

# HIGHER PICTURES

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## NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: Charles Woodard, *The History of Photography in Pen and Ink, 1646–1990*

Dates: June 28 – August 5, 2016

Opening: Tuesday, June 28, 4-6 pm

Higher Pictures is pleased to present the work of Charles Woodard. The 60 four-by-six-inch flashcards on view here comprise the complete set of drawings Woodard made as an undergraduate in 2007 when he was a student in Nick Muellner's notoriously difficult history of photography survey course at Ithaca College. This is the first time these original pieces have been shown and this is Woodard's first solo gallery exhibition.

Without a working printer, Woodard chose to hand-draw the flashcards he used as exam study aids. Presented chronologically—from the German scholar Athanasius Kircher's description of a double-chambered camera obscura in 1646 to Thomas Struth's large-scale museum photograph *Art Institute of Chicago II, Chicago*, dating to 1990—the drawings tell the history of photography through humorously reductive, but tellingly successful, reproductions of some of the most iconic images. When compared to their sources some details in Woodard's sketches are exaggerated (Bayard's unnervingly defined abdominal muscles in *Self-Portrait as a Drowned Man*, 1840), while others are uncannily faithful (crossed legs and the right hand raised and touching the face, in Diane Arbus's *Topless Dancer, San Francisco*, 1968), but none is thoroughly described. That so many of the photographs are readily identifiable from such scant information underscores the power of a truly compelling image, the reductive nature of visual memory, and the collective process of building and perpetuating cultural histories.

Charles Woodard received his BFA in Film, Photography, and the Visual Arts from Ithaca College in 2009 and his MFA in Film and Video Production at the University of Iowa in 2013. *The History of Photography in Pen & Ink* was published by A-Jump books in 2009 and is now in its second printing, 2012. Woodard lives and works in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

For more information please contact Kathryn McElroy at 212.249.6100.