

LOIS CONNER - FLAT EARTH

APRIL 9 - MAY 21, 2022

Artist's Reception: Saturday April 9, 3-5pm

38 Newbury Street, Boston, MA



Xi Hu, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China (1994) - 5-panel Vintage Gelatin Silver prints 17" x 35" in.

Robert Klein Gallery, in collaboration with Penumbra Foundation, is pleased to present Flat Earth, a solo exhibition by renowned New York City-based artist Lois Conner, showcasing a selection of twenty-three multi-panel landscapes and seventeen vintage platinum prints.

Conner has been photographing in Asia, Europe and America since the 1970s. Her photographs are astounding in their composition and detail, and confirm the possibility of an image that is both specific and general in regards to time, place and history.

Inspired by Chinese hand-scroll paintings and seduced by the exquisite tonal and quality reproduction of the platinum printing process, Conner's meticulous contact-printing practice suggests simplicity. Yet it conceals the complex technical and formal decisions she makes with remarkable clarity of purpose. The selected images have been intentionally decontextualized from their original bodies of work to offer a reading of a universal landscape. Through their physicality, visual rhetoric and silent narrative, the images make visible a profound understanding and respect for the genre, the medium (photography) and the documented places (with their particular cultures and histories). Conner's photographs invite us to slow down and look carefully. And it is in this way that we might discover, in the space between the subject and object, her persistent gesture of searching.

About the multi-panels

These multi-panels landscapes were made with a 7x17in banquet view camera and are original prints made with silver gelatin fiber based paper in direct contact with the 7x17in negative. Conner made these prints between the 1980s and 2021.

About the camera

The banquet view camera was produced by Korona, Folmer & Schwing and Kodak from 1915 to 1929. It was originally used for making pictures of people at banquets, hence its name. It uses a single negative: 7x17in, 8x2in or 12x20in, depending on the format of the camera.

About the platinum prints

A platinum print is one of the most subtle and beautiful of all photographic printing processes. In a finished print, inert platinum metal is embedded in the fibers of the paper rather than the silver being suspended in the gelatin emulsion. Because viewers do not peer through a veil of gelatin, the final platinum print is, in some ways, similar to an ink, charcoal, or pencil drawing. Conner made these 5x7in and 8x10in platinum prints between the 1970s and 1990s.

About the artist

Lois Conner is known for her large-scale panoramic photographs. She has received numerous grants, exhibits widely, and her work is featured in many esteemed publications. Most recently, Conner received the Pollock-Krasner Award for Artists (2020) and the Rosenkranz Foundation Fellowship for Photography (2019). She was awarded the Anonymous Was a Woman Fellowship (2007), and grants from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation (1984), the New York State Council on the Arts (1983) and the National Endowment of the Arts (1979). Conner's work is currently on view in 150 years of Women at Yale University Art Gallery and is part of the traveling exhibition Civilization, The Way We Live Now in Australia, New Zealand and France (2020-2021). She exhibited in the inaugural exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston (2020). Conner has had numerous solo shows in Asia and the United States. Her work was featured in group exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2012 and 2017) and in the exhibition Pictures by Women: A History of Modern Photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (2010). Recent books include Lotus, Trees and the Jiangnan Landscape, Hangzhou (2019), A Long View, Shanghai Center of Photography (2018), and Lotus Leaves, Wairarapa Academy, New Zealand (2018). Conner has been teaching photography for over thirty-five years and is currently a visiting artist at Fordham University. She taught at the Yale University School of Art for more than a decade, and at other institutions including Princeton University, Sarah Lawrence College, Cooper Union, Bard College, Stanford University, the New School, the School of Visual Arts and the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China.

About the gallery

Robert Klein Gallery was established in 1980 and ranks among the world's most prestigious showrooms of fine art photography. Early exhibitions included Diane Arbus, Annie Leibovitz, Sally Mann, and Hiroshi Sugimoto. Robert Klein served as President of the Board of Directors of the Association of International Photographic Art Dealers (AIPAD). The gallery maintains an extensive and ever-changing inventory of 19th century, 20th century, and contemporary photographs. Participating in international art fairs such as The AIPAD Photography Show, Paris Photo, Photo London, and The Armory Show, Robert Klein Gallery provides its contemporary artists with international exposure while exhibiting works by recognized masters such as Ansel Adams, Helen Levitt, Yousuf Karsh, Edward Weston, and Irving Penn.

For questions or inquiries please contact:

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