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X + I

Curated by Matthew Porter

COMPILING A LIST OF FIVE ARTISTS IS EASY. It's an exiguous grouping that allows you to slash and burn, to cut with efficacy, and excuses you from oversight. Expand the list to twenty, and cuts are unnecessary—now you have plenty of capital to make your point. But eleven is a cruel number, the April of list making. You have to kill off ideas to bring life to the project. So the following list is incomplete, and it's also too long. It does however, at the time of writing, bring together a group of artists, all born in the early to mid seventies, most of whom probably didn't fully integrate computers and the Internet into their lives until after college. Now, they take what they need from the digital, virtual, and binary world of bits, while keeping themselves rooted in traditional means of picture making. To be relevant, contemporary art doesn't require the exclusive use of the technology of its time—making art is also a practice of utilizing the materials left behind by innovation.

M ATTHEW PORTER



Untitled (Orange Monochrome)
2014
Unique chromogenic print
© Phil Chang; courtesy M+B Gallery, Los Angeles

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Phil CHANG

Chang's practice is an ongoing dialectic centering on photography's main principles: longevity, depiction, and material. While his intention is often to expose the medium's fraught nature, his exhibitions bring a beautiful equanimity to these problems. His attention shifts easily from an unfixed gelatin silver print's inevitable self-effacement to the monochromatic possibilities of color printing. For Chang, the concern is less with what the pictures depict, or the meaning found within them, and more about how we think of their material properties and commodification. To understand Chang's way of thinking, consider how pictures are ranked in an online image search, and the invisible coding, or what he calls "algorithmic realism," that determines those positions. Maybe if Boris Groys made images, they would look like Phil Chang's.