x 101.6 cm)
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

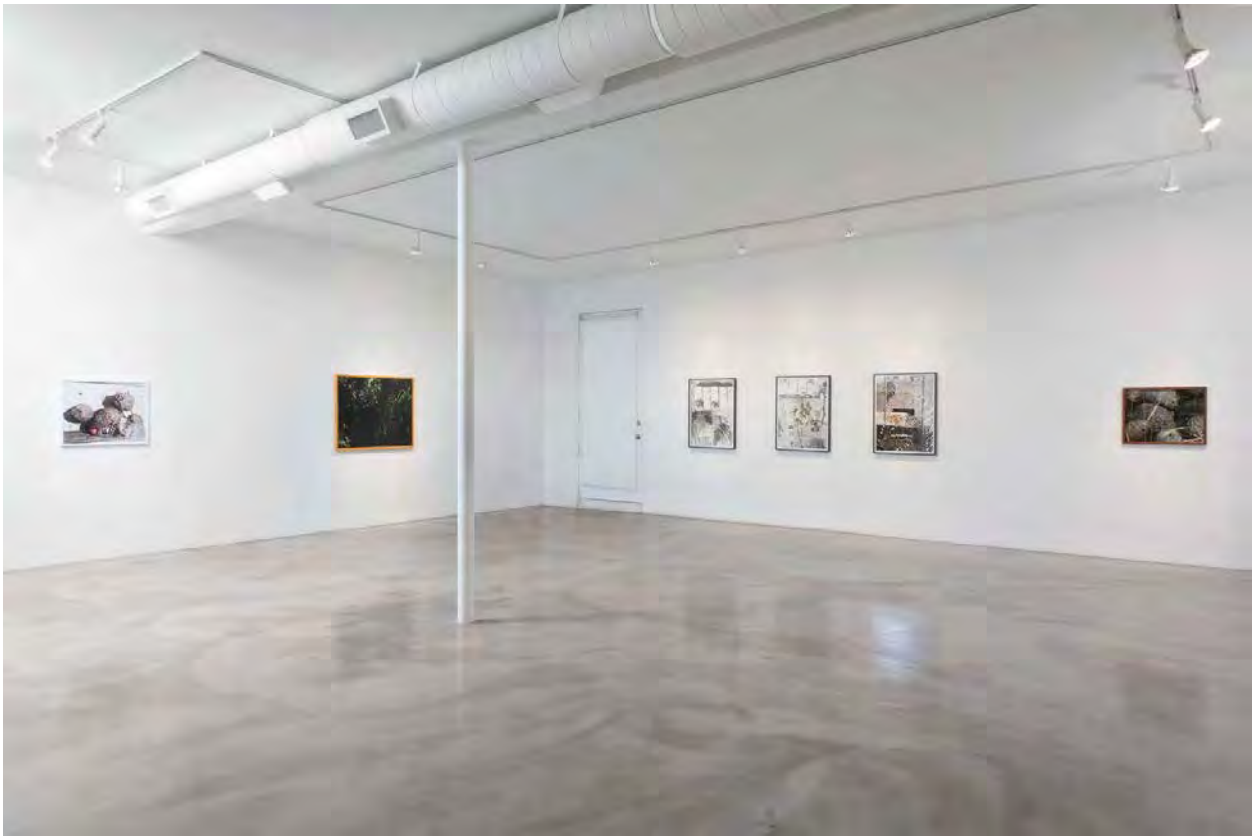
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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Pale Subtropical Light* at M+B, Los Angeles
January 7 – February 11, 2012

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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Pale Subtropical Light* at M+B, Los Angeles
January 7 – February 11, 2012

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Matthew Porter
View From Red River, 2011
archival pigment print in artist's frame
36 x 45-7/8 inches
signed, dated and numbered verso
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

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Matthew Porter
Bees of North America #1, 2010
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated, titled and numbered verso
24 x 30 inches (61 x 76.2 cm)
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

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Matthew Porter
Scissor Lift (Jane Fonda 1982), 2011
digital C-print in artist's frame
signed, dated, titled and numbered verso
20-1/4 x 17 inches
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MPO.11.002)

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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *High Lonesome* at M+B, Los Angeles
December 12, 2009 – January 23, 2010

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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *High Lonesome* at M+B, Los Angeles
December 12, 2009 – January 23, 2010

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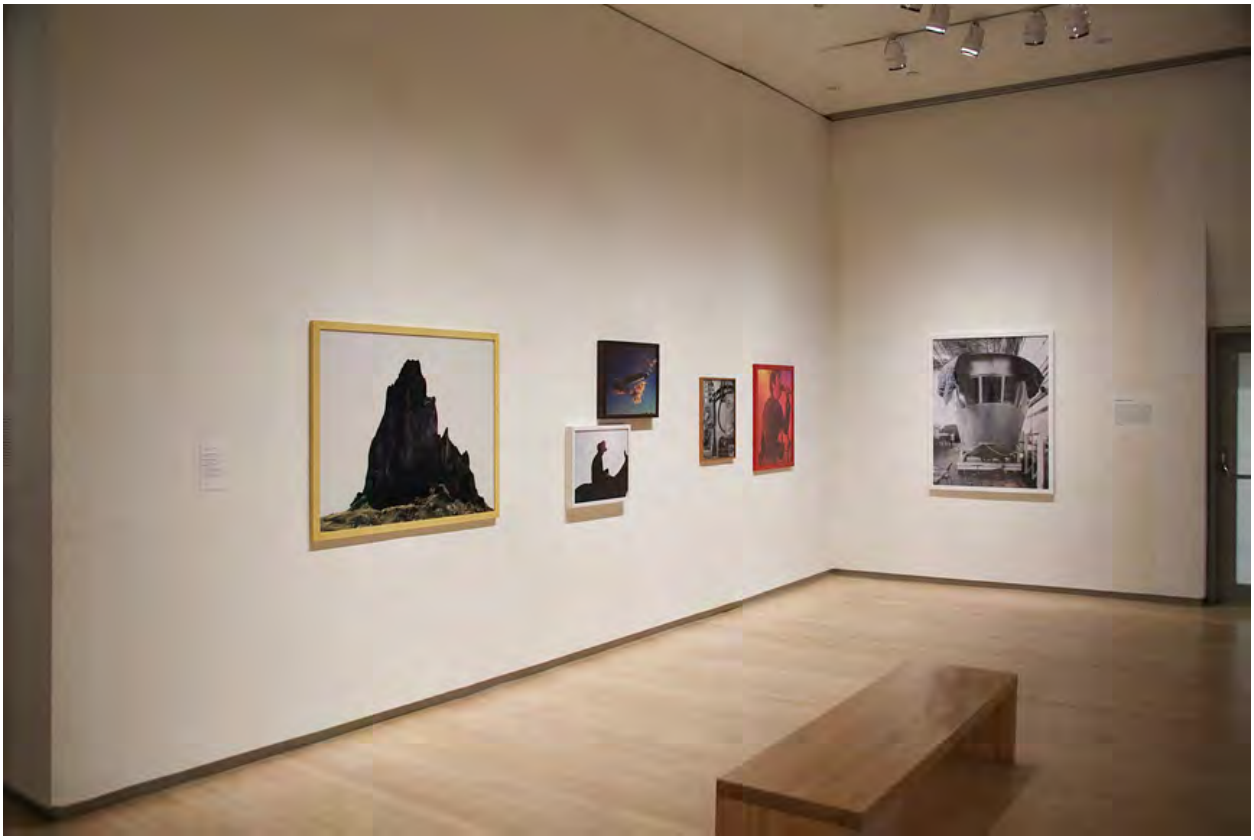
Matthew Porter
Organ Mountains, 2008
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated and numbered verso
40 x 57-1/2 inches (101.6 x 146 cm)
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs

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Matthew Porter
Startled Birds #2, 2009
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated and numbered verso
34 x 42 ¼ inches (86.4 x 107.3 cm)
edition of 5

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Matthew Porter
Installation View of *Perspectives* at The International Center of Photography, New York
May 21 – September 12, 2010

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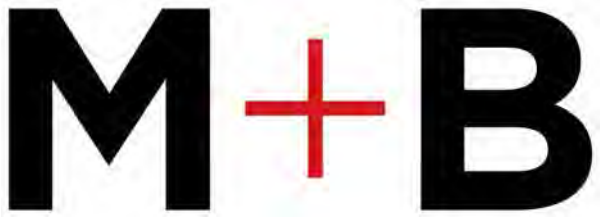


Matthew Porter
Horse & Rider, 2008
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated, titled and numbered verso
17 ½ x 22 ½ inches (44.5 x 57.2 cm)
edition of 5

M+B



Matthew Porter
Dark Mountain, 2009
archival pigment print in artist's frame
signed, dated and numbered verso
38 x 48 ¾ inches (96.5 x 123.8 cm)
edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs



MATTHEW PORTER

Press and Press Releases

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PRESS

matthew **porter**

THE LINKS ARE JOINED AND FORM A RING

Exhibition from April 14th to May 26th 2018
Opening on Saturday April 14th 2018, from 3 pm



Matthew Porter, *Granite, Wood, Marks*, 2018
Archival Pigment Print. Image : 87,6 x 70 cm
Edition 4 + 2 AP
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Xippas

Montages, overlays, multiple exposures: Matthew Porter uses experiments from old and new technologies to explore possibilities in image construction and manipulation. Full of historical and cultural references, his photographs create multiple and complex worlds within the same frame. In his first solo exhibition in France, at the Xippas Gallery in Paris, the New York artist presents a series inspired by the vocabulary of the avant-garde.

For Matthew Porter, photographic film is akin to a canvas: the transparency of the negative enables him to inscribe lines of light upon the surface, layer by layer, thereby creating an intricate agglomerate of shapes. Photography becomes not the capturing of a moment, but the outcome of a long elaboration process resulting in carefully constructed compositions. Following the initial shoot comes a preparatory drawing, which will enable the disposition of objects and the calculation of subsequent exposure times.

Made in the studio of his father, a sculptor inspired by the Modernist period, the photographs in this series feature the cast-offs from the fabrication of his work - the unused wood and steel pieces. With a slightly nostalgic air from this bygone era, the artist gives a second life to these residues destined for disposal.

Scraps, wood cuts, shavings and tools are interlaced on the floor, forming almost abstract black and white compositions, where ordinary objects morph from models of utopian cities to Bauhaus constructions, and where toothed wheels, wrenches or metal sheets float above the image as a result of multiple exposures. The metal, whitened

by the blinding light of the sun, and the nearly black shadows create areas of complete emptiness, as if the shapes were cut out of the photographic film itself, making the wood, concrete or metal almost palpable.

In the exhibition space, two color photographs, imprints of a certain aspiration to the past or a faraway and probably inexistant place, frame the black and white images, creating a kind of parenthesis. These studio photographs of jungle foliage call to mind the ideal tropics, a recurrent dream of Western culture, and evoke the possibility of escape. Much like artists from past centuries who sought inspiration far from civilization, the spectator is immersed in a renewed quest for the uncertain, a mirage.

Cherished subjects for avant-garde photography, such as everyday objects, tools, and more generally, the poetry of daily life and machinery, are reinvented in Matthew Porter's work. As if following Rosalind Krauss, for whom originality (the main characteristic of the avant-garde) is not so much a formal invention, but an expression of "the self as origin"[1], possessing infinite potential for regeneration, Matthew Porter immerses himself in a personal universe in order to create images where superimposed shots merge different realities and times.

[1] Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, MIT Press, 1986, p. 6.

Swinging between references to art history and the attempt to emancipate himself from it by writing his own, Matthew Porter's images play on the gap between nostalgia and the present, the material and the immaterial, the static and the dynamic.

Matthew Porter (born in 1975 in Pennsylvania, United States) graduated from Bard-ICP in 2006. His work has been shown in numerous institutional exhibitions: "After Photoshop" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 2012), "Perspectives 2010" at the International Center of Photography, New York (2010). Recently, he took part in collective exhibitions at the George Eastman Museum in Rochester (2016), and at Foam, Amsterdam, in the Netherlands (2014).

In France, his work was exhibited in the "Autophoto" exhibition at the Fondation Cartier (2017).

His first monograph, "Archipelago" was published by Mack Books in 2015. His work is included in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art in New York, as well as in UBS Art Collection, New York, among others.

In 2016, Matthew Porter was invited by Christian Dior to create the design of the limited-edition bags and accessories for the *Dior Lady Art* project.

Matthew Porter is represented by the M+B Galleries, Los Angeles, and Invisible Exports, New York. He lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

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BLOUINARTINFO

Matthew Porter's Solo Debut at Galerie Xippas, Paris

BY BLOUIN ARTINFO | APRIL 08, 2018



Opening soon is an exhibition of assorted photographs by American artist Matthew Porter. The exhibition is the first solo show by the artist and is being presented by Galerie Xippas. The Paris-based venue will host "The Links are Joined and Form a Ring" from April 14 and run until May 26, 2018.

Porter uses various techniques like montages, overlays, multiple exposures and fuses old and new technologies to explore new possibilities in construction and manipulation of images. His photographs are full of historical and cultural references that create multiple and complex worlds within the same frame. For Matthew Porter, photographic film is a canvas: He etches lines of light on the transparent surface of the negative layer by layer, thereby creating an intricate aggregation of different shapes. To the artist, photography is not just the capturing of a moment, but the product of a long elaborate process that results in carefully constructed compositions. After the initial shoot, he does a preparatory drawing, through which he chooses the disposition of objects and calculates subsequent exposure times, as well as doing additional digital manipulations. These photographs are made of the rejected pieces of the sculptures — the unused wood and steel pieces in the studio of his father, a sculptor inspired by the Modernist period. With a sense of nostalgia, the artist renders new life to these pieces. Scraps, wood cuts, shavings and tools are arranged interlinked on the floor, forming almost abstract black-and-white composition. Thus ordinary objects metamorphose into models of utopian cities to Bauhaus constructions, and where toothed wheels, wrenches or metal sheets float above the image as a result of multiple exposures. The metal turning white in the bright sunlight creates an image of void with the nearly black shadows that seem to cut out of the photographic film itself, making the wood, concrete or metal almost palpable. In the exhibition space, two-color photographs are shown which show the image of a far away, imaginary place. These studio photographs of jungle plants remind us of the tropical jungle, a recurrent dream of Western culture, and evoke the possibility of escape.

Matthew Porter was born in 1975 in Pennsylvania, United States. He graduated from Bard-ICP in 2006. His work has been shown in numerous institutional exhibitions: at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, at the International Center of Photography, New York (2010). Recently, he took part in collective exhibitions at the George Eastman Museum in Rochester (2016), and at Foam, Amsterdam, in the Netherlands (2014). In France, his work was exhibited in the "Autophoto" exhibition at the Fondation Cartier (2017).

"The Links are Joined and Form a Ring" will run from April 14 through May 26, 2018, at Galerie Xippas, 108, rue Vieille du Temple, 75003, Paris, France.

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ARTFORUM

Matthew Porter
INVISIBLE-EXPORTS

By Claire Lehmann
December 2, 2016

In the years after New Hollywood cinematographers popularized lens flare as an acceptable filmic glitch, a certain strain of color photography—as seen on moody LP covers and ad pages for muscle cars or cigarettes—seemed to dwell almost exclusively in the magic hour, that pre-twilight moment when the sun emanates diffraction spikes and gentle melancholy. Roughly the same period marked the apex of utopian design's perfusion in popular culture, as geodesic domes materialized everywhere from Expo 67 in Montreal to Colorado's legendary Drop City commune.



Matthew Porter, Frigatebird, 2014/16
archival pigment print
20 x 25 inches

Matthew Porter mines and merges these aesthetic strains in the exhibition "Sunclipse," titled after Buckminster Fuller's non-geocentric term for sunset. Taking contemporary photography's genre eclecticism as a given, Porter sets off hazy, image artifact–laden pictures of nature and decay in equatorial zones with ambiguous fashion shots and cinematic cityscapes, generating a productively inscrutable mix that implies civilization's impending dusk. A series of late-afternoon photos ("Cape Romano," 2016) taken in southern Florida features a quirky coastal vacation home composed of bubble-shaped pods on stilts—vaguely space-age structures that are being reclaimed by the rising sea, their futuristic curves defaced by graffiti sporting distinctly American appellations: KAYLA, KC, and COBI were here. In Frigatebird, 2014/16, sun shrouds the perched avian subject with the golden mist of a veiling flare, more typically applied to glossy editorials as a dreamy postproduction effect, while Porter's actual editorial-esque shots depict a female model shielding her eyes from bright light or fringed by tropical plant fronds.

The exhibition's fulcrum, however, is Porter's photograph of the United Nations headquarters at nightfall, UN, 2016, which exposes an inadvertent, possibly divinatory ghost: The contour of the camera's aperture blades is doubled in the form of a crimson pentagon—sly metonym for American militarism?—suspended in midair, haunting the monolith to global peacekeeping in the dying light. Ascendant darkness has never looked more radiant, or more terrifyingly apt.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE






MATTHEW PORTER
Four False Starts

January 23 – March 12, 2016

Opening Reception

Saturday, January 23, 2016 from 6 to 8 pm

M+B is pleased to present *Four False Starts*, Matthew Porter's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition will run from January 23, 2016 through March 12, 2016, with an opening reception on Saturday, January 23 from 6 to 8 pm.

1.
Installed in the gallery are sixteen framed photographs—four sets of four pictures. Each of the sets is composed of work from a different series: a continued exploration of multiple exposure still lifes, black and white still lifes made in Porter's father's sculpture studio in Maine, a model wearing a dazzle camouflage suit that Porter commissioned, and pictures made at the fabrication facility Polich Tallix in upstate New York. Together, they form a mosaic of inquiry and interest, overlapping at times, and bonded by their pictorial similarities.

2.
The exhibition takes its title from an artist profile written by Janet Malcolm, *Forty-one False Starts*. Each of the "starts" serves as an introduction, rebooting every few paragraphs, yet the stuttered essay coheres into a full portrait of an otherwise elusive subject. The piece has no ending, so the question is how to begin—a redundant, tidal process that washes new ideas over old ones.

3.
Bauhaus faculty and students had a playful tendency to photograph one another wearing their respective designs. I'm particularly interested in Erich Consemüller's pictures of a woman seated in a Breuer chair. It's unknown exactly who the model was—she wears a mask designed for a theatre production, and her clothes are products of the school's textile workshops. A mask, a dress, and a chair—all items that the school had given a modern facelift to, or to quote Buckminster Fuller's Bronx cheer for the Bauhaus, had merely modernized "the superficies of end products…" That kind of design, he was arguing, was all surface, a purely aesthetic upgrade that left core concepts unchanged.

4.
The Polich Tallix facility is the size of an airplane hangar, airy and bright inside, but as soon as I set up in one of the fabrication bays, I'm in someone's way. Haste is inimical to large-format photography, but it's only a few hours before they close for the weekend, so I'm working quickly. Against the back wall, metal is being heated in buckets over blue flames. People tend to the fire wearing silver suits, their faces hidden behind black visors. *Silver people on the shoreline, let us be…* I find a surface I like and start gathering metal bits to make a still life—copper rods, drill bits, scrap metal, all of it used by the shop in the fabrication of large sculptural works. This is why I came, to photograph the workspaces and to make pictures about the persistence of objects in art making.

Matthew Porter (b. 1975, Pennsylvania) received his BA from Bard College in 1998 and his MFA from Bard-ICP in 2006. His work has been exhibited in galleries in New York, Los Angeles, Paris and London, including *Under Construction – New Positions in American Photography,* a group exhibition at Foam Museum in Amsterdam that then travelled to the Pioneer Works Center for Art and Innovation in Brooklyn; *After Photoshop* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and *Perspectives* at the International Center of Photography Museum, New York. Porter's work is held in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio; The Sir Elton John Photography Collection; the UBS Art Collection, New York; the Statoil Collection, Norway and the Traina Collection, San Francisco. Porter's curatorial projects include *Soft Target,* organized with Phil Chang at M+B, Los Angeles; *Seven Summits* at Mount Tremper Arts, New York; *The Crystal Chain* at Invisible Exports, New York and *Bedtime for Bonzo* at M+B, Los Angeles, which was an *ARTFORUM* Critics' Pick in 2011. He is the co-editor of *Blind Spot* magazine Issue 45 and his writings and interviews have been featured in *Triple Canopy*, *Blind Spot*, *ARTFORUM.com* and *Canteen*. MACK Books recently published his first monograph "Archipelago." Matthew Porter lives and works in Brooklyn.

Location:	**M+B**, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, California 90069
Show Title:	Four False Starts
Exhibition Dates:	January 23 – March 12, 2016
Opening Reception:	Saturday, January 23, 6 – 8pm
Gallery Hours:	Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, and by appointment

For press inquiries, please contact Jeanie Choi at (310) 550-0050 or jeanie@mbart.com.

For all other inquiries, contact Shannon Richardson at shannon@mbart.com or Jonlin Wung at jonlin@mbart.com.

# # #

M+B

ARTSCENE™

RECOMMENDED EXHIBITIONS

By Jody Zellen
March 2016



Matthew Porter, “Dynamic of the Dark,” 2015, archival pigment print, 43 x 34 1/4.” Currently on view at M+B.

”Four False Starts” not only refers to Matthew Porter’s exhibition of four series of works, but is also a reference to Janet Malcom’s “Forty-one False Starts,” an essay written about artist David Salle for the New Yorker Magazine in 1994. Porter’s exhibition is a conceptual photography project in which the artist presents sixteen photographs, four images from each of four series, installing them across sections of the gallery. The photographs are formally related, though made in different locations using different cameras and processes. Juxtaposed are colorful still-lifes that are multiple exposures, black and white images of a model in a patterned jump suit, black and white still-lifes constructed for the camera containing gears and metal fragments, as well as sombre abstract photographs of machinery created at Polich Tallix, a fabrication facility in upstate New York. While the images work in concert with each other, they also resonate in their own right as Porter’s arrangements have a Bau- hausian sensibility and elegance. The images are at once familiar and strange (M+B, West Hollywood).

photograph

MATTHEW PORTER: FOUR FALSE STARTS AT M+B

By Catherine Wagley
February 11, 2016



Matthew Porter, Vorticist Studio, 2015. Courtesy M+B



Matthew Porter, Dynamic of the Dark, 2015. Courtesy M+B

The custom-made, dazzle camo jumpsuit that appears in multiple photographs in Matthew Porter's current exhibition at M+B through March 12 is attractive enough to illicit envy. If a viewer is, like this writer, a jumpsuit collector, she might repeatedly think, "how can I get one of those?" when encountering Porter's model in that quirky black-and-white ensemble, standing on a chair or between the shadows of palm branches in a carefully framed photo. Much of the work in Porter's show Four False Starts invites such personal reactions – it's easy to simply "like" or "want" one of the photographs, and not worry too much about its worth in relation to the cannon or the current moment.

Porter titled his show after a New Yorker essay by Janet Malcolm, "Forty-One False Starts," in which Malcolm considers the career of painter David Salle, trying again and again to effectively "start" the article. In many of her starts, she thinks about expectations, how "the specter of wrongdoing hovers more luridly over visual art than over literature or music." There is more pressure to be at once humble and wildly original, committed but not overtly ambitious.

In his show, Porter includes four different "starts" to bodies of work. There are the girl-in-jumpsuit photos; the close-ups of tools taken in his sculptor father's Maine studio; documentary-style photographs taken in the Polich Talix fabrication studio, which has made work for Alexander Calder and Louise Bourgeois; and semi-abstract, multi-colored still lifes made using multiple exposures. The latter most resembles work from Porter's past shows, stylized explorations of color and control that felt more self-conscious about their cohesiveness and relevance as "contemporary art exhibitions."

Here, hanging so close to an elegant photo of factory tools, a multiply exposed montage of a saturated table and lamp surrounded by leaves looks like just one inconclusive possibility for image-making. There are other possibilities too. Overall, Porter's show, funnily, feels like the effort of a mid-career artist to be free of the pressure to be a single, pitchable thing. This sense of newfound freedom releases the viewer, too, to let the mind wander and to think about attraction or nostalgia rather than success.

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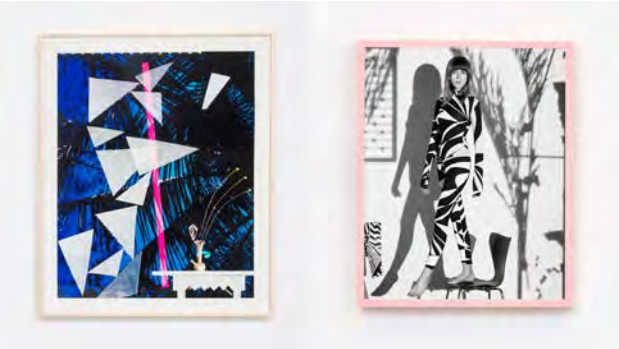
COOL HUNTING

Matthew Porter's "Four False Starts" Exhibition

The Brooklyn-based artist blurs the lines of photographic manipulation in his LA show

By Jonah Samson
February 9, 2016

Brooklyn-based artist Matthew Porter is part of a large group of contemporary artists pushing the boundaries of traditional photographic techniques and blurring the lines of digital and film manipulation. What sets Porter apart, however, are his calculated transitions between manipulated and straight photography. His recent book "Archepelago" (selected as one of our top picks at the New York Art Book Fair) was designed to highlight his versatility in image-making. In his current exhibition "Four False Starts" at LA's M+B Gallery, Porter skillfully weaves influences from the 19th and 20th centuries with classic photographic tropes, illustrating the common threads that tie them together. We spoke with the artist about his wide ranging influences and the state of photography today.

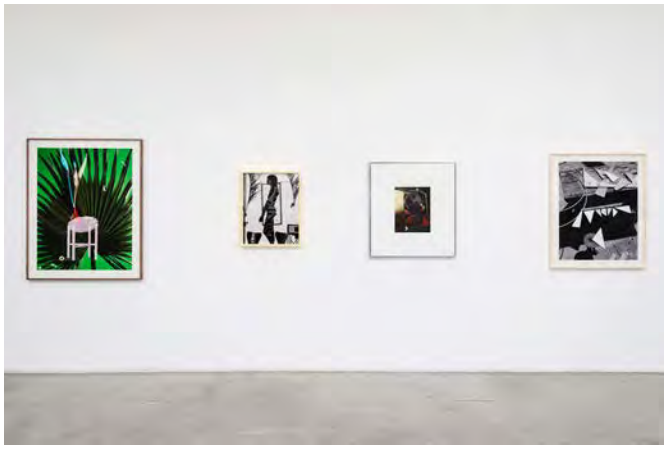


Installation view of *Soft Target* at M+B, Los Angeles
Organized by Phil Chang and Matthew Porter

Your show intertwines work from our seemingly disparate sources. Can you talk about these four elements and why you chose them?

I have five or six things I'm currently working on, but I think the four elements that are in the show represent the strongest, or at the moment the most resolved. That's part of the reason I chose them, the other is that "Five False Starts" would have meant more work than I could have afforded to produce.

I've been working on the color multiple exposures for a while, and wanted to include the next iteration of them—table top still-lifes with landscapes and plants added into the background. That kind of foliage shows up in some of the older work, and so acts like a kind of leitmotif. The same is true with regard to the patterned suit—the high difference camouflage appeared in my last show in New York, but this time I think the results are better. I made the other photographs thinking about the specialized art fabricators that are still in business, and the persistence of unitary art objects, like sculpture—useless forms that are in pursuit of aesthetic satisfaction.





One of the most captivating aspects of your work is how smartly and skillfully you combine historical references and modern sensibilities. there are traces of Florence Henri's mirrored still life photographs from the 1920s and '30s, mixed a very contemporary use of multiple exposures. Were you referencing something in particular with this work?

I haven't looked at Florence Henri in a long time, so thanks for sending me down an internet rabbit hole! I do tend to look at a lot of references, like pictures from the Bauhaus where the students and teachers are photographing each other wearing their designs, or Herbert Matter posters and Stuart Davis paintings. In the past I've tried to create images that look very iconic, like the Hindenburg floating in the sky, but now I'm more interested in developing my own visual language. I'm hoping that when someone walks through the show, they'll recognize visual echoes from picture to picture, that are now part of my lexicon.

You were included in Charlotte Cotton's recent book "Photography is Magic" and a show at The Met a few years ago called "Manipulated Photography in the Ditigal Age," and while your work clearly embraces the manipulated image, you also demonstrate a devotion to straight photography. Do you approach these as two distinct ways of working?

I think Lucas Blalock said it best in response to this question (I'm paraphrasing), "It's all production." I use the tools available, and think less these days about concrete photography than the resulting representational image. The conversation around Cotton's book tends to get bogged down in a discussion of abstraction or production, but she talks a lot in the essay about the importance of starting with an image, a referent, and the work being image based.

The Met show was arguably more of a showcase and included very different work than what's in the Cotton book, but that reflects the kind of artist that I've always wanted to be. I find a varied output exciting, like the work of James Welling, Roe Ethridge, or Tacita Dean.

"Four False Starts" consists of 16 photographs hung as four sets of four and is on now through 12 March at M+B Gallery (612 North Almont Drive) in Los Angeles.

Studio images courtesy of Matthew Porter, all others courtesy of M+B Gallery

M+B

photo-eye BLOG

Book Review: Archipelago

By Adam Bell
June 11, 2015

We begin with a boat. Aboard the Arcadia II, we're led down a river, into the ocean, and along the rocky coast of a tropical island. Led by an unseen captain, our actual trip is far from clear, but we never seem to stray too far. Matthew Porter's Archipelago takes its name from the island of Kaua'i, part of the Hawaiian archipelago, which features prominently in the images, but is never clearly described. Instead, the island, as well as the implied islands that surround it, serve as a metaphoric framework that allow Porter to weave together multiple strands of his work. Employing a variety of different styles and evoking numerous pictorial genres, Porter's disparate images touch on numerous topics and playfully explore the illusionistic possibilities of photographs. Frustrating expectations of a simple journey, Archipelago is a collection of associative links, overlapping narratives, and tangential threads that constantly push us away and pull us back, ultimately leaving us to circle in the eddies of the images' magnetic pull.



Archipelago
Photographs by Matthew Porter
Mack, 2015.

Best known for his sun-drenched images of 70s era muscle cars suspended mid-jump, Porter is a protean photographer whose work has long sought to dissect photography's mythic and history laden possibilities. Much like Porter's exhibited work, Archipelago employs an intentionally varied style that merges multiple narrative threads from Jane Fonda's activities protesting the Vietnam War to the Hawaiian island of Kaua'i to the American Southwest to a coastal lighthouse in Maryland. Ambitiously conflated, the multiple bodies of work are joined and overlapped into a perplexing and fascinating whole.



Historically dense, the contextual support of Porter's image is not always immediately apparent, but become clearer upon close inspection and through the occasional snippets of text that appear in the book. In the case of Fonda, who appears via a restaged photograph of her at a rally from the late 60s or early 70s, we are reminded via the text not only of her controversial political stance and actions during the Vietnam War, but also how her actions and the images taken of her during the time haunted her for years to come. Although less apparent, the tropical island of Kaua'i has significance as the location for numerous Hollywood movies depicting Southeast Asia and the Pacific — the tattered foliage and forlorn iguanas are lingering reminders of the former backdrop for reimagined wars on the screen. For Porter, photography is not only a means of making both the past and present visible, but also a tool to dissect the fantasy and reality of a place.

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Archipelago ties these varied bodies of work together through the careful use of repetition and the subtle variation of reoccurring themes. Images, like those of iguanas, repeat with slight variations. Earlier work, like that of the cars or wasp's nests, are recycled, or referenced through Polaroids or behind the scenes shots of studio set-ups. Jagged lava coated coastlines and tropical foliage, as well as still-lifes of rusted nautical equipment appear throughout the book. Along side these images are restaged iconic photographs, like that of Jane Fonda, as well as seemingly iconic photographs, like the two images of musicians who appear in the beginning and end of the book. Although seemingly disparate, each image becomes a crucial part of the journey, an implied link, visible thread, or tangent that temporarily leads us astray before pulling us back. Owing equal amounts to Roe Etheridge and Christopher Williams, Porter's work deftly conjures photographic illusions while simultaneously poking holes in its curtain.

The book's elegant design underscores this central theme. Each page is arranged in a grid of four potential images. Never entirely full, each spread has gaps. Like the titular islands, the clustered images orbit the book's spine — spinning outward in repeating and overlapping visual narratives. If there is a subject of Porter's book, it is this illusionistic dance and playful subversion of expectations. Each spread with its carefully placed images, circumambulates the work's true subject, which all along has been the dance itself. For the reader, the gaps are invitations to fill the fragmented narratives and puzzle over the omissions. Like gaps in a photo album, the absence of the images draws us in more closely. Interspersed throughout the book are several short texts that frame the work either directly, as is the case for Jane Fonda or the Knoll lighthouse, or reference the work's larger themes like place and time, like Brian Sholis' text. Fortunately, none of these texts attempt to explain the work, but help guide us in various ways.

Ending just as abruptly as it begins, the book leaves us on the boat. Looking off the deck at a small island, past a silhouetted bird on the coast, down a river, and onward into the dense jungle ahead, into parts unknown, we're left adrift, surrounded by land and sea.—Adam Bell









Photography by
Matthew Porter

SUNSHINE NOIR

[/ˈsʌnʃaɪn/ - nwʌ/] ◆ I am attached to the way palm trees float and recede down empty avenues, attached to the deceptive perspectives of the pale subtropical light. I am attached equally to the glories of the place and to its flaws, its faults, its occasional revelations of psychic and physical slippage, its beauties and its betrayals.

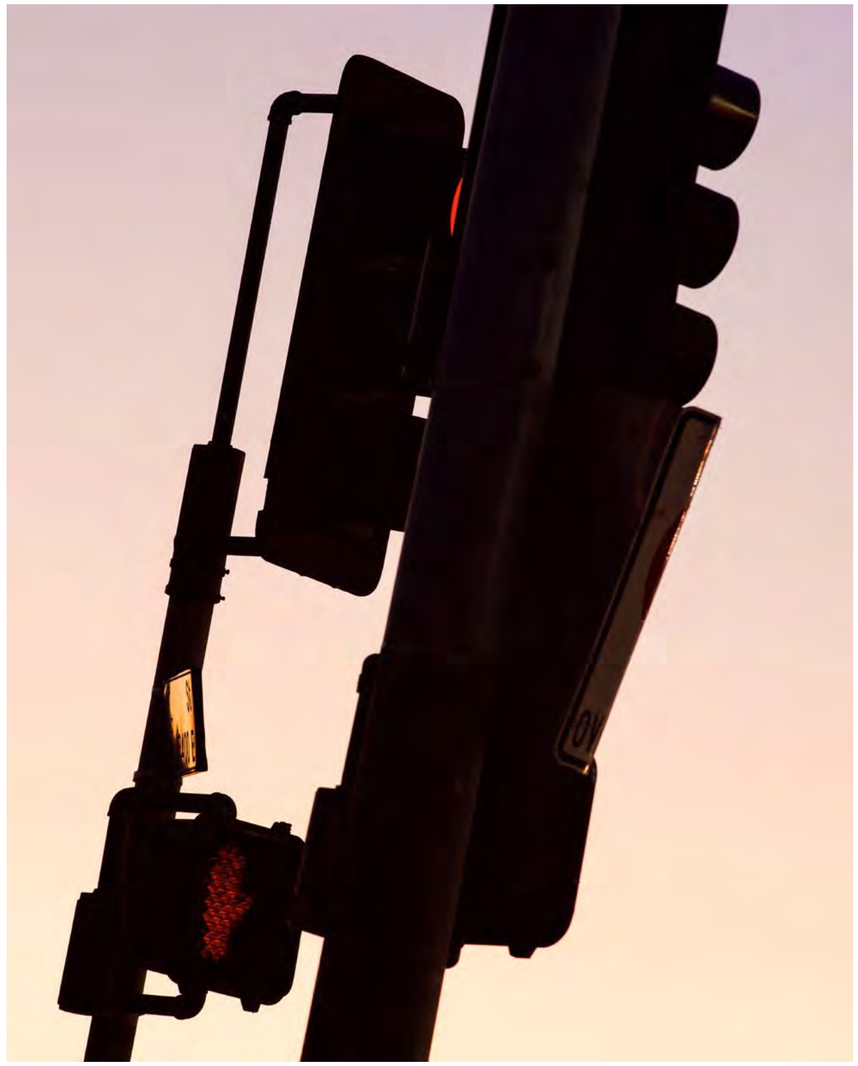
John Gregory Dunne *"Eureka!," 1978*



Von Sternberg House, Chatsworth, 1935 (demolished), Richard Neutra, architect



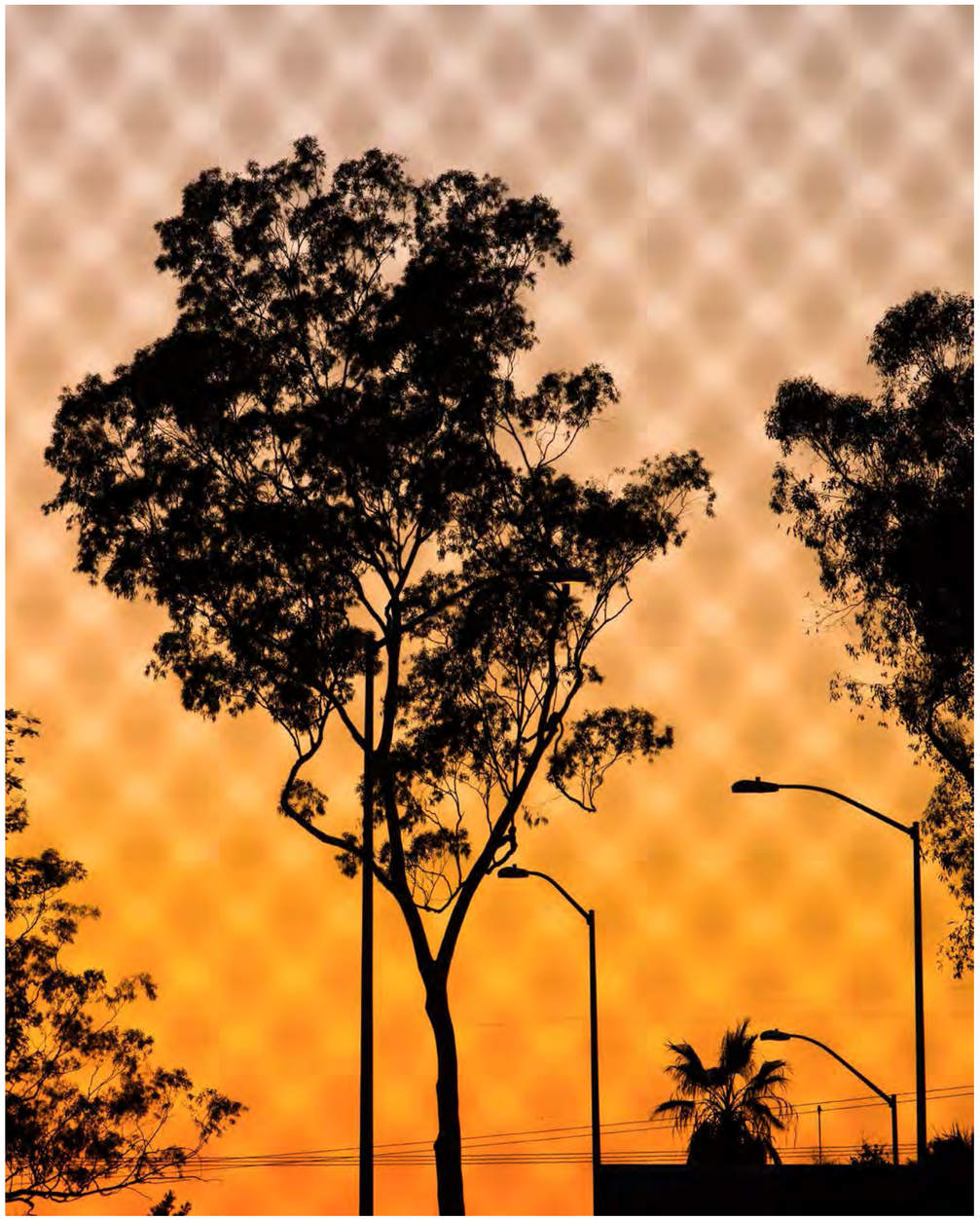
Man talking on cell phone, Boyle Heights



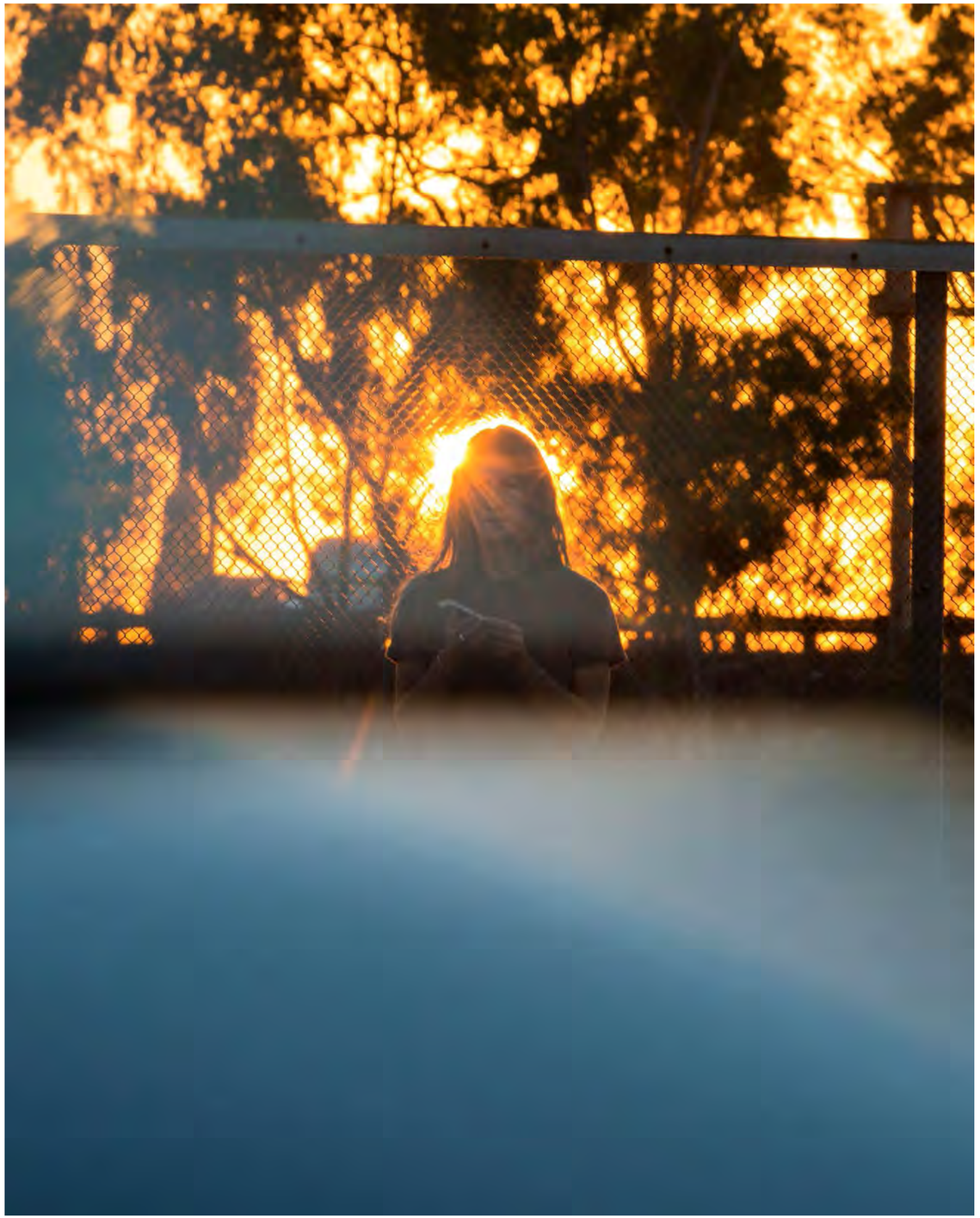
OPPOSITE PAGE — Banana plant, Venice







"There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine." Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*



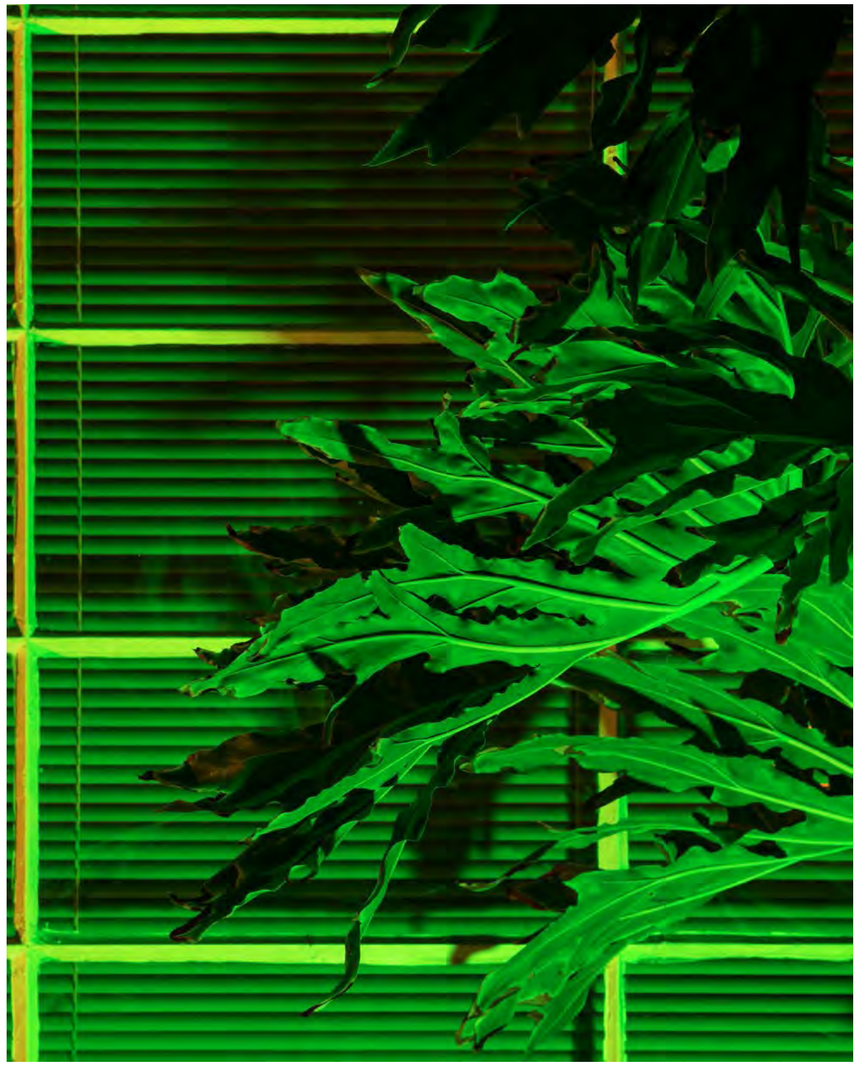


Apartment building, Santa Monica, architect unknown





Manola Court Apartments, Silver Lake, 1926–1940, Rudolph Schindler, architect



OPPOSITE PAGE — First Street Bridge, looking north, LA River



At Large Magazine
December 2014

X + I

Curated by Matthew Porter

COMPILING A LIST OF FIVE ARTISTS IS EASY. It s an exiguous grouping that allows you to slash and burn, to cut with efficacy, and excuses you from oversight. Expand the list to twenty, and cuts are unnecessaryó now you have plenty of capital to make your point. But eleven is a cruel number, the April of list making. You have to kill off ideas to bring life to the project. So the following list is incomplete, and it s also too long. It does however, at the time of writing, bring together a group of artists, all born in the early to mid seventies, most of whom probably didn t fully integrate computers and the Internet into their lives until after college. Now, they take what they need from the digital, virtual, and binary world of bits, while keeping themselves rooted in traditional means of picture making. To be relevant, contemporary art doesn t require the exclusive use of the technology of its timeó making art is also a practice of utilizing the materials left behind by innovation.

M ATTHEW PORTER





Untitled (Orange Monochrome)
2014
Unique chromogenic print
© **Phil Chang;** *courtesy M+B Gallery, Los Angeles*

Untitled (Orange Monochrome)
2014
Unique chromogenic print
© **Phil Chang;** *courtesy M+B Gallery, Los Angeles*

Phil
CHANG

Chang s practice is an ongoing dialectic cen tering on photography s main principles: longevity, depiction, and material. While his intention is often to expose the medi um s fraught nature, his exhibitions bring a beautiful equanimity to these problems. His attention shifts easily from an unfixed gelatin silver print s inevitable self effacement to the monochromatic possibilities of col or printing. For Chang, the concern is less with what the pictures depict, or the meaning found within them, and more about how we think of their material properties and commodification. To understand Chang s way of thinking, consider how pictures are ranked in an online image search, and the invisible coding, or what he calls algorithmic real ism, that determines those positions. Maybe if Boris Groys made images, they would look like Phil Chang s.





Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY
Installation view of the exhibition Artist s Choice: Trisha Donnelly. November 9, 2012 through July 28, 2013. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Photographer: **Thomas Griesel**

The Hand That Holds the Desert Down
2002
Silver gelatin print
Courtesy of the artist

Trisha DONNELLY

In the presence of Donnelly s work, one feels a static pulse, a current that makes hair stand on end and awakens dormant feelings of anxiety about the worthiness of one s own artistic practice. Her se lections in 2012 for MoMA s Artist s Choice series was a thrilling example of her eccentric and ebullient mind. Spread out over several discontiguous galleries, they created a sensation akin to standing in a river, so strong and direc tional was the force of her imaginative choices. Consider, also, a photograph of Donnelly s made over ten years ago. Its provenance is unknown (a post pictures picture), and it depicts a rear foot of the Sphinx. The genius of the piece lies in its title, *The Hand That Holds the Desert Down*ó a string of words with the power to suddenly render weightless the crust of a whole region. The effect is visceral, and one can t help but imagine a desert immune to gravity s grasp, with the Sphinx standing in as Atlas in reverse.

Throughout her career, Ebner has focused on photography s depictive qualities while simultaneously using language to connote meaning outside of what s visible in the frame. While what s often depicted are cinder blocks and other raw materials, the viewer is also looking at text. The work forces text and image to share pictorial dominance, and to coexist within the frame. The photograph becomes the referent, not by showing us a personality, event, or landscape, but by asking us to read. Sometimes the letters are withheld, and signage becomes shapesó the backs of signs, fastened to a fence, appear as a collection of rectangles and circles. This is her usual prac tice in reverse: letters are obscured in order to reveal new forms.

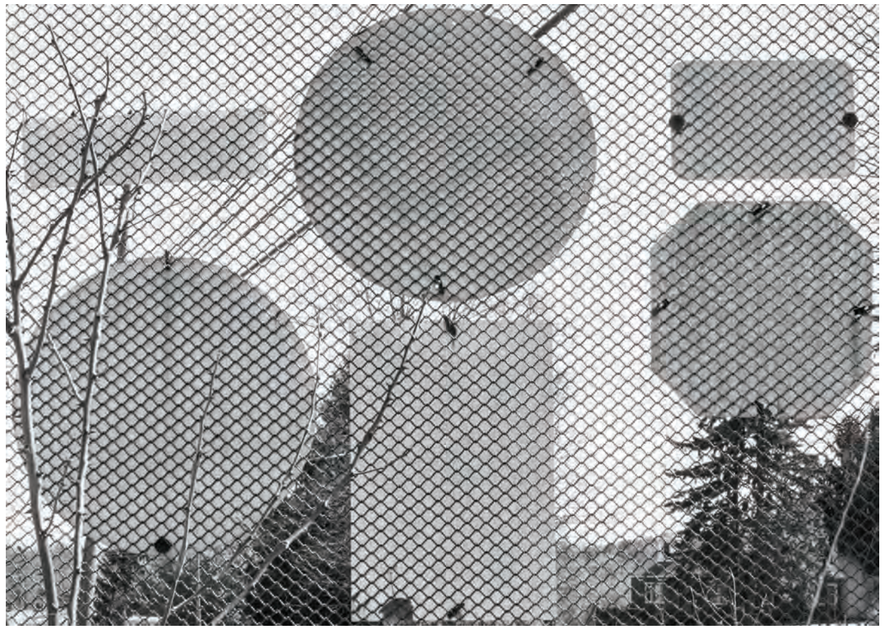
Shannon EBNER

Primer
2013
Epson print
72 x 38 in
(SE PH13 02)



Service Club Signs Verso
2014
Archival pigment print
46 1/2 x 65 1/4 in
(SE PH14 06)

Courtesy of the artist and Altman Siegel, San Francisco; Wallspace, New York; Sadie Coles, London; Kaufmann Repetto, Milan







John HOUCK

Code, print, fold, photograph, repeat. That s the order. Pixels, drops of ink on paper, pixels again. Houck s work is a schizophrenic game of tag between input and output. The word *code*, for Houck, is both verb and noun, referring to equal parts task and lan guage. Photography is about cropping and edges. Houck s edges, because they delineate overlapping planes of in formation, are the boundaries that give his photographs virtual space. The grid, with its implication of order, be comes a forum for possibility. As the line is for Sol LeWitt, so is the grid for Houckó a reminder that what begins as binary transforms into unlimited variation in the hands of the right practitioner.

Peg and Jon
2013
From the series A History of Graph Paper
27 x 22 in
Edition of 3 + 2 a.p.

Untitled #288, 2 colors, #5D6C6F, #EE8A70
2014
From the series Aggregates
Creased archival pigment print (unique)
24 x 30 in

Courtesy of the artist and On Stellar Rays, New York





Matt LIPPS

History as written in images, plundered and organized; events, careers, and per sonalities reduced to cutouts, displayed on glass shelves like tchotchkes in a cab inet. Such are the Wunderkammern of Lipps s latest series of photograph assemblages. Consid ered together, his tools (a digital camera and an X Acto knife) seem almost to represent a subversion of expecta tion. Images, sourced from anthologies of photography now out of print, are stripped of their indexical power and context, and given new meaning through Lipps s juxtapo sitions of them. Like retirees enjoying a second career in their golden years, they come from a time when there were fewer pictures in the world, and without their once grand status they take on a melancholy countenance.

Art
2013
C print
78.25 x 50 in

Caring
2013
C print
77.75 x 50 in

Courtesy Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Los Angeles; Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco; Josh Lilley Gallery, London





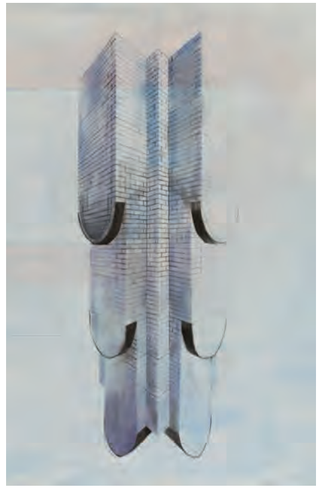
Florian
MAIER AICHEN

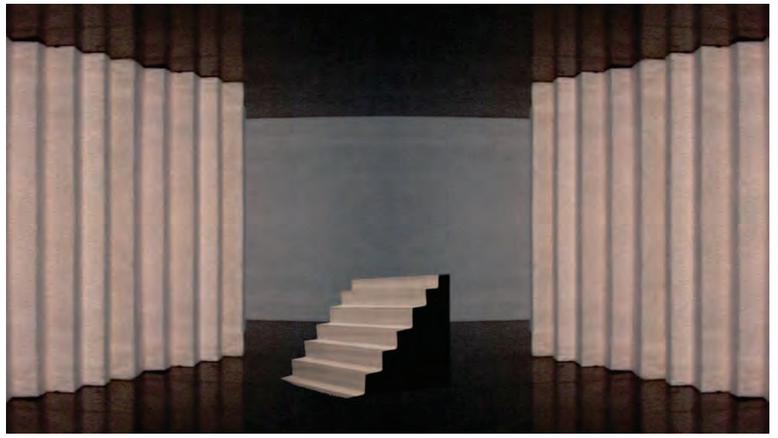
Maier Aichen s photograph of a snow covered Los Angeles street is a climate change what if, a disaster spectacle in place of sunshine noir. Both the pe culiar architecture and the marks in the snow are all part of his considered process of image manipulation. Preproduction involves location scouting, and in post he creates form and texture by dragging his stylus pen across a tablet, essentially making digitally as sisted handmade marks. Trying to parse the meaning of his decisions is part of the pleasure in contemplating his compositions, and the clarity of the photographs does not belie the mystery that persists within them.

Untitled
2014
Dye transfer print
37 1/2 x 31 1/4 inches framed
FMA 285

La Brea Avenue in the Snow
2011
C print
65 5/8 x 81 3/4 inches framed
FMA 269

© **Florian Maier Aichen;** *courtesy of 303 Gallery, New York*





Untitled
2013
Charcoal and pigment on rag paper
50 1/2 x 32 1/2 in

The End
2014
00:20 video w/ sound, from *Reclaimed Empire* (*Deep Edit*) *2008 14*, 60 short films, 27:15 minutes
Edition of 5

Courtesy of the artist and P.P.O.W Gallery, New York

Adam
PUTNAM

Putnam s gaze is often steady, his attention honing in on the dark spaces below vaulted brick archways, while at other times he is manic, sequencing psychedelic vignettes into longform videos. The stillness of his crypt like interiors and studio shadow play are offset by the vivid experience of watching his performative works. Putnam has developed a language akin to that of the New American Gothic. Quoting John Hawkes, Putnam s recent exhibition in New York was an exclamation of psychic material, a merging of the physical and mental interior that allows the visual to function as metaphor.



A.P. (no. 10)
2014
Archival pigment print
34 x 46 inches with fold
Edition of 4
© **Erin Shirreff;** *courtesy of Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York*







Still from *Sculpture Park, Tony Smith*
2006
Color video, silent, 37 minutes (loop)
© **Erin Shirreff;** *courtesy of Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York*

Erin SHIRREFF

Shirreff s interest in Tony Smith s sculptures is manifested in her video *Sculpture Park (Tony Smith)*, from 2006. Produced in her Brooklyn studio during a sweltering New York summer, Shirreff s black and white video depicts a Smith like sculpture being snowed on at night. The mood is somber, yet the snow that slowly accumulates on the object s angular planes gestures toward weather s ability to render form. Removing sculpture from the realm of touch, Shirreff relocates the sculptural form within the planar medium of film. She has an open, easy way of talking about her work that matches the humble quality of her creations. And yet, they possess an uncanny ability to provoke feelings of melancholy and desire without the siphoning pitfalls of nostalgia. Shirreff has made it possible to feel awe in the presence of mid century modernist sculpture again, without the sidetracks of overbearing masculinity and industrial production.



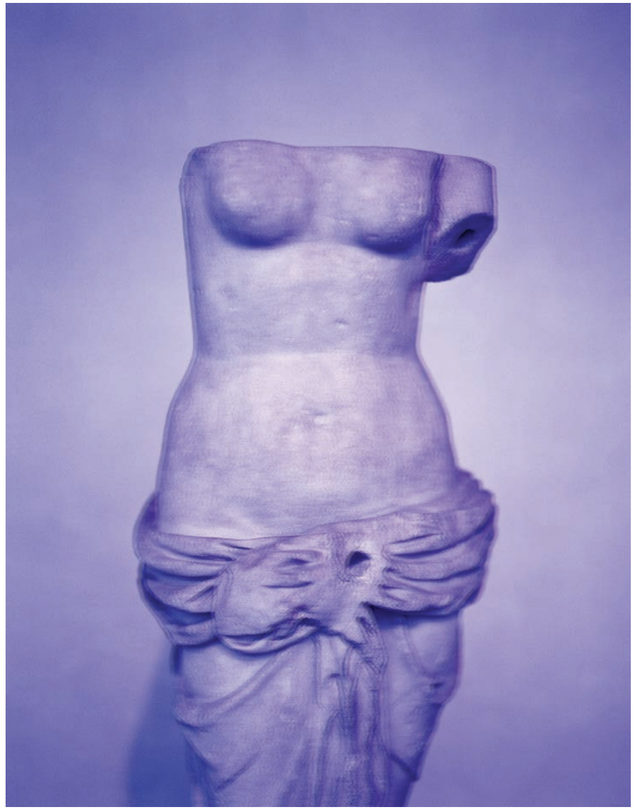


Goshute Ridge
2001
Inkjet print
Courtesy of Derek Eller Gallery

Birds 21b
2008
Digital image
Courtesy of the artist and Triple Canopy

Dan TOROP

Torop s artist talks are don t miss eventsó circuitous musings on the peripatetic life of an artist in residence and his efforts to link the absurd gestures of seventies conceptual art and the formal practice of picture making. His work doesn t look like that of his contemporaries, yet what he s doing seems more relevant now than ever. But what is he doing? On one hand he s a romantic, a photographer who works on a personal scale, using analog photographs as nodes of emotional turmoil. He s often out in the desert alone, or cresting blunt peaks with his 35 mm camera. He s also the only photographer I know who comprehends the virtual dimension of the latent digital image. His knowledge of programming and code has given him access to the raw data from the digital camera s sensor, allowing him to see the image before it s assembled by a demosaicing editing program like Camera Raw.





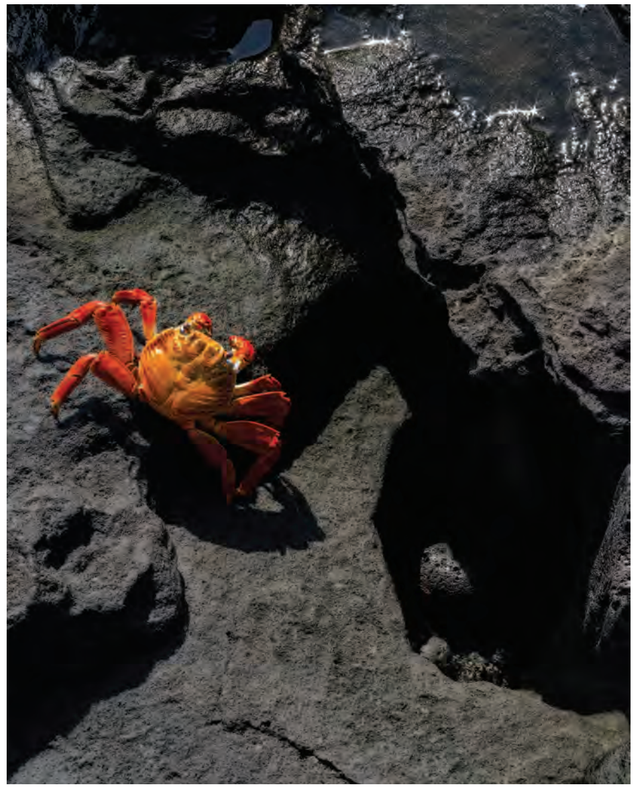
Sara
VANDERBEEK

Roman Women III
2013
Digital C print
60 x 46 in
(SV PH13 02)

Ancient Solstice
2014
Digital C print
24 x 17 3/4 in
(SV PH14 04)

Courtesy of the artist and Altman Siegel, San Francisco, and Metro Pictures, New York

When photographed by VanDerBeek, objects often feel less illuminated than submerged in liquid; bright ness flows around her subjects and gives them form. Her blue and purple hues read like confections. Several of her more recent exhibitions have been prompted by sojourns to California, Europe, and South America, grounding each respective body of work in firsthand research and experi ence. Possibilities unfold throughout her process, carried by currents, swept up in spinning eddies, but all reaching the ocean fully formed. VanDerBeek has a particular gift for turning her investigations into art, for blending intel lectual pursuits with explorations of surface and texture. From out of her visual language of abstraction come ref erences to traditional representationó new icons for our image based society.



Photograph courtesy of ***Matthew Porter***

SERIES 2, EPISODE 16

Five years ago, during a long drive, I was lis tening to a podcast. It was part of a series in which Ricky Gervais and his writing partner, Stephen Merchant, attempt to trick their fool in residence, Karl Pilkington, into be lieving an absurd story. Gervais recounts to Pilkington that a New England microchip factory had been dumping silicon on its neighboring beaches, and that granular, carbon based material had been ingested by indigenous crabs. The crabs began to line up, form patterns, and behave toward each other in a way that caught the attention of the locals. When the crabs were eventually dissected, Gervais goes on to say, their miraculous makeup was uncovered and their memories downloaded. Those memories, in the form of a crude digital code, could be translated by graphic editing programs to reveal fuzzy images of other crabs. Imagine this: a baby crab might inadvertently record an image of its parent, then pass that image on to its own descendants. For their part, scientists could then look at snapshots of a multigenerational crab family. I had to pull the car over to think about thisó crabs imbued with the ability to re cord and carry visual information. They were half machine, half crab, carrying around pictures of their ancestors. Of course, it was all a joke, but whenever I see a crab I still wonder what pictures it might ve taken, what views of this world it could reveal that will forever be withheld from us.

M+B

Los Angeles Times

Review

The focus cleverly blurs in 'Soft Target' at M+B

By Sharon Mizota
August 22, 2014

In photography, targets are high-contrast printed patterns or color bars that help achieve the hallmarks of a "successful" image: sharp focus and accurate color. In their group exhibition "Soft Target" at M+B, curators Phil Chang and Matthew Porter (both also artists who make photographs) set out to trouble such certainties.

Featuring pieces by 30 artists — most working in a photographic vein — the show celebrates "softness," or the moments when art blurs or reconfigures the lines between figure and ground, inside and outside, nature and artifice or any other opposition you can conjure.

Sometimes it's a literal softness, as in Adam Putnam's murky image of measuring tools scattered on the ground or Shannon Ebner's blurred close-up of the letter A on a lighted sign.



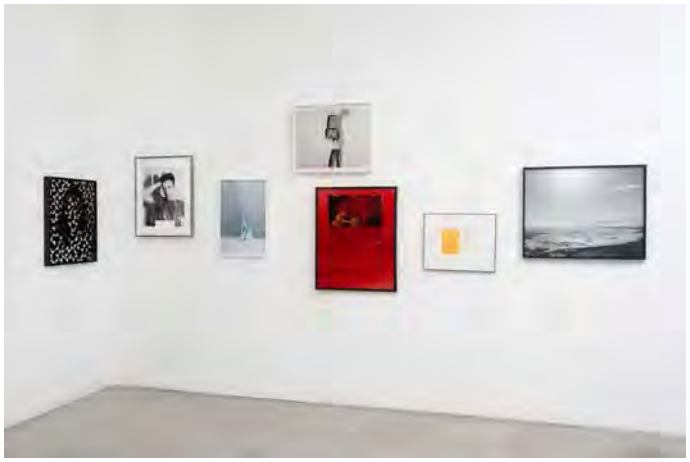
Installation view of *Soft Target* at M+B, Los Angeles
Organized by Phil Chang and Matthew Porter

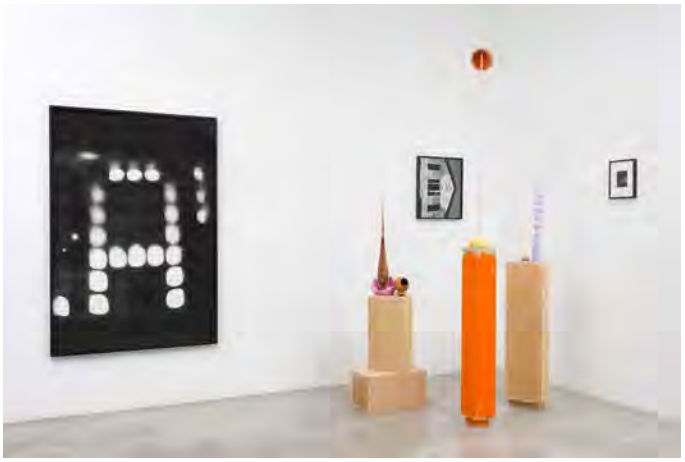
Elsewhere, it's the idea of camouflage, as in Andrea Galvani's photograph of a motocross biker so covered with mud it's nearly impossible to distinguish figure from ground. Conversely, Dan Torop pokes fun at color targets and camouflage by holding a red piece of paper behind some red flowers. It's unclear (and immaterial) which red is the "right" one.

David Goldes' elegant black and white photograph of sugar crystals forming in a glass explores the line between foreground and background more metaphorically, as liquid becomes solid. Barney Kulok's "Untitled (Councilwoman)" approaches the problem from the opposite direction, depicting a public figure as a near-black silhouette: nothing but a boundary line.

Another tactic employs the cutting and suturing of an image in unexpected ways. Julie Cockburn takes a found black and white portrait of a woman and explodes pieces of her face into a lovely chrysanthemum-starburst. In Soo Kim's works, different photographic moments occupy the same space as she excises parts of one print and lays it like a doily over another.

Similarly, a mesh of black triangles partially obscures Hannah Whitaker's portrait. It's not actually a cutout, but the pattern does shift the placement of eyes and other parts as if it were.





Asha Schechter photographed a beautiful, opalescent abstraction made from strips of film, a piece of a jigsaw puzzle and a ping-pong paddle, but if the title didn't tell you this, you would never know. And Richard Caldicott's tiny, strikingly reductive piece juxtaposes a simple, geometric photogram with its cutout paper negative. It's a wondrously simple meeting of object and image, a condensation of the photographic process in which light, guided through an aperture, makes an image.

Chang and Porter have curated this show as artists would, tracing visual and conceptual themes through disparate works without the benefit (or encumbrance) of historical context or artist's intention.

Surely, not all of the included works operate solely within the frame in which they are presented in "Soft Target," but that is largely the point. The show emphasizes the impossibility of ever achieving an exact or precise focus: An artwork's meanings are always multiple, open to interpretation, bleeding softly out of the frame.

M+B, 612 N. Almont Drive, L.A., (310) 550-0050, through Aug. 30.
Closed Sundays and Mondays
www.mbart.com

UNDER CONSTRUCTION:

foam



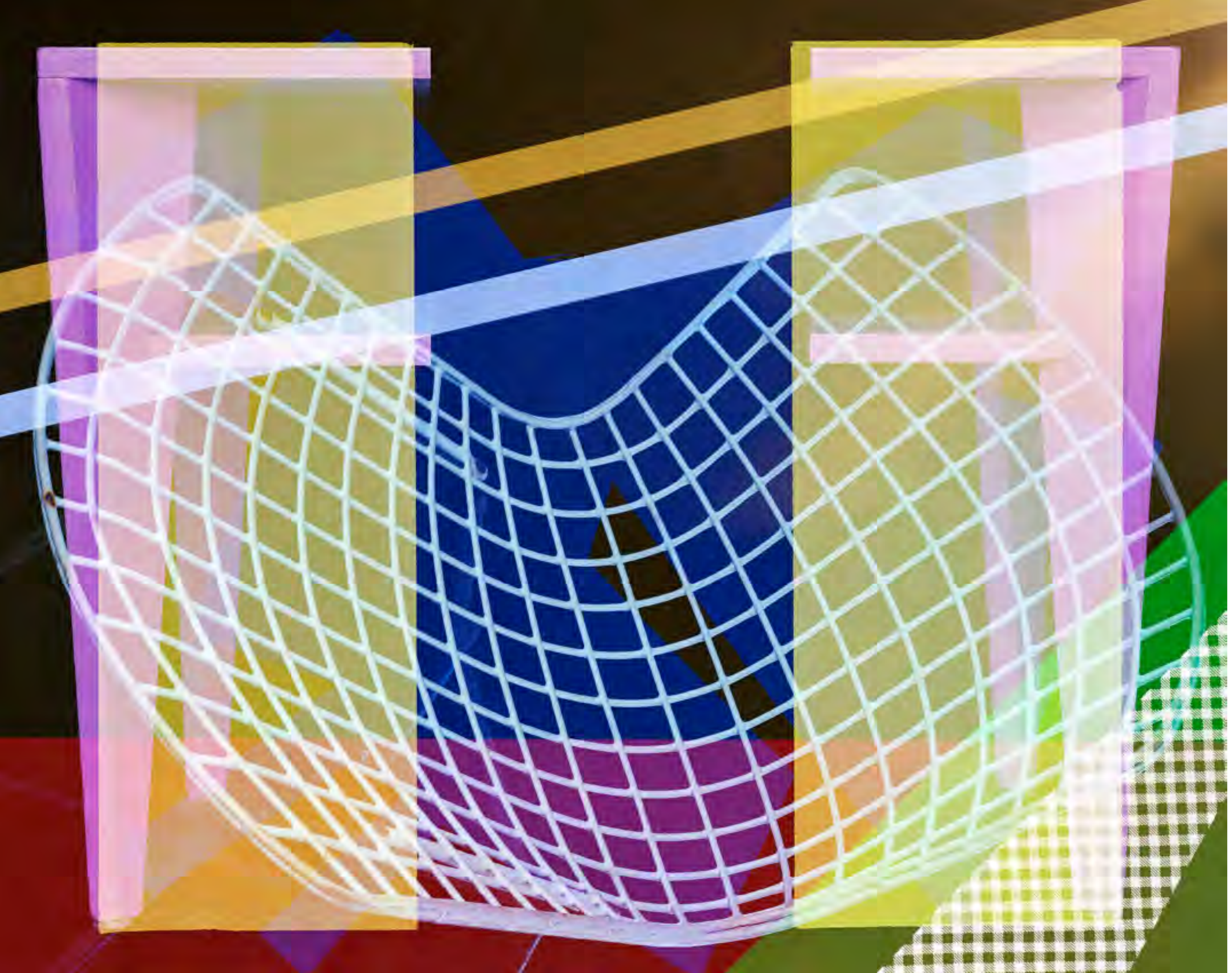






NEW POSITIONS
IN AMERICAN
PHOTOGRAPHY





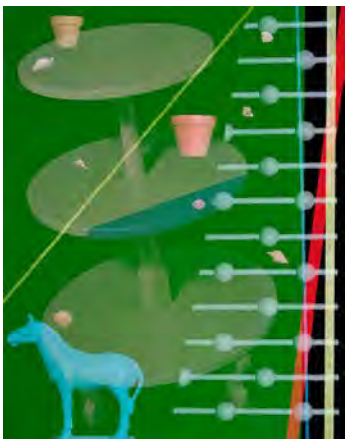


M+B

foam
All about Photography

Matthew Porter

May 8, 2014



Matthew Porter's body of work is difficult to place at first sight. But perhaps this is neither surprising nor the point of his photographic style. As he once put it himself: 'I've always wanted to create an exhibition that looks like a group show […] So you would walk into the space and for a second think there were a bunch of images by different artists.'

Porter initially attained notoriety in the art world with his car photographs. For these images he hunted down miniature models of quintessential American cars. He then meticulously photographed them in his studio, after which he
overlaid the shot of the car on a picture of an American urban landscape. With the cars hovering unnaturally high up in the air, the images reference just about any police procedural or Hollywood action film in recent history. For the Burnout series Porter captured candy-colour cars in empty parking lots surrounded by billowing smoke, whereas in the Supercharged he treats us to close-ups of dazzling, glittering, blinding chrome contraptions built into the centre of a vibrant car hood. For his Jane Fonda series Porter re-staged pictures
of the actress in a way of trying to investigate photographically the capacity of this pop icon to continually reinvent herself. All of these works are funny, tongue-in-cheek and very carefully constructed.

Fast forward to the High Lonesome series. From the get-go it is obvious that the tone has changed to a more serious one. Porter is toying here with visual tropes established by advertising but also images imprinted on our collective memory. In this project he portrays a prototypically, but middle-aged cowboy. The man is riding his horse crossing the prairie or standing on a ledge overlooking a valley. Occasionally we see him looking up to the sky, where we find a Hindenburg hovering over him. These are followed by more pictures of the Hindenburg drifting over the great American plains, the swastika on the tail clearly visible. These jarring contrasts of immediately recognisable but slightly out of sync imagery shake the viewer up. Are these pictures a subtle reference to Philip K. Dick's novel The Man in the High Castle? What happened to the
Marlboro Man? What on earth is going on here? The captured scenes do not provide easy answers.

The new works - included in this issue of Foam - are of an entirely different nature altogether. At first sight they seem to be still lifes, showing yet another variant on this centuries-old concept in art
history. The images show an arrangement of various objects in crisp, saturated colours and sharp details. But upon further inspection we notice something is off. First of all, the perspective is all wrong. We see bowls positioned on top
of a table, but we also see the table legs at an angle that is virtually impossible. Secondly, we are confronted with a mixture of rather mundane objects and geometrical shapes of unknown materiality.

Then some of the objects that should be solid in real life look so sheer in the photo that all the other objects underneath them become visible. The works suddenly start to resemble photograms, those camera-less pictures created by positioning items on top of photographic paper and exposing the paper in the darkroom. Depending on the transparency and the pressure exerted by the objects on the paper, the imprint would be more or less defined. In fascinating contrast to prototypical photograms, these images are made in colour instead of black-and-white. What's more, Porter used multiple exposures shot on film to get these end results, not darkroom trickery.

Matthew Porter (b. 1975, USA) Matthew Porter's work often features historical mash- ups, collapsing disparate events and cultural references within a single frame, or spreading them out over a series of tightly edited photographs. Porter received his BA from Bard College in 1998 and his MFA from Bard-ICP in 2006. He has been profiled in The New York Times and included in the 2012 After Photoshop exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as the International Center of Photography Museum's Perspectives 2010. His work has been exhibited in galleries in New York, Los Angeles, Paris and London and is held in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), and the UBS Art Collection (New York), among others. Porter's curatorial projects include Seven Summits at Mount Tremper Arts, The Crystal Chain at Invisible Exports and Bedtime for Bonzo at M+B. He is the co-editor of Blind Spot magazine Issue 45, and his writings and interviews have been featured in Triple Canopy, Blind Spot, ARTFORUM.com and Canteen.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EXHIBITION:
MATTHEW PORTER | High Difference

DATES:
March 7 – April 13, 2014

RECEPTION:
Friday, March 7: 6-8pm

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS is proud to present the second solo exhibition at the gallery of new work by Matthew Porter.

* * *

Presented here is a selection of multiple-exposure still-life images, a landscape, and a studio portrait. The title refers to a style of camouflage that works against the notion of low visibility. Decorate an object with vivid, abstract shapes and contrasting tones, and it will be more difficult to discern its size, direction, and distance—facts that are crucial to a submarine crewmember looking through a periscope. The theory is still controversial after almost 100 years since its widespread use on allied ships during WWI.

Once you can pinpoint objects on a screen, high difference camouflage is of little value.

Do a Google image search for the word "Knoll" and you'll eventually find pictures of an old Maryland lighthouse, officially named the Seven Foot Knoll Light. Its body is an inelegant squat circle, a disk with thickness, like a core sample. Snatched from its original perch, a rocky outpost at the mouth of Baltimore Harbor, it now sits at the end of a pier, as part of the Baltimore Maritime Museum. Obsolete and inoperative, tourists climb its stairs to view a limited archive of coastal ephemera.

Once you can pinpoint objects on a screen, a lighthouse is of little value.

In 1908, Matisse reflected in a written apologia that he had failed to link his technical ability to any particular conceptual conceit. In his own words, his paintings did not "go beyond the purely visual satisfaction such as can be obtained from looking at a picture." Taken out of context, this statement could erroneously give the impression that Matisse believed his paintings to be merely meretricious decorations, yet it would be unfortunate to traduce them using the Marxist belief that the economic and political conditions of an artwork's production should subjugate its aesthetic properties. His work contains some of the early provenances of modernism—pictorial compression of space and a nagging anxiety about a shifting cultural identity—despite the perception of his Fauvist, bourgeois complacency.

* * *

Matthew Porter (b.1975, Pennsylvania) received his BA from Bard College in 1998 and his MFA from Bard-ICP in 2006. Porter was profiled in *The New York Times* and included in the "After Photoshop" exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum Art (New York, 2012), as well as the International Center of Photography Museum's "Perspectives 2010." Recent exhibitions include "Greet the Dust" at M+B (Los Angeles), and group shows at Frank Elbaz (Paris) and Koenig & Clinton (New York). Porter's curatorial projects include "Seven Summits" at Mount Tremper Arts, "The Crystal Chain" at INVISIBLE-EXPORTS, and "Bedtime for Bonzo" at M+B, which was an *ARTFORUM* Critics' Pick in 2011. He is the co-editor of *Blind Spot* magazine Issue 45, and his writings and interviews have been featured in *Triple Canopy, Blind Spot, ARTFORUM.com* and *Canteen*. Porter teaches part time at Parsons The New School for Design in New York, and his work is included in the permanent collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art. Porter lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

* * *

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS is located at 89 Eldridge Street, just south of Grand Street. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11am-6pm, and by appointment. For more information, call 212-226-5447 or email: info@invisible-exports.com.

M+B

ARTFORUM
CRITICS' PICKS

Matthew Porter

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS
89 Eldridge Street
March 7 - April 13

By Courtney Fiske
April 5, 2014

Matthew Porter approaches his photographs as one might a canvas. His abstractions accrue from multiple in-camera exposures of generic still-life ingredients—furniture, fabrics, and sundry bric-a-brac—that the artist composes in front of monochrome scrims. Transferred to digital files and printed in ink, the resulting composites are shallow, shadowless, and uniformly in focus. Shot straight on or from above, Porter's studio setups flatten volumes into shapes. Depth is made something vestigial, and everything pitches forward, as if magnetized by the print's surface. The results recall the tangled contours of Francis Picabia's "Transparencies," the plunging perspective of Cubist café tables, and the shrill, saturate compression of Matisse's interiors.



Matthew Porter, Plastic Form, 2013
archival pigment print, 58 1/2 x 47 1/2"

Consider the strangeness of Plastic Form, 2013. There's the vertiginous pitch of the table and the clustered seashells that hover above its surface, their flatness incommensurable with the table's residual depth. The vertical zip of a nearby Ionic column promises orientation yet withholds the same: Frontally rendered, it assumes a strictly graphic function. An oblong, organic form, suspended before both table and column, further perplexes, its lattice a seeming metaphor for the composition's unresolved layering, which less produces than evacuates space.

Porter's historical references are self-conscious and somewhat jumbled: Machine for Living, 2014, takes its title from Le Corbusier's quip about the modernist home; Force Lines, 2014, features the dazzle camouflage developed by artists to confound enemy warships during World War I; the press release quotes Matisse. The artist's project further aligns with those of his contemporaries (Michele Abeles and John Houck, among them), who have achieved the cobbled look typical of digital postproduction by analog means. The question for Porter thus arises: Why constellate the present with a moment when the limiting conditions of artistic media seemed suddenly so acute (and, therein, so generative)? If the photograph today is eminently unstable, everywhere made the image's conduit, Porter's relays to a period when media could still claim certain, circumscribed identities oddly comforts. For all their incongruity, there's a familiarity and an assuredness to Porter's telescoped montages. Modernism extends its warrant, and art historians prime their slides. Assimilation is easy, but perhaps that's the work's appeal.

M+B

Gallerist

‘Matthew Porter: High Difference’ at Invisible-Exports

April 2, 2014
By Will Heinrich



‘Field’ (2013) by Porter.
Courtesy the artist and Invisible-Exports

The most fully transparent of all the multiply exposed, deceptively transparent photographs in Matthew Porter’s show “High Difference”—a WWI-era style of camouflage that aimed to dissemble and disorient rather than conceal, “High Difference” would also be a good name for the kind of easy-spirited conceptual double cross that seems to be the fairest flower of our world-weary age—is Field, a color print nearly 5 feet high. Against a background of cosmically primordial blue, Mr. Porter arranged a section of square, wooden latticework, a bookshelf, four gear-like drill bits, a decorative iron star, a coil of pipe, a candlestick, a microscope, some lengths of tablecloth in a pattern of blue and white stripes with alternating white and blue flowers, and a hexagonal wooden table painted green—all of it as neatly balanced and distributed as a workbench waiting for a studio visit. Each of these tools simultaneously demonstrates, enacts and debunks some equally Platonic tool of photography, art or color: The latticework looks off-white where it’s seen against the blue, and yellow against the green tabletop, and like milky water where it overlaps the equally translucent turquoise microscope. The angles of the drill bits’ teeth look like shadows of motion, as if they’re turning before our eyes; the table is separated like a Cubist woman into legs and face; the star is an appropriation and the tablecloth a repurposing; and the bookshelf is simultaneously a metaphor and a thing. The purely shaped tabletop is also grainy and carnal, and the heart-shaped cutouts in its legs are both flat and in perspective. The microscope suggests you look closely.

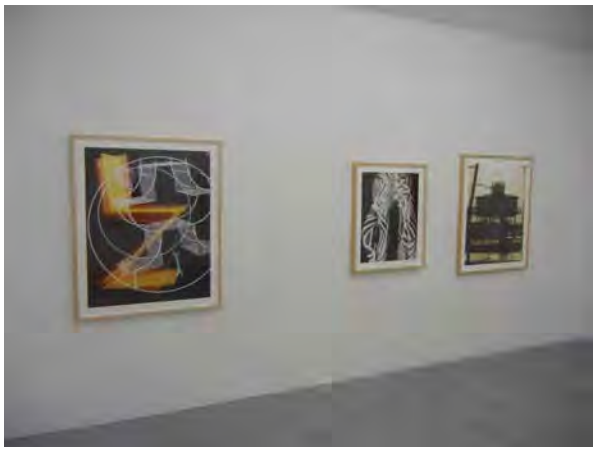
In the photograph *High Difference*, which shows an abstracted squiggle sofa chair in yellow or orange sheet steel, some segments of white-painted wire furniture, and another turquoise tool-become-icon, this one a wrench, Mr. Porter corrals Modernism as a social phenomenon, with a nod to the irrefutability of personality—a lavender gear is either a monocle or boutonniere, depending on where you’re standing. In Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse, a straight photograph, Mr. Porter cancels his gorgeous aesthetic gesture by choosing as his subject a decommissioned lighthouse in Baltimore. A woman’s legs clad in specially commissioned tights printed in jarringly geometric high difference appear in *Force Lines, Vector Field* and two of the untitled Polaroid studies Mr. Porter uses to set up the composition. Their sensual ease and energy are alluringly uncoupled from their specifics: Good luck guessing where she’s headed.

M+B

COLLECTOR DAILY

Matthew Porter, High Difference @Invisible-Exports

April 1, 2014
By Loring Knoblauch



JTF (just the facts): A total of 12 black and white and color photographs, variously framed in brown wood, and hung against white walls in the main gallery space and the back office area. Aside from 2 Polaroid studies (from 2014, roughly 4×3 in size, unique), all of the works on view are archival pigment prints, made in 2013 or 2014. Physical dimensions range from roughly 20×16 to 59×47, and the prints are available in editions of 4+2AP.

Comments/Context: Given that Matthew Porter is perhaps best known for his images of soaring muscle cars digitally inserted into sunset scenes of crested city streets, his new work might seem like a conscious reversal, a deliberate effort to avoid getting stuck in a crowd pleasing rut. But Porter's in-camera multiple exposures are more thoughtful than just a straightforward negation of an earlier artistic approach; they examine various technologies and styles that have lost their meaning in our new age, bringing them together in unlikely combinations and constellations, where formal qualities now outweigh original uses. It's hybrid appropriation and reuse, but done the old fashioned way.

Porter's collage-like images mix both three dimensional forms and two dimensional silhouettes, disrupting our sense of order with their constantly changing scale. Tiny gears, keys, and miniature designer chairs become larger than expected, while shelving units, painted furniture, iron work, and lattice patterns appear at roughly one-to-one proportions, creating layers of floating intermingled objects in contrasting colors and sizes. The overall effect is something akin to a color photogram, with ghosts of shapes and image fragments overlapping into bold rebus-like abstraction. The best of these works are a controlled clash of design and detailing, where fluted columns and a microscope overlay a patterned tablecloth, or shells on a tabletop compete with old nails and a streamlined tin teakettle.

Other works in the show explore technical obsolescence more directly, from a lighthouse set down amid a tourist pier to crosshatched black and white "dazzle" camouflage (a paint style used in WWI to disorient submarines) applied to custom made fabric leggings. Multiple exposure istudies of these leggings create dissolving, intermingled patterns of triangles and lines, ultimately achieving the goal of preventing the viewer from knowing whether the model is coming or going; it's old technology reconsidered, given new life in an alternate context.

Even at their most densely packed, Porter's new additive, iterative image constructions are remarkably restrained; these are works of pre-visualization more than chance. It is this visual problem solving and underlying order that gives the works their structure and balance, infusing the assortment of discarded objects and surrounding negative space with a sense of unifying graphic coherence.

Collector's POV: The prints in this show are generally priced between $2500 and $6000 each, with the smaller Polaroids at $1400 each. Porter's work has little secondary market history, so gallery retail remains the best option for those collectors interested in following up.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATTHEW PORTER
Greet the Dust

September 21 – December 7, 2013

Artist's Opening Reception
Saturday, September 21, 2013 from 6 to 8 pm



M+B is pleased to announce *Greet the Dust*, Matthew Porter's third solo exhibition at the gallery. On view is a selection of new works ranging from Matisse- and Braque-inspired multiple-exposure still lifes, to landscapes from Tasmania and Montana, as well as a portrait. The title refers to a statement made by King Gustav V of Sweden in 1930 upon the return of the remains of three polar explorers. Their bodies had been recovered, by chance, 33 years after a failed balloon attempt to reach the North Pole left them dead on a remote island in Norway. *Matthew Porter: Greet the Dust* runs from September 21 through December 7, 2013, with an opening reception for the artist on Saturday, September 21 from 6 to 8 pm.

Photographic analogue materials are well suited to using multiple planes of depictive information. Film allows for the accumulation of discrete exposures on a single piece of material. It is the record of the event, the visual reference of the subject, the template by which one composes, and the agency of the process. Within the frame, objects stack on top of one another, blend where they overlap, and flatten pictorial space. The process allows photography—a visual language of boxed, still images—to collage multiple topics into single frames: colony collapse, Herbert Matter posters, Navajo blankets, Arne Jacobsen chairs, and ash from an artist's studio destroyed by fire. Together, they form a reticulated pattern of overlapping subject matter.

I have an Arne Jacobsen knock-off chair in my studio, I see them scattered throughout the institution where I teach part-time, and they adorn the lobby of a glowing, glassy-faced condominium that I pass on the way to the subway. Mine is black, but the others are brightly colored, functioning like garnish on the pale, monochromatic hues of open, semi-private spaces.

One of the works, *Isle of Mountains*, features a small bowl of dirt—dark, moist, and brown against the pale blue of a table. It was scooped from the ground in the Tarkine region of northwest Tasmania, a sprawling rainforest known for frequent reports of Tasmanian Tiger (or Thylacine) sightings. While officially declared extinct in 1983, the last known Thylacine died in captivity in 1933. Because of the large amount of unexplored territory in Tasmania, it is difficult to prove that the animal no longer exists. It is possible that the bowl contains the remains of a Thylacine, dried up and returned to dust.

In 1908, Matisse reflected in a written apologia that he had failed to link his technical ability to any particular conceptual conceit. In his own words, his paintings did not “go beyond the purely visual satisfaction such as can be obtained from looking at a picture.” Taken out of context, this statement could erroneously give the impression that Matisse believed his paintings to be merely meretricious decorations, yet it would be unfortunate to traduce them using the Marxist belief that the economic and political conditions of an artwork’s production should subjugate its aesthetic properties. His work actually contains some of the early provenances of modernism—pictorial compression of space and a nagging anxiety about a shifting cultural identity—despite the perception of his Fauvist, bourgeois complacency.

Matthew Porter (b.1975, Pennsylvania) received his BA from Bard College in 1998 and his MFA from Bard-ICP in 2006. Porter was recently profiled in *The New York Times* and included in the "After Photoshop" exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum Art in New York in 2012, as well as the International Center of Photography Museum’s "Perspectives 2010." His work has been exhibited in galleries in New York, Los Angeles, Paris and London and is held in the permanent collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Statoil Collection (Norway). Porter's curatorial projects include "Seven Summits" at Mount Tremper Arts, "The Crystal Chain" at Invisible Exports, and "Bedtime for Bonzo" at M+B, which was an *ARTFORUM* Critics' Pick in 2011. He is the co-editor of *Blind Spot* magazine Issue 45, and his writings and interviews have been featured in *Triple Canopy*, *Blind Spot*, *ARTFORUM.com* and *Canteen*. Porter teaches part time at Parsons The New School for Design in New York, and his first monograph will be published by Mack Books in early 2014. Porter lives and works in Brooklyn.

Location:	**M+B**, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, California 90069
Show Title:	Matthew Porter: Greet the Dust
Exhibition Dates:	September 21 – December 7, 2013
Artist’s Opening Reception:	Saturday, September 21, 6 – 8pm
Gallery Hours:	Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, and by appointment

For more information, please contact Alexandra Wetzel at **M+B** at (310) 550-0050 or alexandra@mbart.com.

# # #

photograph

November/December 2013 $5

Matthew Porter: Greet the Dust

M+B, Los Angeles



Matthew Porter, *Base Camp*, 2013.
Courtesy the artist / M+B, Los Angeles

The girl in Matthew Porter's photograph *Base Camp* has a whimsical, far-off look, like one of the girls in Sophia Coppola's early films—*Virgin Suicides* or *Lost in Translation*. She's broody and inaccessible but also really normal-looking: the girl next door who has a deep interior life or who just looks especially pretty when zoning out. She's wearing jeans and a flannel button-down shirt, has pulled her sandy blond hair back, and sits inside of a mandarin-colored tent made of fabric too ethereal to belong to anything you'd find at REI. It's more the kind of tent you might make as a kid out of your mother's discarded sheer curtains. She has a black and silver microscope between her legs, and a white metal bar from a curlicued fence is superimposed over the print's right side, an unfinished decorative border.

Base Camp hangs in the small back room of Matthew Porter's *Greet the Dust*, on view through December 7 and seeing it might make you go back and look at the whole show again.

Porter, whose last show at M+B featured images of plants superimposed on midcentury architecture, crisp images of Jane Fonda or images of women posing as Fonda, and landscapes too perfect to be totally believed, is a smooth operator. Like Elad Lassry, Roe Etheridge, or Sarah VanDerBeek, all born in the same decade, he makes you feel nostalgic for a just-past era of print advertising when the colors and saturation of photographs felt slightly more tangible, when the adman's arguments for materialism felt slightly more material.

Porter calls his exhibition *Greet the Dust* after a statement by King Gustav V of Sweden when remains of explorers were returned to the Swedes 30 years after they had failed to reach the North Pole and crashed their balloon over a Norwegian island. The remains of a dead fantasy brought back into the public eye. Most every image involves multiple exposures, all done using analogue processes. In *This is Tomorrow*, patterns and color blocks, a photo of a coconut and a kitchen table all come together to make a colorful, mod montage. In *Plastic Form*, a tan plastic form floats above a red Corinthian column, two tables and a pair of purple clippers. It's all competently, seductively produced, yet suggests a perplexing fantasy.

What happens most clearly in *Base Camp* happens to some degree in all Porter's prints: his highly stylized, seemingly benign images make his subjects more appealing and more inscrutable than they otherwise would be. They seduce you like a pretty, moody shot in a TV show like *Mad Men*, only in the context of a gallery and with no narrative to distract, you're more aware of being seduced.

— By Catherine Wagley

M+B

Slate

BEHOLD

THE PHOTO BLOG

Avoiding Pigeonholes: From Muscle Cars to Jane Fonda Recreations

By David Rosenberg
Thursday, July 18, 2013



Downtown, 2008
Matthew Porter

Photographer Matthew Porter certainly doesn't have to worry about being pigeonholed.

Known primarily for his images of model muscle cars, Porter touches on nature, film and pop-culture icons, pre–World War II avant-garde movements, midcentury modernism, and even the Tasmanian tiger in his other work—and, in certain cases, almost all of the above compressed into one image.

"I've always wanted to have a really varied style. It's something I've always been interested in, and I think to my benefit and also my determent certain things came to the surface," Porter said referencing the muscle cars.

Although his collective work is varied, there are themes that run consistent within his projects. Sometimes simply having multiple themes or symbolic is enough to call a body of work a "Porter."

One thing consistent is Porter's desire to put his mark on everything found in his images. For the muscle cars, that meant creating his own cinematic backgrounds he used throughout the series. "I had to photograph the cars in the studio, but for the backgrounds I'd go to New Mexico, find a hill … and I liked finding my own source material," he said.

In that case, it was a way of incorporating photography both in and out of the studio. Porter isn't necessarily tied to location, shoots both film and digital, and enjoys the blending of both old and new technology. "I get excited about thinking about how you collapse as many topics as possible in the frame… photography is a good place (to do that), where the dinosaurs and caveman or cowboys and zeppelins can coexist in one image," he said.



Valley View, 2013
Matthew Porter

Each of those elements or influences can be found in his work “Isle of Mountains,” part of his new series that borrows from “the utopian idealism of the pre war avant-garde … being eclipsed by midcentury modernism,” Porter explained.

Porter admits finding a way to describe his work can be complicated, saying even he has a hard time writing a concise artist statement about the new work. Still, it’s all part of a vision that has made his body of work both unique and varied, something Porter has strived to achieve.

“I’ve always wanted to create an exhibition that looks like a group show,” Porter said. “So you would walk into the space and for a second think there were a bunch of images by different artists.”

Porter applies that philosophy when making images of things that no longer exist, such as his work on the Hindenburg. “There isn’t one I can photograph, so I used technology to solve that problem,” he said. Or when he was inspired to restage iconic Jane Fonda images. Porter said he chose to make iconic portraits of Fonda because he was interested in the “decades of her life where she reinvented herself.”

For his newest work, Porter is going after multiple-exposure imagery shot with film in his studio. Although he had been using multiple elements in his previous work, he wanted to collapse all of his ideas into one frame. Some of those ideas include Stuart Davis paintings, Arne Jacobson chairs, Navajo Saddle blankets, and soil he brought back from Tasmania, where he believes the remains of the now-extinct Tasmanian tiger (or Thylacine) are contained.



Giant, 2008
Matthew Porter

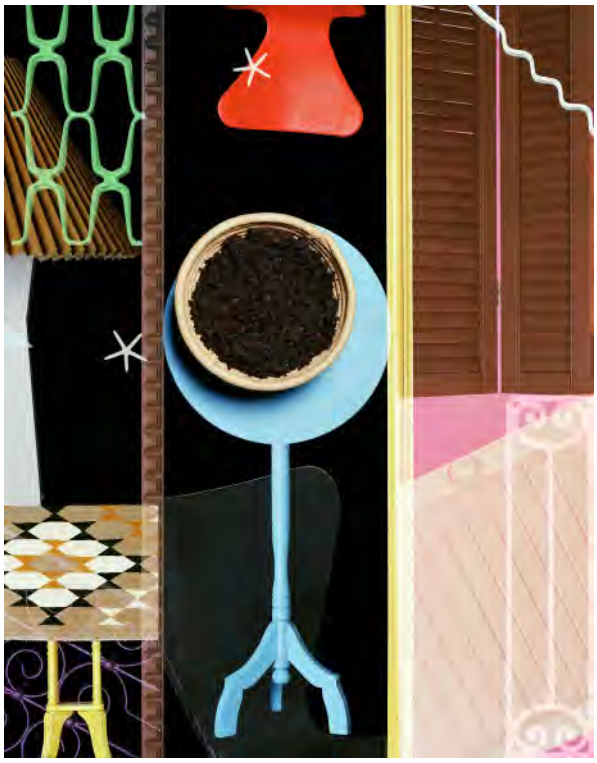
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Scissor Life (Jane Fonda 1982), 2013
Matthew Porter



Barefoot (Jane Fonda 1987), 2013
Matthew Porter



Isle of Mountains, 2012
Matthew Porter



Single Pedestal, 2013
Matthew Porter

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M+B

Art in America

AIPAD Photography Show: Top Ten
by Tracy Zwick
May 5, 2013

A wide swath of historical photography is on view at the Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD) Photography Show at the Park Avenue Armory in New York (through Apr. 7). Among the 82 dealers represented, there's a line-up of classical photography's usual suspects: Fox Talbot, Steichen, Evans, Kertesz and so on. While lighter on the contemporary, the fair contains a few standout galleries in this category, including Lisa Sette, Bonni Benrubi, and M + B. Price points range widely, from $500 carry-away prints to large scale Massimo Vitali pictures (price upon request).

Whether pre-pictorialist, post-modernist or something in between, choose your own top 10 this weekend. The show is open 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. Friday and Saturday, 11 A.M. to 6 P.M. Sunday, with panel discussions all day Saturday

Lisa Sette Gallery (Scottsdale): British photographer Damion Berger's pictures call to mind British painter John Virtue's. There are no people in these images; they are populated with energy. Printed as negatives, Berger's large night photographs offer semi-abstract takes on fireworks in a style that's chalky, gritty and glorious.

M + B (Los Angeles): When it comes to punk rock epics, Matthew Porter's captivatingly implausible flying muscle cars sort of define the category. The one at M + B's booth, Valley View (2013), like the rest of the series, is California cool, cinematic to the nth degree. Starsky and Hutch meets the Metropolitan Museum of Art (where another of Porter's cars was recently on view as part of the "After Photoshop" show), it's what you'd expect to see decorating one of Brad Pitt's walls.

Jackson Fine Art (Atlanta): Born to German parents in Brazil, L.A.-based Mona Kuhn is showing sensual, restrained nudes including Maya and Pan (2012) and Mirage (2012). Desert hot and exquisitely, naturally lit, Kuhn's photos are included in Sir Elton John's collection as well as those of LACMA and SFMoMA.

Bonni Benrubi Gallery, Inc. (New York): Twentieth-century and contemporary photography stalwart Bonni Benrubi Gallery does not disappoint with a striking, if too small, selection of French photographer Stephane Couturier's work. Even though Brasilia, Monument no. 1 (2007-08), from his Melting Point series, is not Couturier's strongest work, it nonetheless reflects his sharp sense of design, composition and color, and his lyrical, painterly ability to represent transformation.

Robert Klein Gallery (Boston): Rounding out the contemporary field, Bill Jacobson has shifted his attention from out-of-focus images to Ellsworth Kelly-like clarity in abstraction, with his Place (Series), 2012-13. Jacobson won a Guggenheim fellowship last year. His newest work comprises deceptively simple, spare geometric images in black and white and primary colors mostly, resulting from Jacobson's placement of variously sized rectangles in an array of constructed and natural settings.

Paul M. Hertzmann, Inc. (San Francisco): Fun, unique, hilariously captioned, staged '70s-era photos by Marica Resnick are the highlight here. A masked Stephen Colbert look-alike in a tux holding a cigarette is at the center of one small, vintage silver print. In the frame the artist has scrawled, "She would rendezvous in her bed with the sandman every night." Roughly 16 by 20 inches, the prints are reasonably priced at $4,000.

Galería Vasari (Buenos Aires): In a similar vein, though more political-historical, Vasari has a handful of rare 1948-9 photos documenting no longer extant collages by German World War II émigré Grete Stern. Stern studied at the Bauhaus before fleeing to Argentina, where she illustrated via collage a column in a women's magazine, Idilio, to which ladies sent their dreams for analysis. These sueños evince a gamut of classical psychoanalytical motifs with style, precision and a modicum of humor, at $19,000 each.

PDNB (Dallas): Who can resist an iconic composition by André Kertész? Romantic, mysterious, geometric, classic Martinique (1972) is monochromatic magic.

Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery (New York): Cartier-Bresson wrote, "In order to give meaning to the world, one has to feel oneself involved in what one frames through the viewfinder." Canadian-born Edward Burtynsky's Dryland Farming #13 (2010) reflects the artist's consciousness of environmental and sociopolitical issues around topography, natural resources and farming. It's a large-scale landscape, a systems C-print taken over Monegros County, Aragon, Spain, filled with Brice Marden-esque squiggles, dots and dancing lines in a rhythm of beiges and grays.

Weinstein Gallery (Minneapolis): Last but not least, Alec Soth's pictures are among the first you see when you enter the fair and the last your weary eye drifts over on the way out. They hold your gaze in either direction, particularly the Dutch-infused Angela, Los Angeles (2011). It features an elegantly posed woman Soth met through a porn convention, photographed in banal quarters from the side, turned away from the camera, with a parrot resting on her shoulder. The yellows are straight out of Vermeer. It's priced at $13,000

M+B

The New York Times

Hot Wheels in Hot Pursuit of Artifice

By David Segal
January 11, 2013



MATTHEW PORTER is shopping online for a vintage muscle car, and not just any car will do. He is tempted by a ’66 Dodge Charger but isn’t crazy about its glossy white paint job. A ’72 Plymouth Road Runner would appeal, but it’s tricked out for racing, with “43” painted on its roof and Pepsi decals all over. The ’70 Plymouth Superbird? It lacks the steroidal contours he craves. He passes on a couple of convertibles and then discovers a ’67 Ford Mustang Shelby GT 500.

“Yeah, this is the first thing I see that I’d seriously consider,” he says. “I have a few Mustangs, but I don’t have a Shelby. They’re special because Shelby was a designer and a racecar driver, and he helped engineer this car for Ford. This is kind of exciting.”

If Mr. Porter buys the Shelby, he knows exactly what he’ll do with it: photograph it in midair, soaring so dangerously high that it will look doomed to a chassis-bending wreck. Happily, he will not need a driver to pull off this stunt. He won’t even need gas. Like all the vehicles photographed for what this artist calls his flying car series, the Shelby is a 1:18 scale model, about 11 inches long, purchased from a Web site, DiecastMusclecars.com.

The miniatures arrive in Mr. Porter’s Brooklyn studio, a cluttered space in an old building between the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and the Navy Yard. The cars are dangled like marionettes from a mechanical arm, carefully lighted and shot, then digitally fused to an image of a streetscape that Mr. Porter has photographed with a large-format camera. When vehicle and backdrop are seamlessly

melded, he has devised a classic image from ’60s- and ’70s-era TV and cinema — an airborne hunk of Detroit steel, but a hunk that looks hazardously aloft.

To anyone unfamiliar with Mr. Porter’s technique, the photographs delight and then mystify. How’d he catapult a car like that? And who paid the driver’s medical bills? Then comes the realization that the car is sailing impossibly high, and that the tableau must be fabricated. At which point delight returns, along with wonder: If this isn’t real, how did it happen?

“Honestly, some of it came from watching the closing of the remake of ‘Starsky & Hutch,’ ” Mr. Porter said on a recent afternoon in his studio. “They do one of those jumps over the crest of a hill, and it froze, and the lens flared over the hood. And I thought, that’s the picture I’d like to make, but
I don’t have the budget or the resources to actually stage it.”

Mr. Porter printed his first flying car a year after the movie came out, in 2005, and the images have been so popular that he has made about two a year since — 14 so far, most in editions of five. They sell out immediately, and his galleries, Invisible-Exports in Manhattan and M+B in Los Angeles, keep a waiting list for new releases. One of his photographs, “110 Junction,” is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s exhibition “After Photoshop: Manipulated Photography in the Digital Age.”
“I think of it as a companion to Yves Klein’s ‘Leap Into the Void,’ ” said Mia Fineman, an assistant curator in the Met’s photographs department. She was referring to a photograph Klein took of himself jumping off a building, seemingly on the verge of a skull fracture. Actually he had arranged men beneath him holding an outstretched tarp to break his fall, which he erased from the final image. Klein’s “Void” can be seen across the hall from “110 Junction” in the show “Faking It: Manipulated Photography Before Photoshop.”

“ ‘Leap’ and Porter’s flying cars have a similar sense of freedom and risk, defying gravity through the artifice of photographic manipulation,” said Ms. Fineman, who organized the two shows. “Both artists are engaging the viewer to see how much they can get you to suspend disbelief. Both are interested in that tension between what the eye sees and what the mind knows.”

Mr. Porter, 37, is lean and soft-spoken, with a contemplative manner and neatly trimmed beard that would fit right in in a faculty lounge. He grew up in Bellefonte, Pa., the grandson of Eliot Porter, a 20th-century nature photographer who was a friend of Ansel Adams and Georgia O’Keeffe. Matthew was a high school sophomore when his grandfather died, and his interest in photography did not blossom until later. The two never really talked shop. When Mr. Porter attended art school — at 29, he enrolled in an M.F.A. program offered by Bard College through the International Center of Photography — he didn’t tell anyone about this familial link.

“I kept it a secret because ‘nature photographer’ had pejorative connotations,” he said.
He was drawn to flying cars for reasons more complicated than nostalgia or the allure of retro style.
“What I like about muscle cars is how absurd they are,” he said, holding a model of a 1970 Oldsmobile Cutlass SX, which he was considering for a new image. “They feel like they were designed by a committee. They are the camels of the road. Nothing that heavy or wide, with that much hood in front of you, should go so fast.”

They are also flashy and obnoxiously thirsty when it comes to gas, he added. At the same time, he said, he loves their “macho aggressiveness” and regards them as the laudably populist reaction of American automakers to European manufacturers, which priced their speedsters beyond the reach of the average consumer.

“Americans were thumbing their nose at European snobbery, which said you need to be from a certain class to own a sports car,” he said.

Mr. Porter has pulled off similar digital feats of this-can’t-be in other series, including one in which the airship Hindenburg appears to be hovering over landscapes of the American West. But he is not wedded to any theme, and lately he has created photographs inspired by Georges Braque still lifes. No other project, though, has found an audience as smitten as the one awaiting the next flying car, and Mr. Porter is a bit uneasy about that. He feels at times like a rock musician who wrote a hit a few years ago and now has to keep playing it.

“I can’t tell you the number of times I’ve heard, ‘Oh, you’re the flying car guy,’ ” he said. “But it’s fine. I’m comfortable with that. I stand behind these works.”

They help finance his other projects, he is quick to note. And while the learning curve for the series has flattened out, he still delights in the craft required to compose the photographs.

The process starts with what he calls “location scouting for a movie you’re not going to make,” he said. Usually he sets up his tripod and 4-inch-by-5-inch format Wista camera at daybreak, when traffic is minimal. One of his early vistas was a San Francisco street that Steve McQueen had raced over in “Bullitt,” a 1968 movie with one of cinema’s great car chases. He has also found spots in Los Angeles and New York.

The series didn’t sell at first, partly because Mr. Porter wasn’t represented by a gallery and was asking $2,000 a photo. But an assortment of Web sites — some focused on photography, others on stuff that just looks cool — started showcasing his work. Benjamin Trigano, the founder of M+B, discovered the series through a friend and contacted Mr. Porter, inviting him to join the gallery’s roster.

Mr. Porter became part of M+B by 2008, and interest in the series took off the next year, for reasons that he can’t fully explain. He has never mounted a flying car show, and he has never received much publicity. But now, when Mr. Trigano receives a new flying car edition, he sends five e-mails to people on the waiting list, and the images are gone, selling for $8,000 to $10,000 apiece. Unlike a lot of manipulated images, the flying cars seem more interesting the more you know about how they are made. Initially they come across as fantastically kinetic and loud; the implied soundtrack is the roar of a V-8 engine, the squeal of burned rubber and Foghat’s “Slow Ride.” But these images are made in stillness and something close to silence, on empty streets, with tiny, motionless cars suspended by thread. The part of the process with the highest decibel level may be the conversations that Mr. Porter has with the guy who answers the phone at DiecastMusclecars.

Usually, Mr. Porter asks lots of questions.

“I ask him what the tire tread is like, how detailed the grille is, are the windshield wipers one piece?” he said. “You want as many separate, distinct pieces as possible, so when you blow the car up, you can’t tell it’s from a mold.”

The DiecastMusclecars owner once asked, “What’s with all the questions?” But Mr. Porter didn’t tell him how he uses the cars, or that an image of one them — a footlong 1970 Plymouth GTX — is now flying at the Met.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATTHEW PORTER: PALE SUBTROPICAL LIGHT
January 7 – February 11, 2012
Artist's Opening Reception: Saturday, January 7, 2011 from 6 to 8 pm

A PARTICIPATING GALLERY IN PACIFIC STANDARD TIME





M+B is pleased to present *Pale Subtropical Light*, a selection of new works by Matthew Porter. The exhibition comprises a critical photographic inquiry into the career and legacy of Hollywood icon Jane Fonda, mid-century modern architecture in California and historical locations such as the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in Montana. *Pale Subtropical Light* runs from January 7 through February 11, 2012, with an opening reception for the artist on Saturday, January 7 from 6 to 8 pm.

The exhibition's six discrete subjects are threaded together to form a reticulated pattern of overlapping subject matter. The title is lifted from "Eureka!," a 1978 essay by John Gregory Dunne. The essay tracks the attitudes of New York City literati toward his decision to move to Los Angeles in 1964 and their unfounded accusations that he traded the cultural capital of opinions for the cultural capital of images. Los Angeles is often described in terms of mirages and dreams, so it is fitting that Dunne uses hallucinatory imagery to describe his attachment to the city: "I am . . . attached to the deceptive perspectives of the pale subtropical light." His description of quotidian beauty is used to counter the observations of others on the city in which he lives. He writes of the chimerical possibilities of "psychic and physical slippage" that a place like Los Angeles can instill in the astute observer, using examples of the disconnect between history and experience. In the exhibition, the various pictures explore the relationship between the vivid imagery of historical American myths and the iconicity of the photographs (or lack of) that represent them.

* * *

In 1972, Jane Fonda traveled to North Vietnam. Like hundreds of other Americans before her, she was seeking to confirm rumors of the deadly effects of chemical weapons and the bombing of civilian targets by the American Military and to deliver mail to American POWs. On her last day there, she was driven to the site of an anti-aircraft gun emplacement (inactive at the time), surrounded by American, Japanese and Vietnamese journalists, and casually directed to sit at the helm of the weapon. Members of the local community sang Fonda a song, and she responded with an emphatic performance of a Vietnamese anti-war song written by students in Saigon. It was a rapturous moment. Everyone applauded, and Fonda, exhausted by the manic pace of her tour, clasped her hands together and thanked her hosts. A photograph from this encounter became the focal point of the 1972 short film titled *Letter to Jane*, a footnote to *Tout Va Bien*, and a pinnacle of Godard pedagogy. Fonda survived her time in the jungle, but the legacy of those photographs continues to stalk her.

* * *

The jungle landscapes were made on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. Kauai has a long history as a location for Hollywood war movies because of the aesthetic approximation of its jungle foliage to Southeast Asia and the Pacific Theater. In recent decades, however, the film industry has largely moved on to more arid climates to address more contemporary conflicts.

* * *

In 1947, architectural photographer Julius Schulman photographed Ayn Rand in her Richard Neutra designed house. Neutra originally designed the house for the Austrian film director Josef von Sternberg (mentioned by Dunne in "Eureka!") in Chatsworth, Los Angeles. The Schulman photographs have been scanned, cropped, overlaid with grass and plants from the Little Bighorn Battlefield, and re-photographed. The result is a layered collage, formed by multiple exposures, depicting the collision of various historical and ideological subject matter.

* * *

In 1876, General George Armstrong Custer, notoriously rapacious, led a doomed but credulous battalion of 210 soldiers along a series of bluffs above an Indian river encampment. When he realized he was outnumbered, his military erudition dictated that he seek further high ground. What was revealed at the top of Last Stand Hill was the vertiginous optical sensation of endless, undulating green hills. Clearly, the preferable perspective on that day was from the denser foliage of the valley below.

* * *

In the exhibition there are three photographs of hornets' nests piled on tables and chairs. The nests have either been seasonably abandoned, or the hornets were exterminated. They are spherical, composed of concentric wrappings of what looks like low-grade cardboard—a material that's been chewed and spit out by the hornets to synthesize into paper. The annual apocalypse affects every colony, but often leaves the nests intact.

* * *

Matthew Porter (b. 1975) received his BA from Bard College in 1998 and his MFA from Bard College and Bard-ICP in 2006. His work often features historical mash-ups, collapsing disparate events and cultural references within single frames or spreading them out over a series of tightly edited photographs. Recent exhibitions include a solo show at Invisible Exports in New York, and he was included in the International Center of Photography's *Perspectives 2010*. In 2010, he curated shows at Mount Tremper Arts in upstate New York and M+B in Los Angeles. Porter lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. This is his second solo exhibition at M+B.

This exhibition is part of *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980*, a Getty initiative that brings together more than sixty cultural institutions from across Southern California to examine the history of contemporary art in Los Angeles.

Location:	M+B, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90069
Show Title:	Matthew Porter: Pale Subtropical Light
Exhibition Dates:	January 7 – February 11, 2012
Artist's Reception:	Saturday, January 7, 2012 from 6 – 8 pm
Gallery Hours:	Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, and by appointment

For more information, please contact Shannon Richardson at M+B at (310) 550-0050 or shannon@mbart.com

# # #

A PARTICIPATING GALLERY IN PACIFIC STANDARD TIME: ART IN L.A. 1945–1980

HOTSHOE



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Winter 2013

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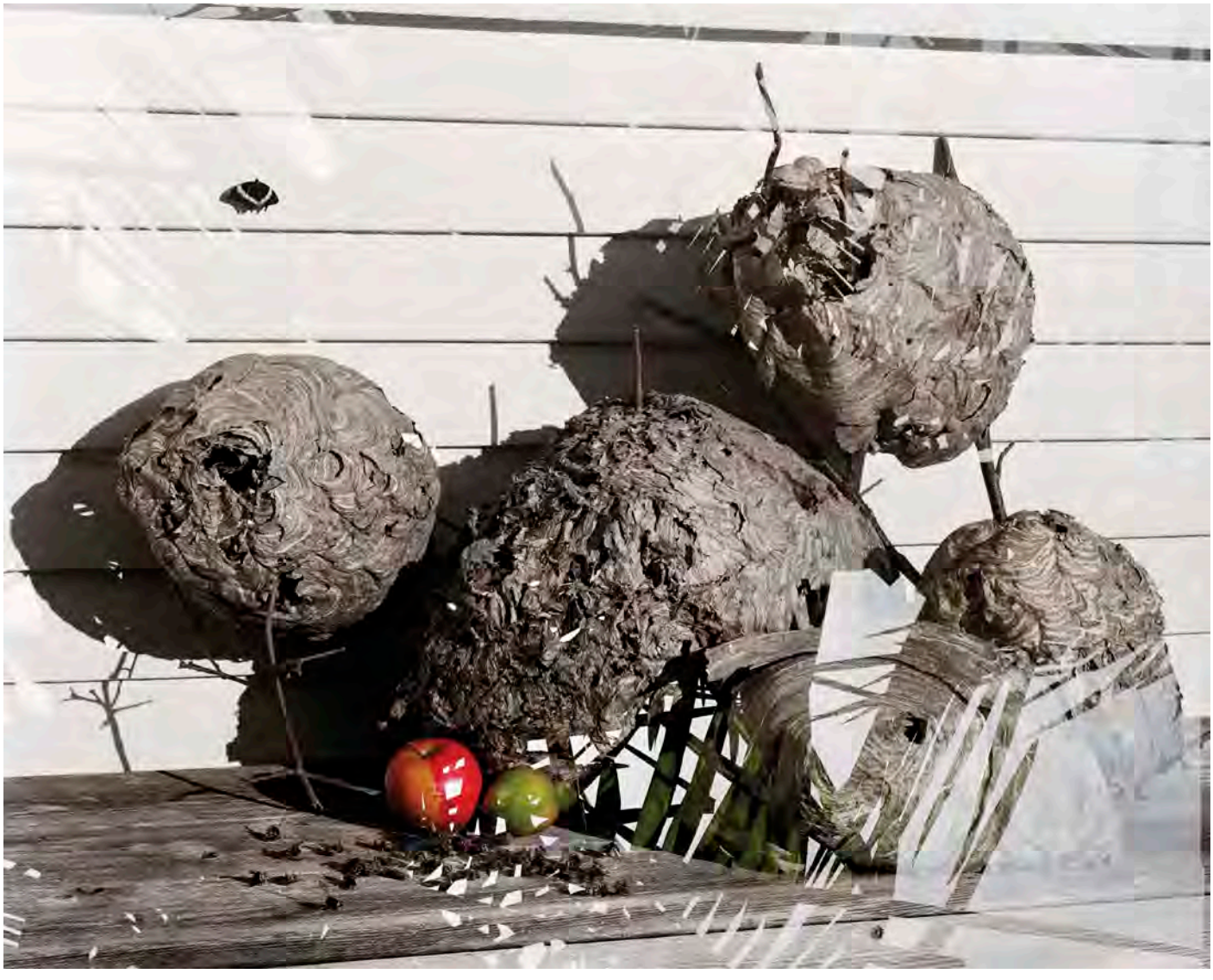
PALE SUBTROPICAL LIGHT



All images © Matthew Porter (Courtesy M+B, LA and Invisible Exports, NY). *Von Sternberg House #3*, 2012



South Carolina (Jane Fonda 1972), 2011



Bees of North America #1, 2011



Barefoot (Jane Fonda 1967), 2011



Bees of America #2, 2011



Valley, 2011



Scissor Lift (Jane Fonda 1982), 2011



Von Sternberg House #2, 2012



Alice (Jane Fonda 1979), 2011

MATTHEW PORTER

“He writes of the chimerical possibilities of ‘psychic and physical slippage’ that a place like Los Angeles can instill in the astute observer, using examples of the disconnect between history and experience.”

Jane Fonda, tropical forests, a Modernist house, a verdant hillside and some empty hornets’ nests — what connects?

Los Angeles is one clue. Another is the imagination of Matthew Porter whose seductive series, *Pale Subtropical Light*, brings these disparate subjects into conjunction.

The title Porter takes from John Gregory Dunne’s essay, *Eureka!* — a celebration of the emancipatory powers of Los Angeles over body and mind. Dunne described his attachment “to the deceptive perspectives of the pale subtropical light” and as the gallery note tells us, “he writes of the chimerical possibilities of ‘psychic and physical slippage’ that a place like Los Angeles can instill in the astute observer, using examples of the disconnect between history and experience.”

Porter is not an artist who seeks to conceal his sources or process. His *Flying Cars* series and *Cowboys & Zeppelins* — their staging and mash-ups — reveal a liking for the absurd. With their nod to sci-fi and fantasy films, as well as car chases, the Wild West and the conflation of impossible worlds, it’s not surprising Porter should have been drawn to making his own statement on the place and psyche from which those fantasies derive.

If *Pale Subtropical Light* were a game, Level 1 participation — requiring little or no information about its subject matter — would in all likelihood take the viewer first to the Fonda pictures. These re-stage well-known photographs of Jane Fonda, ranging from her sci-fi, sex bomb persona in *Barbarella (Positronic Ray,* 2011*)*; her fitness goddess incarnation (*Scissor Lift*, 2011); feted actress in cowboy love story *Electric Horseman (Alice,* 2011*)*; sex-kitten (*Barefoot*, 2011) and political activist (*South Carolina*, 2011). But whilst the poses and styling echo the original photographs fairly closely, there is not the least attempt to cast look-alikes in the manner of Alison Jackson’s satirical stagings. The women are all stand-ins — used as one might a professional stand-in on a film or photo shoot: to provide an approximate likeness of height, build and colouring for the director of photography to set-up and light the scene.

Porter says his interest in Fonda comes from the sheer amount of photographic coverage that exists of her at key moments in her life and transformations that have come to stand for milestones in America’s own recent history, just as her image has become short-hand and signifier for virtually every incarnation of female archetype. Porter was born in 1975 as the Vietnam War drew to an end, so was evidently too young to remember Jane Fonda’s notoriously controversial visit to North Vietnam at the time it took place. She went to corroborate rumours of chemical weapons and the bombing of civilian targets by the American Military, and to deliver mail to American POWs. As the gallery note contextualises: “on her last day there, she was driven to

PALE SUBTROPICAL LIGHT

the site of an anti-aircraft gun emplacement, surrounded by American, Japanese and Vietnamese journalists, and casually directed to sit at the helm of the weapon." Songs were sung and Fonda, "exhausted by the manic pace of her tour, clasped her hands together and thanked her hosts. A photograph from this encounter became the focal point of Godard's 1972 short film titled *Letter to Jane*, a footnote to *Tout Va Bien*."

What interests Porter here is the legacy of the photographic image, and its capacity to remain a lightning rod and justification — so many years later — to ad hominem vitriol and political propagandising. He is also aghast that at least one leading critic has described these images as "appropriated", when they so patently and deliberately declare themselves otherwise.

It's at least one of Porter's stated aims in this series to make "each photograph do just one thing — to reference just one event". But what the Fonda re-staging pictures demonstrate is how rarely an image can ever be of just the thing that it is; how every image — wanted or not — is encoded with the halo-ing effect of earlier images.

The pictures of tropical forests — *Valley*, 2011; *Canopy*, 2011 — requires altogether more insider knowledge — at least a Level 2. These jungle landscapes are taken on the Hawaiian Island of Kauai (whose heritage the 2011 Clooney movie, *The Descendants*, brought to wider attention). In this context, we're told the island "has a long history as a location for Hollywood war movies because of the aesthetic approximation of its jungle foliage to Southeast Asia and the Pacific Theater. In recent decades, however, the film industry has largely moved on to more arid climates to address more contemporary conflicts."

In Los Angeles, Kauai provided a convenient stand-in for Vietnam and Korea, but in Porter's mind, it's become a stand-in for John Wayne himself. The original show card to *Pale Subtropical Light* contains a "Possible Letter from John Wayne to Jane Fonda". It begins:

> *"Dear Jane Fonda*
>
> *Hello — This is John Wayne, the famous actor who appeared with your father in the film Fort Apache."*

He goes on to say:

> *"Essentially my political affiliations serve to reinforce the archetype I embody for the movie-going populace. For them, the two roles I play — on screen and in life — are inseparable."*

Of course this is a spoof, written by Porter's friend Ivan Svenonius, but it's a humorous way of reminding us not only of the peculiar ways we allow ourselves to read and conflate the "image" with "reality", but also an opportunity for Porter to have a private poke at Wayne, and his contorted over-justification for jumping the draft.

With these themes in mind, the titling of *Last Stand Hill*, 2012, is a bit of a give away. We can be reasonably sure these landscapes of a rising hillside are of General Custer's last stand against the Sioux in the Battle of Little Bighorn. Porter is showing us the view as Custer would have seen it — outnumbered and seeking to get to the high ground for military advantage. Porter adds: "What was revealed at the top of Last Stand Hill was the vertiginous optical sensation of endless, undulating green hills. Clearly, the preferable perspective on that day was from the denser foliage of the valley below." Whilst the image, like most of the battlegrounds of history, can give no sense of "being there" on the day, it's the sort of observation of particular appeal to a photographer — interested in perspective and the trick of light — and the significant ironies from being able to trust, or not, what one sees.

And whilst there's a link between Custer's hillside and the collage images in the series, it's a Level 4 to work out all the layers (*Von Sternberg House #1*, 2011; *Von Sternberg House #2*, 2012). The house is a Richard Neutra beauty, built originally for that most Teutonic of legendary Hollywood directors, Josef von Sternberg, later owned by Ayn Rand, the darling of the Libertarian right, and therein photographed by the great architectural photographer, Julius Shulman in 1947. The connection to Little Bighorn? The grasses and plants — which were picked there, then overlaid onto scanned, cropped and re-photographed images of the originals.

What of the bees? The empty nests, arranged in the classical still life idiom, are literal "*natures morte*" — complete with shells and glazed apples. They are the empty husks of hornets' nests — not the endangered honey bees — but they still stand (alongside *Falcon Apocalypse*, and its nod to the *Mad Max* genre) in Porter's image system for exactly that — the collapse of a dead world, an apocalypse — a harbinger perhaps.

Matthew Porter is transparent about the connective tissue that links the disparate images, yet welcomes the idea this series could pass for a group show. He sees the Fondas as portraits, the forests as landscape, the bees as still-life, the Neutras as collage. Yet for all their generic and stylistic variations, the images uniformly demonstrate what Porter calls his "finish fetish". "I could have plastered the walls with cheap inkjet prints and made the same statements and perhaps the conversation would be different. But I'm not willing to deny the pleasure of presentation. I know I'm filling the world with more objects but it is intended to be an exhibition. Picture and frame and a white box — the genre hasn't been exhausted yet. I'm glad we went through a period of upheaval, but I'm on the other side. I'm trying to present the work without trying to undermine it with that self-consciousness."

As Christopher Isherwood put it, "Los Angeles is a town which is like an advertisement for itself." But *Pale Subtropical Light* is not an advertisement for Los Angeles. It's a body of work which is knowing, but not self-conscious. It's an indisputably conceptual series that is unashamedly aesthetically appealing. It's a work that is knowing about its own effect.

SOPHIE BALHETCHET

M+B

Art in America

ZieherSmith Pops Up in Tennessee

By Naomi Mishkin
July 29, 2011



Chelsea gallery ZieherSmith is making the best of the typically sleepy month of August. While many galleries close for a month-long vacation, Scott Zieher and Andrea Smith Zieher are heading south to open a pop-up gallery in the seemingly peculiar locale of Nashville, Tenn. "BNA: Brooklyn to Nashville" will be open from Aug. 6-27 in a storefront space in the Gulch neighborhood's trendy ICON condo building.

"BNA"--also the acronym for the Nashville airport--features 20 (mostly) Brooklyn-based artists, among them Kate Gilmore, Rachel Owens, Matthew Porter, Sara VanDerBeek and Caroline Allison, who now lives in Nashville.

Over the years, the gallery co-directors (a married couple) have spent many holidays and vacations in Nashville, where Smith Zieher's family lives, and have always been interested in bringing some of the New York contemporary art world to the city. Knowing they would be Nashville in August, "we wanted to see if we could wing it," Scott Zieher told *A.i.A*. The couple's idea went from seed to fruition in just one month, and they were lucky enough to find a space that was "free--well, practically free, by New York rent standards."

With the crates packed and Zieher off to his final studio visit, their Chelsea location will be open by appointment only until Sept. 15, when the gallery reopens with a solo exhibition by--you guessed it--Brooklyn-based Mike Womack.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EXHIBITION:
MATTHEW PORTER | The Undefeated

DATES:
May 13 — June 19, 2011

RECEPTION:
Friday, May 13, 6-8pm

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS is pleased to present *The Undefeated,* a solo exhibition of new work by Matthew Porter. The exhibition comprises a critical photographic inquiry into the antagonistic but complementary careers and legacies of Hollywood icons Jane Fonda and John Wayne as political actors—and political actors as Hollywood icons.

* * *

The Undefeated *is a 1969 film starring John Wayne. The previous year he wrote and directed* The Green Berets*, an agitprop narrative about career soldiers fighting in Vietnam. That was also the year that Jane Fonda starred in* Barbarella*. While filming, Fonda began to realize that director and husband Roger Vadim wasn't an exemplar of New Leftist virtue, as she had previously thought. His misogynistic attitude towards their sex life and his indifference to her emotional needs imbued her with an urge for independence, and adventitiously she began to become more politically active. But* Barbarella *wouldn't be the last time Jane Fonda would be photographed wearing tights; in 1982 she released her first exercise video to help fund the Campaign for Economic Democracy, an organization started with her next husband Tom Hayden.* Jane Fonda's Workout Book *was a best-seller, and* Jane Fonda's Workout Video went on to sell 17 million copies.

*

Last summer I drove to Kingston, New York, to photograph a working replica of the car from the 1979 Australian film Mad Max*. The film, the first in a series, is critically understood as an anti-establishment film about the effects of mechanized violence on a society struggling to maintain order in an increasingly apocalyptic landscape. The owner of the replica car is a retired New York State Trooper, who commissioned the modifications in Australia and had the car shipped to him in New York. While I was photographing the car, he explained that he saw the film as a different sort of cautionary tale—a warning to liberals about the dangers of a lenient legal system that undervalues and impairs its law enforcement.*

*

In 1972 Jane Fonda traveled to North Vietnam. Like hundreds of other Americans before her, she was seeking to confirm rumors of the deadly effects of chemical weapons, the bombing of civilian targets by the American Military, and to deliver mail to American POWs. On her last day there, she was driven to the site of an anti-aircraft gun emplacement (inactive at the time), surrounded by American, Japanese, and Vietnamese journalists, and casually directed to sit at the helm of the weapon. Members of the local community sang Fonda a song, and she responded with an emphatic performance of a Vietnamese anti-war song written by students in Saigon. It was a rapturous moment. Everyone applauded and Fonda, exhausted by the manic pace of her tour, clasped her hands together and thanked her hosts. A photograph from this encounter became the focal point of the 1972 short film titled Letter to Jane*, a footnote to* Tout Va Bien*, and a pinnacle of Goddard pedagogy.*

*

In the exhibition there are two photographs of hornets' nests piled on tables and chairs. The nests have either been seasonably abandoned, or the hornets were exterminated. They are spherical, composed of concentric wrappings of what looks like low-grade cardboard—a material that's been chewed and spit out by the hornets to synthesize into paper. The annual apocalypse affects every colony, but often leaves the nests intact.

*

John Wayne's last collaboration with John Ford is 1963's Donovan's Reef. *The film, redolent of period racism, is a campy send-off to Ford's waning interest in war-primed masculinity. The love interest for Wayne's character is an uptight Boston socialite and board chair whose prissy attitude Wayne meliorates with an over-the-knee spanking. The Hawaiian island of Kauai serves as the backdrop for the film, standing in as French Polynesia. Kauai has a long history as a location for Hollywood war movies because of the aesthetic approximation of its jungle foliage to Southeast Asia and the Pacific Theater.*

* * *

Matthew Porter lives and works in Brooklyn. His work often features historical mash-ups, collapsing disparate events and cultural references within single frames, or spreading them out over a series of tightly edited photographs. His work was recently the subject of solo exhibitions in Los Angles and Dallas, and he was included in the International Center of Photography's *Perspectives 2010* in New York. In 2010 he curated shows at Mount Tremper Arts in upstate New York and M+B in Los Angeles. His interviews with artists will appear in Triple Canopy's upcoming issue on photography.

* * *

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS is a gallery dedicated to superior conceptual work. IE is located in the Lower East Side, at 14A Orchard Street, just north of Canal. The hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11-6:30pm, and by appointment. For more information, call 212 226 5447 or email: info@invisible-exports.com.

M+B

ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICK
January 4, 2011

"Bedtime for Bonzo"

Curated by Matthew Porter
M+B Gallery
612 North Almont Drive
December 11, 2010 – January 29, 2011



A DeLorean, gull-wing doors ajar, sits on the rack at the mechanic's. Its vintage California license plate insists: NOW. Yet the image (Matthew Brandt's *Aluminum*, 2008—a LightJet print mounted on aluminum, no less) has the unmistakable dull sheen of an already obsolete future.

Curated by artist Matthew Porter, this tightly packed group show takes its name from the didactic 1951 film starring Ronald Reagan. Porter's selections bring to mind another reference point: "Ronald Reagan and the Conceptual Auto Disaster," a subheading in J. G. Ballard's 1968 pamphlet "Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan." As it poises the 1980s between midcentury optimism and current malaise, the exhibition has something of Ballard's chilling erotics of catastrophe. The show achieves a kind of fetishized, polished stasis: the DeLoreans in the shop, for one, but also James Welling's black-and-white print of a vehicle being jump-started (*Jump, Averil Park, New York, NY*, 1995) and Andrew Bush's striking photos from 1989 of motorists driving classic cars. These last have long, elegiac titles that make poetry of technical description. In one, an old man "drift[s] northwest at approximately 68 mph," "somewhere" in California, "one evening in 1989." The subject is frozen in time, bathed in golden light, yet "drifting" with terrible velocity.

Like Reagan's films, Porter's show has plenty of sententious moments—Moyra Davey's photo of vintage audio equipment (*Receivers*, 2003), Brandt's print of dead bees rendered in bee parts (*Bees of Bees*, 2008), or Matthew Spiegelman's blown-up photogram of a marijuana pipe (*Glass Pipe Transfer 9*, 2007)—as if to say this is the decade(nce) America asked for, and then some. In Mark Wyse's *Untitled Landscape*, 1998, for example, the sprinkler system of a coastal SoCal villa battles a brown hillside for a moat of green lawn. Yet even where the works are blatant, they are also astute, as when Spiegelman photographs portions of the 35-mm filmstrips of trailers for '80s teen flicks *Better Off Dead* and *One Crazy Summer*. Against white backdrops dappled by the shadows of potted plants, the strips suggest the arrested, glossy motion of a Reagan-era adolescence—a past this show and its coldly nostalgic images are still working through.

— Travis Diehl

Photo credit: © Andrew Bush. *Man drifting northwest at approximately 68 mph on U.S. Route 101 somewhere near Camarillo, California, one evening in 1989,* c-print, dimensions variable.

PHOTOGRAPHY OF MATTHEW PORTER | PORTRAITS OF FROZEN ENERGY

November 4, 2010
By JP



Burnout #2, 2006 - Image © Matthew Porter



Blue Ridge Parkway, 2008 - Image © Matthew Porter

It's shocking to me that I missed these incredible "created" images by Brooklyn photographer Matthew Porter when they came out. These epic Muscle Car shots are the stuff of every machinehead munchkin's daydreams, and have the ability to still give a grown man that "hell yes, fist-pumpin' feeling." They're pure unbridled fantasy of the best kind. Interviewer Rosecrans Baldwin described them as, "…a studied spontaneity, a way to make portraits of frozen energy, of time put on pause." Indeed.

Let's cut the crap here and boil it down– bitchin'. There's also a captivating series called "High Lonesome", which Porter describes as, "sort of an absurd mash-up between the Hindenburg and the American West." Here's the interview and images from The Morning News–



Empire on the Platte, 2008 - Image © Matthew Porter

In many of the pictures, there's an affection for wide-open spaces and grandeur, even myths: big skies, flying cars, floating blimps, cowboys. Do you find photography well suited for capturing big ideas?

Overall, I would have to say no. I've had to use quite a bit of Photoshop and travel to different parts of the country to make those images. It would be easier if I could make the work from scratch, or appropriate the imagery, but because I'm interested in authoring my own source material, I need access to the subject. Sometimes I feel like photography is not the best medium for the work I'm making, but I'm determined.

The flying cars have garnered a lot of attention. Where did they start for you? Are you still interested in them?

I was inspired by '70s road and car chase movies to make something with muscle cars, but I couldn't get away from a documentary style project. Then I happened to see the end of the Starsky & Hutch remake, where the car freezes in mid-air while lens flares splash over the hood, and I realized that's what I wanted. Then it became a problem of how to do it on a small budget.

I like them because they represent iconic moments that have very little with telling a story. No one ever talks about how Bullitt is a police procedural, but I see stills from the car chase reproduced all the time; the imagery is vivid enough to remain, and they play directly to the imagination. When I get an opportunity to install work somewhere, I like the flying cars to function the same way, so they should never be shown all together. I'll probably continue to make them, maybe one every year for a while.



Downtown, 2008 - Image © Matthew Porter



The Heights, 2006 - Image © Matthew Porter

Do you have a special appreciation for how things are made? How they're constructed? I'm thinking about the portraits of the tools, the wasp nests.

Yes, although I had other aspirations for that work. The pictures of tools and workspaces that you're talking about were going to be paired with portraits of women singer/songwriters as kind of a testament to the erstwhile connection between folk and rock music and the manufacturing base. Actually, I think I meant the connection to be sweeter than that. I photographed the nests to augment a series of photographs I made of the original Fort Knox in Maine. The fort never saw any action, so it's a historical landmark without any real historical significance, and in a way emasculated. The nests are the feminine companion pieces—they have this disconcerting hole and they're actually quite delicate.

What sort of frustrations do you run into? What kind of limits when you're trying to create?

It's financially exhausting to continually make work that requires props, travel, and high-end finishing. That's not to say that my work necessarily requires a lot of money to make, a lot of things are shot hanging from string in my kitchen. The larger frustrations have more to do with how to get what can at times look like very glib, substance-less work exhibited in the right context.

Are you a lover or a fighter?

I wish I were living in LA in 1970, writing and recording long, heartfelt works of disillusionment.

What are you working on now?

The new work is tentatively titled "High Lonesome", and it's sort of an absurd mash-up between the Hindenburg and the American West. I'm in the process of building some Hindenburg related objects so that I can photograph some

M+B



The Heights, 2006 - Image © Matthew Porter



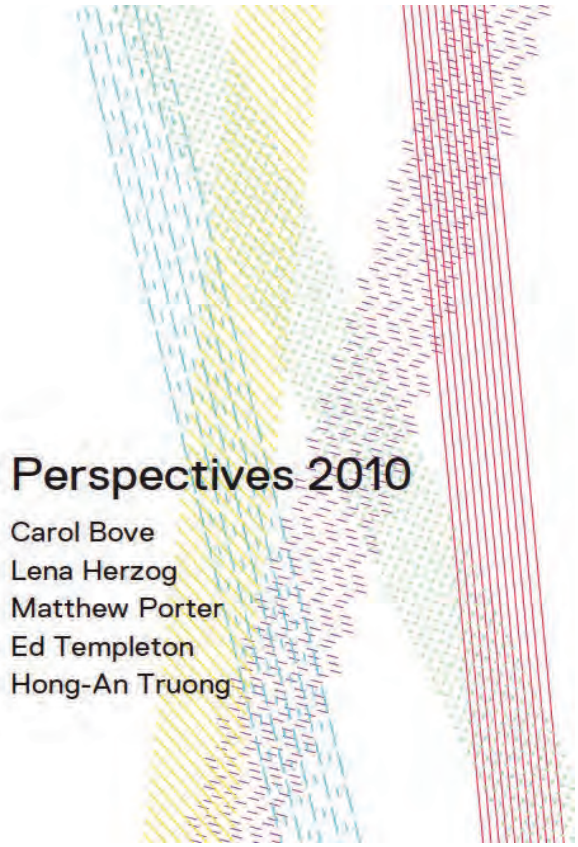
The Hindenburg, 2008 - Image © Matthew Porter

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International Center of Photography

Contact: Communications Department
212.857.0045 info@icp.org

media release



On view from
May 21
through
September 12, 2010

Media Preview
May 20, 2010
11:30 am–1:00 pm

RSVP:
info@icp.org
212.857.0045

The International Center of Photography is pleased to present *Perspectives 2010: Carol Bove, Lena Herzog, Matthew Porter, Ed Templeton, Hong-An Truong*, the inaugural installment of a new annual series focusing on significant recent works by contemporary artists, photographers, and filmmakers. The exhibition will be on view at ICP (1133 Avenue of the Americas at 43rd Street) from May 21 through September 9, 2010, and is organized by Brian Wallis, ICP Deputy Director for Exhibitions and Collections & Chief Curator. The "Perspectives" series continues ICP's ongoing exploration of the most exciting projects by emerging and less familiar photographers initiated in its award-winning Triennial exhibitions.

"This is a critical moment," states Wallis, "in which the questions about the constructions of history and memory are not just theoretical ideas but issues pertinent to daily life. Transformations in the making and interpretation of images, driven forward now mainly by digital technologies, have made ever more urgent our understanding of how historical meanings are invented in the present. What is impressive about this group of artists is their very diverse explorations of the contested relationship between the pulsing flow of images that define our daily life and the appropriated archive of historical imagery."

Although the "Perspectives" exhibitions are intended to be non-thematic group shows, inevitably there are associations between the artists. Most notably, while these five are united in their reliance on the photographic image, their uses of photography often take unexpected forms. Some of them rely on installations or room-size ensembles of photographic objects to communicate their ideas. Found or appropriated images and concepts are often the raw materials of their practices, and they are often engaged with other mediums in addition to photography, including writing, drawing, sculpture, filmmaking, bookmaking, and performance.

These artists are not concerned only with the photographic medium, whether it is the formal qualities of photography in transition or the newly defined digital features of the photographic print. Instead, they focus on the subjects of photography, and its means of defining and describing critical social, political, or even philosophical issues.



Carol Bove
Das Energi, **2005-6**
Wood and metal shelves, magazine page, books, feather, concrete, mirror
65 x 110 x 12 inches / 165, 1 x 279, 4 x 30, 5 cm
Photograph by Thomas Müller
Courtesy of the artist and Kimmerich, New York

Carol Bove (American, b. 1971)
Many of Bove's earlier works focused on shelf-based collections of books and objects that referenced past historical moments or moods, often centering on the turbulent 1960s. Her more recent work has adapted room-sized installations or settings that establish associations between various types of sculptural objects, both natural and manmade. Her precise Minimalist settings draw together raw materials as diverse as peacock feathers and driftwood, books and pop culture images, creating evocative symbolic references.



Lena Herzog
Untitled #11, Vrolik Museum, Amsterdam, Holland, **2008**
Matted silver gelatin print, split toned
22" x 28"
© Lena Herzog
Courtesy of the artist

Lena Herzog (Russian, b. 1970)
Lost Souls records Lena Herzog's journey into the world of Cabinets of Wonder and Curiosities, precursors to the modern museum. Containing objects discovered in travels to unknown territories, especially the New World, these cabinets sought to illustrate and explain the universe and new sciences. It was an era of map making, of filling in the blanks and naming the unnamable, doubting the unquestionable.

This new delineation of geographical boundaries and human identity was one of the most fascinating and subversive events in the history of ideas, and it triggered a debate over fundamental religious and philosophical questions. Lost Souls takes us into this world rarely seen by outsiders. Having been granted access to the early cabinets *Wunderkammern* and to the first medical museums, Herzog has photographed their mysteries with a sense of beauty, wonder and tenderness. Her subjects are mostly infants born with genetic defects that prevented their survival, and although they have been preserved as scientific specimens, some for hundreds of years, they are profoundly transformed through Herzog's lens into beings who mirror our own longings, fears, and existential dilemmas.



Matthew Porter
Empire, **2010**
Archival pigment print
Edition of 5
43" X 56"
© Matthew Porter
Courtesy of M + B

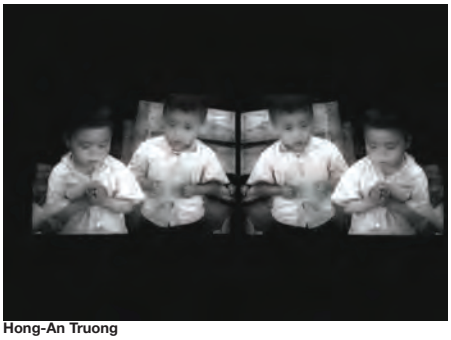
Matthew Porter (American, b. 1975)
In his dramatic, almost cinematic photographs, Matthew Porter establishes an unsettling relationship between history and imagination. His sun-drenched muscle cars excerpted from 1970s television fly just too high over their city streets, evoking youthful masculine fantasies. Capitalizing on the inherent narrative implied in any juxtaposition of images, Porter has moved toward increasingly improbable installations of unrelated photographs, such as cowboys in Western landscapes alongside invented images of Nazi-era dirigibles.



Ed Templeton
Bird Release, San Clemente, **2007**
Color photograph
© Ed Templeton
Courtesy of Roberts & Tilton, Culver City, CA

Ed Templeton (American, b. 1972)

Known as much for his intense observations of the chaotic lives of suburban youth as for his professional skateboarding accomplishments, Ed Templeton is an acute chronicler of the turbulent life going on around him. His highly personal photographs and installations exist alongside his paintings, graphic designs, and writings as a vivid and perpetually unfinished diary. But they also stand as a profound meditation on the meaning of everyday life, embodied in questions of life and death, love and beauty, hope and desire.



Hong-An Truong
Video still from *The Past is a Distant Colony,* **2007**
Digital video
Black & white with sound
Dimensions variable
© Hong-An Truong
Courtesy of the artist

Hong-An Truong (American, b. 1976)

In her video series *Adaptation Fever* (2006–07), Hong-An Truong uses found film footage to explore the lost history of French Colonial Viet Nam. Her psychologically inflected vignettes use a variety of disruptive techniques, such as mirrored images and truncated English subtitles, to suggest our distanced and disjointed perceptions of the past. Aimed at a Western audience, the quartet deliberately attempts to reconsider notions of postcolonial subjectivity, power, and nostalgia, even without memory or experience.

Funding

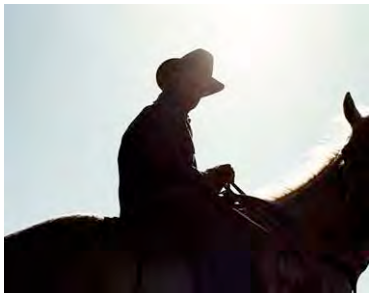
This exhibition was organized by the International Center of Photography with lead support from the ICP Exhibitions Committee and Studley. Additional support was provided, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATTHEW PORTER: HIGH LONESOME

December 12, 2009 – January 23, 2010
Artist's Opening Reception: Saturday, December 12, 2009





M+B is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Matthew Porter titled *High Lonesome*, running from December 12, 2009 to January 23, 2010.

The exhibition contains 18 photographs, varying in size and sometimes clustered together in a seemingly inchoate mass. But two themes persist: the American West and the Hindenburg. The show is an attempt at historical mash-up, bringing together romantic imagery of cowboys and zeppelins. Both subjects are iconic, yet their reputations have been soured by facts, as history overtakes myth. The Hindenburg, which began its life as the fountainhead of German creative and entrepreneurial vision, ended in a fiery death under the dark shroud of Nazi propaganda. As a romantic symbol it has been spoiled, much like the history of the American West—you can't watch *The Searchers* without being aware of the racism.

While not a direct narrative, the fictional meeting of a cowboy and the Hindenburg after peripatetic wanderings through the desert has the familiar ring of cheap science fiction. Dinosaurs didn't share the planet with cavemen, but their fictional conflict has been featured in a variety of media. This absurd collision is represented in the cornerstone piece *Farewell, Promised Land*, a photograph of a few shelves in a personal library; the shelf containing WWII nonfiction bleeds into the shelf containing Western history, while the entire rack is peppered with fiction.

Matthew Porter was born in State College, Pennsylvania in 1975. He graduated from Bard College in 1998 and received his MFA from the ICP/Bard Program for Advanced Photographic Studies in New York in 2006 and now resides in Brooklyn. His work has recently been exhibited in New York, Miami and Dallas and featured in the *New York Times Magazine*, *Modern Painters*, *VMan*, and *Exit*. This is Porter's first exhibition in Los Angeles and with M+B.

Location:	M+B, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90069
Show Title:	Matthew Porter: High Lonesome
Exhibition Dates:	December 12, 2009 – January 23, 2010
Artist's Reception:	Saturday, December 12, 7 – 9 pm
Gallery Hours:	Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, and by appt

For more info, please contact Shannon Richardson at M+B at (310) 550 – 0050 or shannon@mbart.com

# # #

MATTHEW PORTER
High Lonesome Essay

Paragraphs on the Photographs (After Sol LeWitt's *Paragraphs on Conceptual Art)*
by Matthew Porter

Let's take it as a given that the functions of conception and perception are contradictory—and pre and post, respectively—when it comes to making art. It follows that we should then be able to bisect the experience of looking at and understanding art into countering cognitions. In order to accept and conflate this duality, some preconditioning is required on the part of the viewer. Basically, you need to be in the right state of mind.

This is how I recommend you prepare: Imagine surfing in the middle of the Vietnam War, then picture what that would look like in a movie. Now that you have that image in your mind, consider another absurd collision—cowboys and zeppelins. These two things never met, but I can show you what it might look like if they did. That's the concept. Next, consider the photograph mounted before you on the wall. It has height, width, and depth—a series of very un-conceptual decisions have been made in order for this object to be produced according to the artist's speculation. It's all very technical, but it enhances your perceptual experience, like an esthetic emulsifier. The idea—the "perfunctory affair"—is merely in service of the picture.

I will refer to the kind of art in which I am involved as photography. In photography the idea and subject, the conceptual and the literal, are engaged in a constant rivalry for hierarchical importance. Sometimes they agree to artistic entente, and consent to share the medium's real estate. When this happens, those who were once obstinate advocates of intuitive practice can now pre-visualize, and the artist is freed from the constraints of working on location. The actual exposing of film, a mere instant, struggles for relevance in a mosaic of pre and post-production.

There are many claims to the provenance of conceptual photography, and the putative leaders of the movement often speak of documentary practices with disapprobation. But photography in the '80s saw its leaders reach détente, while some practitioners of the medium carved out a space for themselves in the middle. In other words, it's no longer interesting (and maybe never was) to discuss whether or not the information contained within the borders of a photograph is real or unreal.

With conceptual art, there is a tendency toward the obscure. Not so in the case of the work presented here. The plan of execution was a simple one, the design modular, and then the number of works became finite. Again, the concept was simple: cowboy meets zeppelin. How will the viewer perceive the concept, where will their own subjective interpretation lead them? Because conceptual art shares little with the rigid practice of mathematics, there's little chance of predicting the percentage of that understanding. Presentation then, is everything, for that's how the artist can influence the viewer's experience.

The ideas stated in these paragraphs are reasonably close to my thoughts on photography at this time. They should not be interpreted as categorical imperatives, but rather as an effort on my part to articulate my interest in both high-concept representational photography and conceptual art. The former relies on the technique and the latter on the idea.