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Artist's Statement

Alison Rossiter

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ALISON ROSSITER

Artist's Statement

THE DARKROOM IS ESSENTIAL to my work process as a photographer, whether it involves traditional methods or experimentation. I have worked with the materials and processes of light-sensitive, gelatin-silver-based photography since 1970. Recently, two years spent volunteering at the Sherman Fairchild Photographic Conservation laboratory at the Metropolitan Museum of Art immersed me in the field of photograph conservation and fed my deep interest in the history of photographic materials.

As technology evolves, so does my interest in materiality. Working without a camera or negatives in the darkroom led me to experiment with using a flashlight to draw on light-sensitive photographic paper. This created bold geometric abstractions. My light drawings series *Light Horse* and *Dark Horse*, from which this portfolio is assembled, grew from my lifelong admiration of horses. This admiration spurred a desire to draw representational images. I am a photographer, so this was foreign territory. As I created these light drawings, what I discovered was the beauty of the magnificent tones of silver gelatin that only exist through the basic photographic processes of light and chemistry.

After the light drawings, I began to explore the possibility of finding latent images in long-forgotten packages of expired black-and-white photographic papers. Atmospheric conditions, pollutants, light leaks, and physical damage can cause changes in the light-sensitive properties of these photographic papers. I process these sheets of paper in my darkroom to reveal found photograms. I have collected over twelve hundred individual packages of paper with expiration dates that represent the photographic industry of the late nineteenth century and every decade of the twentieth century. When I process these papers, they yield abstract images that bear a surprising resemblance to artworks from the last century. Each print title contains three facts: the manufacturer and type of paper, the expiration date on the package, and the date that I processed the material.



ALISON ROSSITER

Light Horse, 2003

light drawing on gelatin silver paper, 16 x 20 in.

Courtesy Stephen Bulger Gallery



ALISON ROSSITER

Light Horse (Buck), 2006

light drawing on gelatin silver paper, 8 x 10 in.

Courtesy Stephen Bulger Gallery



ALISON ROSSITER

Dark Horse (Buck), 2006

light drawing on gelatin silver paper, 8 x 10 in.

Courtesy Stephen Bulger Gallery



ALISON ROSSITER

Light Horse Head, 2003

light drawing on gelatin silver paper, 8 x 10 in.

Courtesy Stephen Bulger Gallery



ALISON ROSSITER

Light Horse No. 6, 2003

light drawing on gelatin silver paper, 8 x 10 in.

Courtesy Alison Rossiter



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