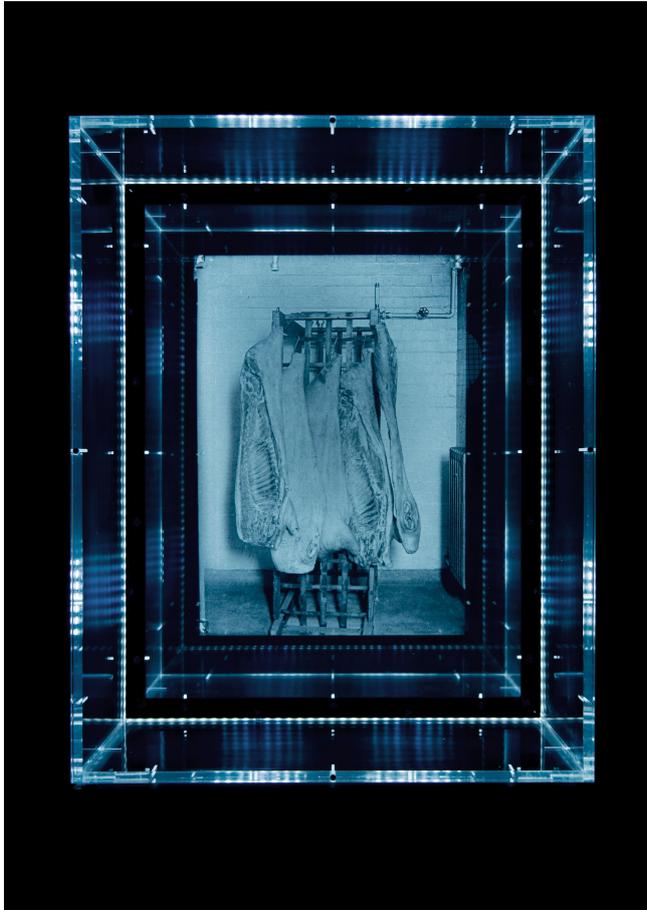


Mat Collishaw
In Camera



In Camera; 5 Sides of Bacon (Stolen Property), Mat Collishaw, 2015

18 September 2015 – 10 January 2016

The Gallery, Library of Birmingham

In camera: a legal term that means kept private, confined or hidden.

Camera obscura (Latin: "dark chamber"): an optical device that led to photography consisting of a box or room with a hole in one side through which light from an external scene passes through to make or reveal an image.

In camera: a term used by photographers to indicate that an image is authentic, having been made from the real, and presented without any cropping or post production.

The Library of Birmingham and GRAIN are proud to present an exhibition of new work by artist Mat Collishaw supported by the Arts Council of England. The exhibition is presented in parallel with a major survey of Collishaw's work being shown at The New Art Gallery Walsall (25 September 2015 – 10 January 2016).

In Camera is an installation created around a series of 12 crime scene negatives made for Birmingham City Police Force during the 1930s and 1940s. Collishaw discovered these uncatalogued images, made to provide evidence in alleged and actual crimes committed in

the city, hidden amongst an archive of orphaned police negatives whilst exploring the Library's internationally renowned photography collections during 2014.

Extracted from their current, obscured institutional setting and detached from their referent case notes, in Collishaw's new installation these unexceptional, transparent images become fluid, emotionally redolent and unsettling objects.

Intermittent flash bulbs expose the images printed in phosphorescent ink and incarcerated in translucent vitrines. The scenes glow eerily in the darkness, as if lit for forensic analysis. Mundane depictions of empty rooms become charged by the illicit acts implied. These human stains appear as violations of decency, images that commemorate transgressions, as with the act of capturing an image; where the light contaminates the photographic negative.

The work prompts questions about the medium of photography, its historical role as witness and the ways in which our reading of images are affected when they shift from the private to the public. Devoid of human presence, the works invite the audience to speculate about these backdrops; the identity of suspects and victims and the circumstances which led to the crimes being committed.

Here, as in the works on display at New Art Gallery Walsall, Collishaw continues to explore the potential for such images to be simultaneously shocking yet alluring, drawing us in with these seductive, unsettling and compelling works and asking us to look beneath the surface where complex questions and darker, more malevolent forces are at play.

The New Art Gallery Walsall, The Library of Birmingham and GRAIN have jointly commissioned a limited edition print *Third Degree*, 2015 to both celebrate and raise income for both projects. The prints are priced £195 + VAT (unframed) and can be purchased from our website: www.grainphotographyhub.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

About the Library of Birmingham Photography Collections

The Library of Birmingham holds one of the national collections of photography: the only such collection held outside a national museum, library or archive and the only one of such significance held in a public reference library in the UK. The collection comprises some 3.5 million items ranging from daguerreotypes made at the dawn of the photographic era to modern digital prints made by leading contemporary photographers. It also includes a vast collection of photographic albums, books and albums illustrated with original photographic prints and a considerable collection of literature associated with photography. Together these archives and related reference materials have made the existing Library a focal point for students, photographers and researchers working at every level of study and have attracted local, national and international visitors to the city.

About GRAIN

GRAIN creates, facilitates and delivers ambitious, engaging and high quality photography projects, commissions, events and exhibitions. Working with emerging and established artists and photographers and in collaboration with partners to reach new audiences and build the infrastructure and profile for photography. For more information www.grainphotographyhub.co.uk

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is an international art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents a roster of both well established, mid-career and emerging contemporary artists. The programme also includes exhibitions held in close collaboration with other notable artists and curators.

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GRAIN and the Library of Birmingham have received generous support from Arts Council England in support of this project.

The Library of Birmingham is open;

Monday - Tuesday 11am - 7pm; Tuesday – Saturday 11am – 5pm.

Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays. Admission to the gallery is free.

For more information visit the [GRAIN](#) or [Library of Birmingham](#) websites.

Mat Collishaw is represented by [BLAIN|SOUTHERN](#)