

Light, Shadow and Magic: Antiquarian Photographic Processes and Contemporary Photography

Presentation Description:

This will be an oral presentation with a history and brief description of each process, including images. Contemporary artists working with these processes will be featured along with examples of their work, particularly as it relates to new technologies and new theories of image making.

Proposal Blurp:

A century and a half ago photography came to us as a gift—the product of decades and lifetimes of curious intrepid minds asking the right questions about light and chemistry; its discovery (or invention) was fueled by their wish for the implausible: to capture and hold forever “the moment”. Fast forward to now: the same appetite and curiosity finds us in a digital age where photography, capturing the shadow, is available to anyone.

In the mid 19-century, photography was a white European gentleman’s diversion. That was then. Now everyone everywhere photographs, incessantly. Every day scores of millions of pictures are made, sent to the ether, never to be seen again, nor missed.

The world changes daily; we are the prime agents of this change. We demand and expect cutting edge technology, which augments our ability to share information globally. This power, unexpectedly, also isolates us; numbs us; insulates us from the full spectrum of aesthetic sensibility. Social media makes us less social.

This presentation confronts this conundrum by probing the meaning and value of new technologies; and we explore their real world _ and their theoretical effect on artists. It will also focus on the spike in the revival of nearly-forgotten photographic techniques, formulas and practices. These “antiquarian processes” generate pictures made by the “hand of the artist”, images imbued with pleasure and wonder; pictures which embody subtly—the dark mystery of some elusive, ephemeral truth. It is alchemy, replete with its own mysteries and unexpected pleasures.

Topics Covered:

Description /history of processes covered in this presentation.

Cyanotype

Sir John Herschel
Anna Atkins
Hippolyte Bayard

Palladium/Platinum, Printing

Adolph Ferdinand Gehlem
Heinrich Gustav Magnus
C. J. Burnett
Peter Henry Emerson

Frederick Evans

Albumen

Louis-Désirée Blanquart-Evrard
Julia Margaret Cameron
Henry Peach Robinson
Charles Dodgson

Wet Plate Collodion

Gustave le Gray
Frederick Scott Archer
Joseph Ambrose Cutting
Marcus A. Root

Van Dyke

Sir John Herschel
Elizabeth Fulhame
Arndt & Troos

Contemporary artists working with these historic processes.

Cyanotype Process

Christian Marclay
Betty Hahn
Meghann Riepenhoff
Sam Wang
John Dugdale
SCAD students _ Suhair Farhat, Russell Cambron

Palladium/Platinum Printing

Nancy Marshall
Dan Burkholder
Luis González Palma
SCAD student _ Nicole LeCorgne, Jinyao Yuan

Albumen Process

Nancy Marshall
France Scully Osterman
SCAD student _ Emma Elaine de Cárdenas

Wet Plate Collodion Process

France Scully Osterman
Adam Fussá
SCAD students _ Cecelia Montalvo, Charlie McCullers, Donna Garcia

Van Dyke Process
Christopher James
Betty Hahn
V. Elizabeth Turk

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