

White Columns

Vince Aletti – *The Drawer*

March 22 – May 4, 2024

Opening Reception: Friday, March 22, 2024. 6–8pm.

White Columns is pleased to present *The Drawer* - an installation by the New York-based writer and curator Vince Aletti.

Titled after Aletti's award-winning 2022 book *The Drawer*, the installation takes the form of five large-scale tabletop arrangements of printed ephemera drawn from Aletti's vast – and legendary – collection (that is typically housed in antique flat file drawers in his East Village apartment.) Collected over several decades, Aletti's 'image bank' focuses on portraiture with an emphasis on portraits of men.

Like its printed counterpart, Aletti's installation freely juxtaposes images drawn from the worlds of art, photography, fashion and popular culture: images that originally appeared and previously circulated as gallery announcements, in magazines and newspapers, as cinema lobby cards, and much more besides. Eschewing any distinctions between 'high' and 'low,' with *The Drawer* Aletti celebrates photography's multiple and overlapping histories, and photography's ongoing entanglements with the media and the printed image. Seen together and in relationship to one another, Aletti's often visceral juxtapositions explore and amplify "the complexity and variety of desire, personal and collective histories, and the power of art to reflect and shape who we are."

Sharing an aesthetic intensity with the devotional, scrapbook-like displays to be found on a teenager's bedroom wall, and the more pointed juxtapositions evidenced in the extraordinary collaged photomurals that the British playwright Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell created for their mid-1960s London flat, Aletti's installation is an open-ended visual 'essay' on the seductive power - and potential - of images.

Vince Aletti is a writer and curator based in New York City. His writings on music and photography have been published widely. Between 1973 and 1978 Aletti wrote a highly prescient weekly column on the emerging disco scene for *Record World* magazine, and between 1987 and 2005 he was the art editor and photography critic for *The Village Voice*. His writings have also appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Artforum*, and *Vogue Italia*, among many other publications. His book *Issues: A History of Photography in Fashion Magazines* was published by Phaidon in 2019. *The Drawer* was published by Self Publish, Be Happy in September 2022 and went on to win the 2023 Aperture/Paris Photo Photobook of the Year award. This exhibition is Vince's fifth collaboration with White Columns following on from his 2008 exhibition *Male: Work from the collection of Vince Aletti*; the 2014 exhibition of Robert Kitchen's work, and the 2019 exhibition of Ed Baynard's work (both curated by Vince); and the 2008 White Columns publication of Vince's collected writings on disco, *Disco File*, which was subsequently republished in an expanded edition by DJ History/D.A.P.

White Columns would like to thank Vince for *The Drawer* and his ongoing enthusiasm for and collaborations with White Columns.

Copies of *The Drawer*, now entering its second printing, are available to purchase from the gallery. To learn more: selfpublishbehappy.com

For more information about this exhibition, please contact info@whitecolumns.org

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