

Basic Detail Report



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Title: Blinks R/G/B/Y/M/C

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Medium: Color photograms (C-prints,unique)

Description: Connecticut-based, New York City born, Ellen Carey aligns her artistic practice with the legacy of Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism and Conceptual Art as well as the history of photography. Her images lack an identifiable object reference, which prompts the question: "What is this a picture of?" Believing that "if the photograph is a memorial of anything, it is a memorial of its own composition," Carey investigates the idea of process as subject. Blinks R/G/B/Y/M/C presents Carey's version of "drawing with light," the original 19th century descriptive phrase for photography. Belonging to Carey's umbrella concept of "Struck by Light, Blinks R/G/B/Y/M/C" is a large-scale series of color photograms-as-installation. Invented in 1834 by William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877, further developed by Anna Atkins (1799-1871) and later explored by 20th centuries artists such as Man Ray (1890-1976), the photogram is the silhouette of an object placed onto the surface of light-sensitive paper. Traditionally, it uses the sun for exposure, hence the term "sun pictures" or "photogenic drawing." In the 21st century, Carey revisits Talbot and Atkins' camera-less methods, only now in full color and using the darkroom's enlarger as her "sun." The super-sensitivity of the paper to light is so high that Carey works in total darkness, except upon exposure. Like the practitioners, she uses "found" objects, but replaces her historical references with unconventional objects such as metal push pin and glass marbles now expanding her visual repertoire to only light that literally and figuratively strikes the paper. Her bold palette underscores photographic color theory reflected in her title while a newer interest finds "investigation into the biology of seeing: lines crisscross the image over saturated fields of bright hues, creating at the intersection tiny squares of black and/or white that 'blink' back (at the viewer) in a visceral, post-optical experience, an afterimage." Ellen Carey received a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Carey is currently Associate Professor of Photography at the Hartford Art School, University of Hartford.
Dimensions: 40 x 60"