

Maccarone is proud to present “*Natural Magic*,” the gallery’s second solo exhibition of Sarah Charlesworth (1947-2013) and the first time this iconic series will have been exhibited in its entirety since 1993.

In “*Natural Magic*,” Charlesworth composed images depicting illusion, sleight of hand, telekinesis, and the manufactured suspended belief in an attempt to probe the philosophy behind photographic truth. This series remains an important moment in the oeuvre of the late photographer, as it was the first series that she staged entirely in the studio and “within the camera;” operating as a transition away from the found and manipulated images that defined her early career.

While familiar imagery can be seen throughout her photographic career, a particular interest in nineteenth century American Spiritualism and photography, and the creation of visual and optical modernism, distinguishes “*Natural Magic*.” Framed in ovals styled after nineteenth century traveling magic road shows, Charlesworth uses the “magic tricks” of analog medium and large format camera—double exposures, special effect props, and light and scale manipulation—to explore the relationships between the science of photography and the obfuscating effects of magic, playing the conventions of each against each other.

Sarah Charlesworth was a central figure in the development of contemporary photographic practices. From the late 70s until her final series in 2012, Charlesworth responded to the rapidly increasing saturation of the visual field, analyzing the ways photography expresses value and belief systems, and examining the role of the medium within popular culture as it serves to articulate models of sexuality, gender, and politics. Upon reevaluation in today’s socio-political context, this particular series provides poignant commentary on the notion of veracity.

Sarah Charlesworth exhibited widely in the US and abroad with over 50 solo exhibitions in her lifetime, and her work is housed in numerous museum collections worldwide. She was included in the 1985 and 2014 editions of the Whitney Biennial; the 1986 Venice Biennale; and the Whitney Museum’s seminal exhibition, “*America Is Hard to See*,” in May 2015. The Art Institute of Chicago’s solo exhibition “*Stills*” in 2014, evolved into a comprehensive survey exhibition, “*Doubleworld*,” held at the New Museum in 2015, which will travel to Los Angeles County Museum of Art in August 2017.

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