

Francis Schanberger Artist Statement

Having been trained to archivally process images for stability, it seems strange to call something a photograph when it relies upon an act of prolonged fading. I utilize natural pigments, some gathered from my backyard and others gleaned from the kitchen, in a historic photographic process called the anthotype. Pigments are coated onto watercolor paper in successive layers until enough density is built up. I arrange textiles, usually sleepwear, on top of the coated paper, sandwich the two between plywood and Plexiglass and leave them to expose in the sun for weeks or even months depending upon the time of year and the strength of pigment. The final image is a photogram and is formed by the fading of the pigment in response to how sunlight passes through the garment. In theory the anthotype will fade with continued exposure to light so the very act of displaying and viewing it has a cost in terms of how long lived the image will be. It will fade more quickly than an archivally processed photograph but nothing lasts forever.

Bio:

Francis Schanberger has been photographing since fourth grade when he presented a homemade, long focal length pinhole camera as his science project. He received his Master of Fine Arts from the Ohio State University in 2002. He has been an artist in residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts (2005), Emmanuel College in Boston, Massachusetts (2011) and Vermont Studio Center in 2013. He has exhibited at Soho Photo in New York, the Houston Center for Photography, the Free University of Brussels, as well as COHJU Gallery in Kyoto, Japan. Francis has been involved with the Anthotype process and making images with sleepwear since 2009.

-francis schanberger