

ROMAN ROAD

PRESS RELEASE PHOTO LONDON Stand G23

Thursday 17 May – Sunday 20 May 2018

Somerset House
Strand
London, WC2R 1LA

Opening Hours:

Thursday 17 May: 12 PM – 8 PM
Friday 18 May: 12 PM – 7.30 PM
Saturday 19 May: 12 PM – 7.30 PM
Sunday 20 May: 12 PM – 6.30 PM

Exhibited Artists: Antony Cairns, Gita Lenz, Natalia LL, George Platt Lynes, Aaron Siskind, Daisuke Yokota

Roman Road is very pleased to be participating in the fourth edition of Photo London, hosted at Somerset House from 17 – 20 May 2018. Featuring both 20th-century and contemporary photographic works, our stand brings together pieces by international artists who have engaged with experimental printing methods and the aesthetics of abstraction. The display considers the definitions of abstract photography, looking at the originality and process of artists who have abstracted subject and composition, or experimented with techniques that manipulate forms and impart new meaning.

The stand features experimental works by contemporary artists Antony Cairns and Daisuke Yokota. Employing unlikely supports and radical techniques, Cairns' work engages deeply with technological developments and he transforms machines and recycled materials into art objects. The display includes selected works from two of his most recent series – *E.I.* and *IBM* – through which he presents his images of cities petrified in e-reader screens and printed on tinted IBM computer punch cards. Yokota's works on the stand are taken from his *Matter/Burn Out* (2016), a series whereby he documented the process of setting fire to installation prints in a vacant construction site in Xiamen, China. The resulting highly abstract colour photographs ensue mediation on creation, destruction and ephemerality. The presentation also includes unique and intensely black large-scale works by Yokota, in which he investigates the chemical reactions caused by exposing photographic emulsions.

Among the display of vibrant contemporary works, Roman Road's stand presents significant black and white photographs by late photographers Aaron Siskind, Gita Lenz and George Platt Lynes. The first of these artists, Siskind, became internationally renowned for his images from the 1940s and 1950s, when he moved away from his literal documentary work and began to explore the formal elements in photography. He started taking pictures of found objects, weathered materials and textured surfaces, through which he explored ideas of fragmentation and transformation. During a visit to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, Siskind began capturing still objects in close-up views, creating abstract pictures that highlighted the formal qualities of their shapes and textures. A collection of these photographs taken by the artist on the island is presented on the stand. During the 1940s, Gita Lenz' photographic interests similarly shifted; she moved from street photography into more abstract, surreal compositions, creating contemplative images inspired by her day-to-day encounters.

George Platt Lynes' substantial body of work involves fashion, dance, nude and homoerotic photographs. Throughout his career, he demonstrated an interest in the body as pure form. His nude studies, while explicit, are also sculptural and often tightly framed; his intimate images highlight the shapes and shadows of the pictured body, bestowing his pictures with an abstract quality. Along with Lynes' work, the stand also shows a different side of avant-garde Polish artist Natalia LL's oeuvre, featuring conceptual and unfamiliar photographs that comparably explore the body and abstraction.

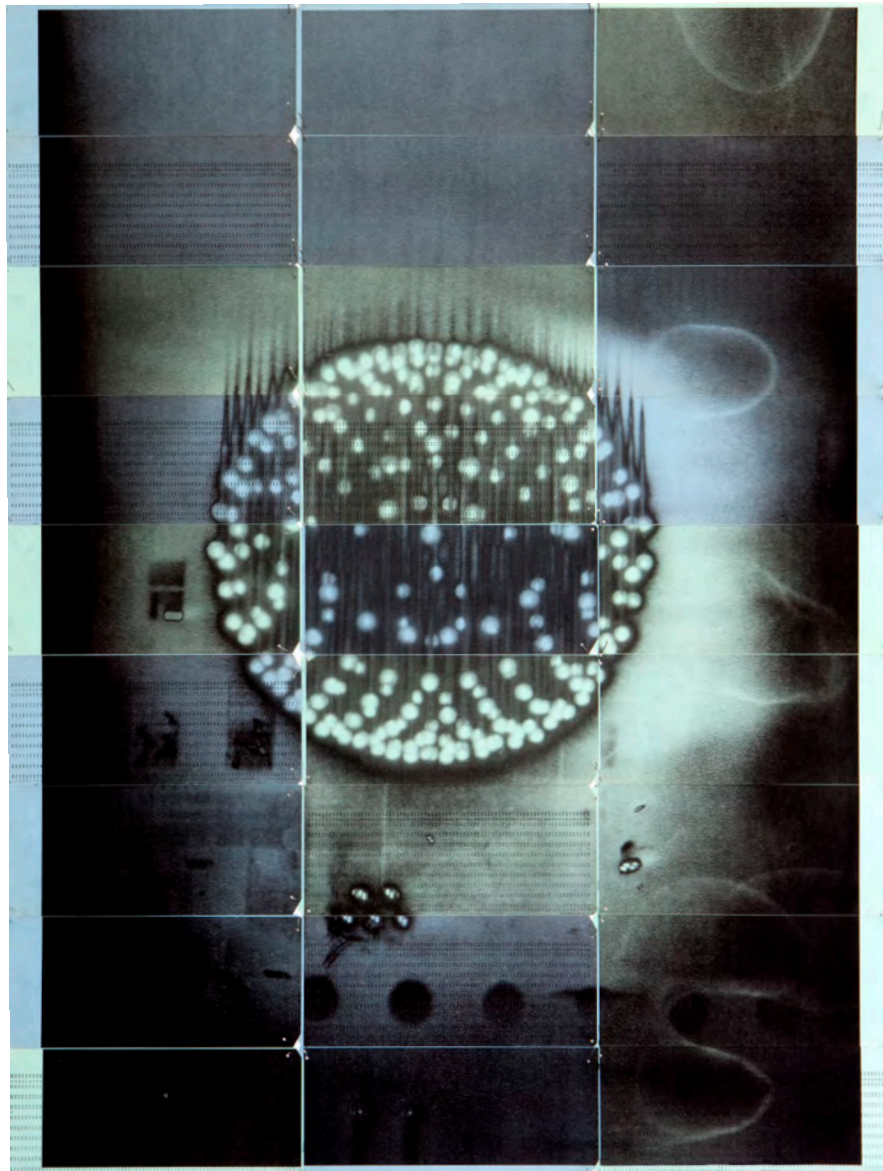
Coinciding with Photo London 2018, Cairns and Yokota are currently featured in *Shape of Light: 100 Years of Photography and Abstract Art* at Tate Modern, London, presenting new works made especially for the exhibition.

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ABOUT ROMAN ROAD

Roman Road was founded in 2013 by Marisa Bellani and initially began as a project space. The peculiarity of the premises has had a direct impact on the gallery's programme since its beginning. Tall and with a small footprint, the space led the director to challenge artists to employ the architectural elements in order to develop or restructure a body of work. Artists have frequently been asked to use the exhibition as a medium and have managed to transform the gallery room into a unique work of art. In 2014, the building underwent refurbishment to instate an additional private viewing space that gathers varied works by the gallery's represented artists, which are viewable by appointment. Since completing this renovation in 2015, Roman Road has established a qualitative programme, including participations at art fairs, and has seen its represented artists become internationally recognised by institutions and collectors.

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Antony Cairns, *IBM LDN5_51*, 2017. Inkjet on 27 green and blue computer punch cards assembled and mounted on archival cardboard with archival glue, 74.7 x 56.1 cm, unique. Courtesy of Roman Road and the artist. © Antony Cairns

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Antony Cairns (b.1980, London) works across photography, installation and sculpture. He studied photography at the London College of Printing, graduating in 2002 with first class honours. He was awarded the 2015 Hariban Award and received the Images Vevey Special Jury Prize in 2017. Recent exhibitions include: *TYO2-LDN4* at Roman Road, London (2017); *A Matter of Memory: Photography as Object in the Digital Age* at George Eastman Museum, New York (2016); and *LA-LV / LDN Process* at SferaExhibition, Kyoto, Japan, as part of KYOTOGRAPHIE 2016. A new installation by Cairns is currently featured in *Shape of Light: 100 Years of Photography and Abstract Art* at Tate Modern, London, and he is also participating in *London Nights* at the Museum of London. His work is held in a number of important British and European collections and was also recently acquired by George Eastman Museum, New York.

Gita Lenz (b.1910–2011) was an American photographer whose work, ranging from New York street photography to Abstract Expressionism, probed the realms of the surreal and process-based art. In the 1950s, her work was presented in two seminal photography exhibitions curated by Edward Steichen for the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA): *Abstraction in Photography* (1951) and *Family of Man* (1955). She was also featured in the three-person show *The Third Eye* (1952) at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, alongside John Reed and Don Normark. Lenz' work has more recently been receiving new recognition; in 2010, Candela Books published a first monograph *Gita Lenz: Photographs* in conjunction with an exhibition of her vintage prints at Gitterman Gallery in New York.

Natalia LL (b.1937, Żywiec) is a Polish artist working in photography, video art, performance and installation. From 1957-1963, she studied at the PWSSP (known today as the Academy of Fine Arts) in Wrocław, where she completed her MSc degree. Her work has been featured in international exhibitions and institutions, including in *The EY Exhibition: The World Goes Pop* at Tate Modern from late 2015 to early 2016. In 2017, she had a retrospective exhibition titled *Sum ergo sum* at the Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej in Toruń, Poland. Natalia LL's work is held in collections worldwide, including at the International Center of Photography, New York, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art, Kraków, Poland; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, France; and MUMOK, Vienna, Austria.

George Platt Lynes (b.1907-1955) was a largely self-taught fashion and commercial photographer. In 1932, he had his first solo exhibition at Leggett Gallery in New York, followed by a two-man show with Walker Evans at Julien Levy Gallery. Lynes opened his own New York studio in 1933 and collaborated with high-profile fashion magazines, including *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. In 1936, his work was included in *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* at MoMA, New York, and was also later presented in the museum's seminal exhibition *Abstraction in Photography* (1951), curated by Edward Steichen. Lynes' works are included in institutional collections, including at Musée des beaux-arts du Canada (MBAC), Ottawa; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg (MAMCS), Strasbourg; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles.

Aaron Siskind (b.1903-1991) graduated from the City College of New York in 1926. He became interested in photography in the 1930s and joined the New York Photo League where he began his career as a social documentary photographer. In the 1940s, his imagery shifted to abstract photography, for which he is best known. From 1947-1953, Siskind regularly exhibited his works at Charles Egan Gallery in New York alongside eminent painters of the time. In 1965, he had a solo exhibition titled *Siskind Recently* at the MoMA's Edward Steichen Photography Center. Recent posthumous exhibitions include: *Abstract Expressionism*, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Spain (2017); *Performing for the Camera*, Tate Modern, London (2016); and *The Pure Products of America Go Crazy*, Center for Creative Photography, Tucson (2015). Siskind's work is held in many museum collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago; Getty Center, Los Angeles; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art Tokyo; and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.

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Daisuke Yokota (b.1983, Saitama) majored in photography at the Nippon Photography Institute in Tokyo. As the winner of the first Outset | Unseen Exhibition Fund at the Unseen Photo Fair 2013, he presented a solo exhibition at Foam Photography Museum in Amsterdam in 2014. In 2015, Yokota was featured at Shashin Festival: Photography from Japan (New York), and participated in *In the Wake: Japanese Photographers Respond to 3/11* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston); *Another Language* (Rencontres d'Arles, Arles); and *Trans-Tokyo / Trans-Photo* at the Jimei x Arles: East West Encounters International Photo Festival (Xiamen, China). The year after, Yokota received the Foam Paul Huf Award and presented his solo exhibition *Matter* at Foam Photography Museum in 2017. His works are included in the collections of the Foam Photography Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the SFMOMA. A set of 56 prints by Yokota was also recently acquired by the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (MAMVP) and is presently on display in their permanent collections. Yokota is currently featured in *Shape of Light: 100 Years of Photography and Abstract Art* at Tate Modern, London, and will soon present an installation at Centre Pompidou-Metz as part of their forthcoming exhibition *Painting the Night*.