

THE REHOBOTH ART LEAGUE

# FADING



October 16 - November 29, 2015

# KENDALL MESSICK

## The Swann Song

What defines age, and what does age look like?  
What remains after we are gone?

In this series, a sampling of works from his upcoming Swann Song installation, Messick celebrates both beauty and spirit in these intimate portraits of Elaine Swann, a former character model and actress who lived and worked for more than sixty years in New York City. Messick's project explores the representation versus the realities of age calling into question our view of the effects of time on our bodies and minds.

The juxtaposition of saturated images of an aging Swann to the black and white images of her youth is a powerful commentary of the richness of her story as her life evolved.

This is the first time that works from this series have been presented in public. The accompanying video is a 'work in progress' of the installation's final edition.

Kendall Messick (American, born 1965) constructs installations of still photography, film, audio recordings and video to tell stories. He explores memory, intimacy, acceptance and humanity through his documentation of inspiring human-interest stories. His installation, *The Projectionist*, which documented Delawarean Gordon Brinckle's (1915-2007) lifelong fascination with the golden age of film, was exhibition at the Biggs Museum, in Dover, in 2013. His photographs are in numerous public and private collections including the National Museum of American History, Washington DC, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY.



Clockwise from upper left:  
*The Red Chair* 2015 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5  
*Audition* 2008 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5  
*The Looking Glass* 2010 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5  
*Final Portrait* 2014 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5





*The Swann Song Video Still*

Opposite Page (Top to Bottom)

*Flower Girls* 2007 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5 24"x12"

*Looking Back* 2007 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5 24"x12"

*Regarding the Past* 2007 archival pigment print Ed. 1/5 24"x12"

*The Swann Song Video Still*

# JEFFREY STEEN

## Present, Past Portrait of Auschwitz-Berkinau

The past is an indifferent master.

It shapes the ever-present moment and sets a stage for the future. It is defining, and directing. Identity, whether of societies, or of individuals, is its hostage.

Memory, in part, is its legacy. Memory, however, is a feeble translator of what has gone before. Often uneven in recall, uneven in identifying the significance of events, uneven in remembering what happened the day before, it is both a gift and a burden. Sometimes, lying close in, it infuses the present with detail and innuendo. Sometimes, it is remote and unrecognizable. In either case, its influence on society, and on the individuals within it, is often hard to know. Surely, one of the measures one might take to guard against its distortions is to create, and to maintain, a hard record of what has gone before.

In a quiet, but sometimes active, investigation of the time before my own, I have come to regard certain issues as important. Included among them are the issues of power and powerlessness, security and vulnerability, loss and gain. Arching over all of these is the issue of voice, the ability to speak and to be heard. In this context, voice is not limited to utterance alone. It is any action, any existential gesture, whether of sound or otherwise, that conveys one's thoughts and desires.

To me, these matters are important. They are important to understanding one's self and one's larger world, and to being a full participant in both. They are the issues that inform my work, including my art, and photography. They are the issues that motivate me to press on and to pursue projects that, absent context or consideration, might otherwise be overwhelmingly grim.

In five trips to southern Poland from the end of 2011 to the spring of 2015, I have spent over two months walking the streets, the barracks, and the fence lines of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The photographs in this collection come from my experience at these two locations.

*Present, Past*  
Main Guard House  
Birkenau



The Main Guard House, one of the camp's surviving, large buildings, served as the camp's main entrance and guard house. It was also the building through which the railroad line transporting deportees from distant European locations entered the camp.

*View from the Tower*  
Main Guard House  
Birkenau



View of the railroad spur that extended into Birkenau.

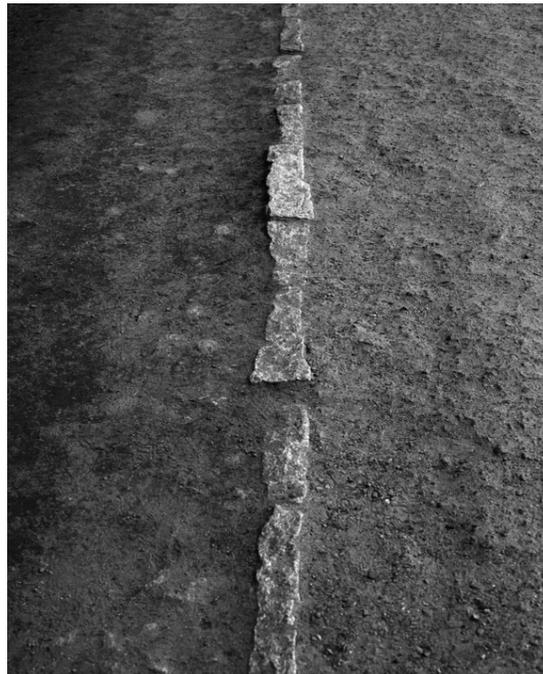
The railroad spur was constructed so that trains carrying prisoners could bring them into the interior of the camp. This included, in the spring and summer of 1944, approximately 430,000 Hungarian Jews, most of whom were murdered shortly after their arrival and only months before the camp was liberated by the Red Army on January 27, 1945.



*Far From Home*  
Railroad Cars  
Ludenrampe  
(Jewish Ramp) Memorial  
Near Birkenau

Forced into ghettos and staging areas across Europe, prisoners destined to Auschwitz-Birkenau were transported in railroad cars similar to those depicted in this photograph. With little ventilation and with little or no food, water, or sanitary facilities, up to one hundred, or more, prisoners were crammed into a space that, frequently, left standing room only. Journeys of several days, or longer, were frequent. Often, the old, the in-firmed, and the young died before reaching their destination.

Of the approximately 1,300,000 men, women, and children transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, approximately 1,100,000 were murdered or died in the camps. Of these, approximately 90 percent were Jews.



*Line of Stones*  
Hauptstrasse (Main Street)  
Birkenau

On the right, an open expanse. On the left, the road to the crematoria. Lines are a frequent subject of my photographs. Often, they serve as a starting point for reflection on dualities, such as life and death, and good and evil.



*Light in a Dark Room*  
Block 20  
Auschwitz

In the room opposite the one shown in this photograph, prisoners were murdered by injection of phenol into their hearts. The bodies of those murdered were dumped on the floor of the room shown in this photograph. On one occasion, 121 Polish and Jewish boys were murdered in the room across the hall. Their bodies were dumped on the floor shown in this photograph, where they remained, awaiting collection for transport to the crematorium.



*Block 10*  
Auschwitz

For part of the camp's operation, Block 10 was the site of experiments to identify methods to quickly and cheaply sterilize women, and men. The ground floor contained offices for doctors, a surgery room, and support facilities for those conducting the experiments. Upstairs, two large dormitory rooms housed the hundreds of women who were the principle subjects of the experiments.

The rooms depicted in this photograph include the two rooms on either side of the office of the program's principle director, Dr. Carl Clauberg.



*Last Light*  
Anteroom to the  
Gas Chamber  
Auschwitz

Prisoners to be gassed were taken to the plaza in front of the building that housed both the gas chamber and the crematorium. After being forced to undress, they were ordered to enter the building. To the right of the main door was a small anteroom to a second, much larger room. For a portion of the camp's operation, the larger room served as the camp's gas chamber. As prisoners entered the anteroom, they passed the last window that allowed natural light to meet their eyes. Only a few steps later, they exited the anteroom to the gas chamber where they were murdered.



*A Once Clean Line*  
Wall  
Gas Chamber  
Auschwitz

After construction of crematorium facilities at Birkenau, use of the gas chamber at Auschwitz was discontinued. The chamber, itself, was cleaned, painted, and converted into an air raid shelter for camp staff.

The line in this photograph is part of the line separating the black and white portions of the chamber's walls. With humidity, the passage of time, and other factors, the once clean line painted on its walls has changed into a complex of patterns, peeling paint, and abstract forms.



*Reflections*  
Pond  
Birkenau

For those killed in the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau, part of their ashes, and some might say, their souls, went up the chimneys of the camps' crematoria. At Birkenau, the volume of ashes from those murdered in the gas chambers was so great that a small gauge rail line was built from the crematoria to a nearby pond.

After being pulverized, ashes from the crematoria were put into a metal cart, transported to the pond, and dumped into its waters. The reflections of trees in the pond were taken to suggest the smoke and the last remains of those who were murdered as they billowed up from the crematoria chimneys.

# HAROLD ROSS

Artists and writers have often addressed the negative effects of time. Being convinced that beauty is not necessarily diminished when something is “past is prime,” Harold Ross feels that there are certain aspects of beauty that only the patina of time can create. Using light as a sculptural tool and revealing things that we do not see under ordinary conditions, he discovers the inherent qualities of shape, texture and dimension of his subjects.

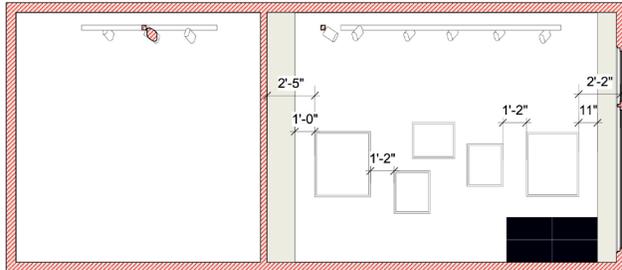




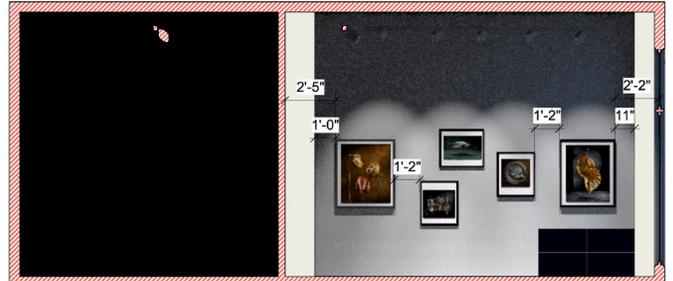




# Concept Renderings



1 Ross \_ Fading Elevation  
 Ross Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



1 Ross \_ Fading Elevation  
 Ross Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

# Installation



