

Ellen Carey
Struck by Light (Photogram) and Photography Degree Zero (Polaroid)

#1. Title: ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2014

Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 100"W (each row) or 8' ft.H x 8' ft. 4"W (all)

Medium: Color Photograms - Unique - 20 total

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: This large grid, a monumental installation (8' ft.H x 8' ft. 4"W) of photograms sees photographic color theory (RGB=YMC) as its contextual point-of-departure in palette, partnering it with a "split filter," borrowing this reference to the special effects filter on a camera's lens. These two concepts centerpiece *light*, photography's indexical. The medium has its own color theory, located in light, a unique characteristic. Color is universal, important to art and in nature light finds color through the rainbow, a distinct phenomenon equal to the one in photography.

A color photogram begins the series of five, found in each row (of four), as: RG; then GB; to BY; then YM; ending as MC. The composition of each unique image purposely and seamlessly moves from one to the next, extending abstract form and spectral range. The edges connect to make another color composition, splitting again, between the two prints and support a fluid, linear progression of "off-frame" space. Collectively, once installed as a grid, this rectangular format (the camera body) is repeated from panel to panel, from row to row, seen as one monumental installation, that cascade from bright, luminous colors in saturated hues found in photographic color theory (RGB=YMC). Dramatic colors of the "dings" are extended into its "shadows" often in deeper hues. Black appears from a penlight flashed, and in contrast to this, when light is absent, the white of the color paper serves as ground, exposing both material and process.

Each photogram contains multiple "dings" that act as the catcher of my "shadows," created in the light-tight environment of the color darkroom, where no light is allowed except upon exposure. The surfaces are folded, crushed, flattened, scrunched and embossed with a circular shape that uses a developing tank, introducing another form that adds impact while referencing photography's relationship to chemistry. This circle and the camera's circular lens highlight one of the two universal codes found in visual art, doubling the picture's meaning. As a metaphor for the lens-based art field, image and meaning maker, I begin with the photogram, wherein the object-as-paper is literally and figuratively — ***Struck by Light*** — my photogram practice (1992-2014). As a conceptual umbrella, it uses the camera-less vintage photogram method from the dawn of photography; created in a darkroom, not a studio. Randomness and chance, process and technique, skill sets in printing and creative imagination, merge innovative ideas with iconoclastic art making, linking photography to abstraction, color to light.

#2. Title: ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2014

Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 60"W (all)

Medium: Color Photograms - Unique – 3 total

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: This triptych has photographic color theory and the 'split filter' seen on glossy paper, splitting the composition vertically in half. The primary additives partner with their opposites, the primary subtractives, newly configured as: RC to GM then BY. This conceptually underscores content and context with newer experiments in abstraction, feather - blending light in saturated

hues. Circular shapes, created with a developing tank, have a smooth surface area adding variety to my geometries of the angular "dings" and cascading "shadows." Solid, flat blocks of minimal color add another layer of complexity to my free wheeling compositions; it spreads out and around a subtle, circular form. Multiple, expressive abstract marks leave behind topographies, in light, capturing its first traces, from the hand-made "dings" and their counterparts found in the crescent and irregular forms of the "shadows." The glossy paper allows for reflective patinas, a study in color as well as surface, introducing a mirror-like polish, a high velocity in saturation and form, experiment and abstraction.

- #3. Title: *Dings & Shadows*
Date: 2014
Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 60"W (each row) or 8'ft. H x 5'ft. (all)
Medium: Color Photograms – Unique – 12 total
Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: A large grid of color photograms is an installation that uses RGB, the primary additives in photographic color theory adding Y, a reference to this primary color in painting; final palette is RGBY; it contains RBY, painting's primaries. The echo of the early 19th century photographic phrase *drawing with light* from William Henry Fox Talbot's discovery of the photogram (1834) is reconfigured in my installation to include a phrase often used to describe my work as *painting with light*. These four colors are included in each photogram, across multiple panels, that partner hues and forms. Experiments in abstraction, that use a less-is-more approach to the picture making process, collide and cascade across the raised and distressed surfaces of the (matte) color paper; so light-sensitive, working in a black-box, a rich metaphor as well.

The taboo "ding" is a crescent shape left behind when the emulsion breaks on the surface of a print. It is considered unacceptable in the fine art and traditional discipline of museum, archival printing; here in my work, it is exaggerated and "blown-up" to use another photographic term. This allows me to symbolically and physically break from tradition, to enter the picture making process, to create with freedom. It is through various experiments that involve chance Flashes of black add depth to the composition, made in nanoseconds with a hand-held penlight, while white sees the original surface of the paper-as-ground. Taken collectively, references to truth in materials and the economy of means, both tenets found in Minimalism and Abstract Expressionism, find unusual combinations with my drawing in the dark, a necessary reality in color darkroom, that naturally fits into tapping the unconscious, seen in the "automatic drawings" from Dada and Surrealism. Especially invigorating is the penlight drawing in Man Ray's "Space Writings" that led to my discovery of his "hidden" signature (Man Ray Discovery/Ellen Carey).

and random encounters, in total darkness, where chaos and order, symmetry and asymmetry, color and non-color co-exist, eventually seen outside the color darkroom, in the white light. The apt phrase "artist struggle" is metaphor and experience as I literally struggle with the paper. Colors are dialed in, various light sources added/subtracted using non-traditional, non-art materials to create my images, such as: enlarger; penlight; or techniques: rotate paper; "ding" paper. The end results are a true, direct experience of my creative and imaginary *seeing*, sound/touch as helping guides.

The photogram used the 19th century phrase *drawing with light* to describe the medium at the dawn of photography. It was discovered by the British inventor, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877) to create an image without a camera and continues under my practice *Struck by Light* (1992-2014) with a focus on color and experimentation, minimalism and abstraction, process and photo-based art (2000-2014). Talbot's contemporary was the Victorian, Anna Atkins

(1799-1871), the first woman practitioner and the medium's first in color; she used the cyanotype method, invented and taught to her by Sir John Herschel, a friend to both. Together their legacies move forward in my work, embracing advances in color, art making, and visual creativity.

#4. Title: *Dings & Shadows*

Date: 2014

Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 100"W (all)

Medium: Color Photograms - Unique - 5 total

Collection: Ellen Carey- The Artist

Description: Made in 2014, this new series of color photograms conceptually underscores photographic color theory (RGB=YMC) while simultaneously offering a different interpretation that references the "split filter" a special effects lens that goes over the camera. This linear installation of five unique images start the compositional leitmotif by splitting the picture plane in two, starting with red (left) and green (right), thus paying homage to the filter's dualities. These deep saturated hues cross over each other at random intersections, light bursts from/around the circular form at the center. Created using the smooth, bottom end of a developing tank, it references film, chemistry and wet process, all still valid and vital in photo-based art today.

The circle is a ubiquitous visual code in art, purposely doubled in my work, pointing to the circular lens of the camera. These subtle but important "picture signs" add visual meaning while the high gloss surfaces reflect a spectral patina that highlight the vibrancy of color theory, a special characteristic unique to photography. Depth across the picture plane, created with the "dings" in their physical construction, allows the "shadows" to articulate crevices of form: color-on-color, mixing the two, or shiny blacks (hand-held penlight) to crisp whites (unexposed paper).

Taken collectively, this series of *Dings & Shadows* further my ideas in abstraction and form, minimalism and color, while introducing innovative and iconoclastic ideas in photographic process and art making. The center image shows a circle in white, a reference to nature in sun and in moon, it is the color that is created when all the primaries, both additive and subtractive, overlap, seen in my earlier Polaroid 20 x 24 artwork titled *Color Theory* (1995).

#5. *Dings & Shadows*

Date: 2013

Size: 40"H x 30"W

Medium: Color Photogram

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: A kaleidoscope of photographic color theory is seen in a different configuration with angular, sharp triangles within the large composition, of open-ended frames-within-frames, on matte paper. This references the triangle within the square, the other universal code, and camera vision's rectangular-to-square format. The dark crests of warm browns and blacks are from my penlight "drawing" while the unexposed color paper shows white on the composition's ground.

Please note: Kodak filed Chapter 11 in 2012 and discontinued all products, including its pre-cut large color paper. I now use Fuji (crystal archive) that comes in large rolls and must be cut in the light-tight color darkroom, which I do with an assistant; the pre-cut Fuji color paper in boxes that is 24"H x 20"W is still available. However I am committed to these materials, their future is uncertain, hence my Guggenheim proposal.

#6. ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2013

Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 100"W (each row) or 8'ft.H x 8'ft. 4"W (all)

Medium: Color Photograms – 20 total

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: Nature inspires me — skies, weather, seasons — I am a keen observer of its changes, taking note that these include variety in color (rainbow/flower) as well as forms (trees/clouds). Artists who use light (James Turrell), color and form (Lydia Benglis) from minimal to geometric (Donald Judd) often combine the less-is-more aesthetic of one or more of these through inventive use of size and scale (Sol LeWitt) enriching art with new meaning through non-traditional art materials (Dan Flavin) also are influences for my work.

The conclusion to focus solely on light, looking at the color enlarger and its dials, is an unusual tool for inspiration. My aim is to turn up the visual volume in intensity, saturation, hue and opacity in my photograms. A linear progression of “split filters” is organized around photographic color theory in my first version of a monumental installation as ***Dings & Shadows***. Two colors, in one composition, are expressed in selectively smooth surfaces, angular, flat and geometric. Expansive and minimal areas, pinched here and there, go into off-frame space, creating a mesa of abstraction. Colors, neon-bright, collide, asking: “All this from an enlarger?”

Charging forth, rendered in misty, seamless explorations that surge, bounce and ricochet around and off of — forms and feelings — it is a kaleidoscope of high impact images. Colors fall randomly and in chance encounters, unexpected connections emerge in playful and overlapping exposures, the paper *struck by light*, the indexical in photography. After a decade and a half mastering my discipline, new ideas open up to a high degree of iconoclastic sophistication, experiments that reinvent a color wheel, celebrated in characteristics only found in photography. This image documents the studio installation of ***Dings & Shadows***, with me, for size and scale.

#7. ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2013

Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 100"W (each row-top row)

Medium: Color Photograms – 5 total

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: This is a linear detail of five photograms, the top row, in my series highlighting the concept of color theory-as-split-filter that belongs to a large grid arranged as a monumental installation, my first, titled ***Dings & Shadows***.

#8. ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2013

Size: 24"H x 20"W

Medium: Color Photogram

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: ***Struck by Light*** describes the plentiful, striking characteristics of my photogram practice that begins with a palette reductive in black and white (1992-99) and gains momentum that is purposely and fiercely bold — ***Push-Pins*** — in color (2000-14) with a parallel investigation into the biology of seeing in my ***Blinks, Ray Bands*** and ***Neo-Ops*** (2002-05) coupled with imaginative, huge scale photograms (2006-2014). Color theory is highlighted as

subject and object; objects on paper are later replaced by light that strikes, used in original, unorthodox ways, and materials have meaning imbedded in the my use of color in photography.

My concepts and images begin with light — its presence, absence or half-life — and acknowledge it as *the* primary agent in all photography, being both *indexical* and *prima facie*. Light informs all my work, often in tandem with universal themes such as joy and mourning. It underscores these states with bright color, shadow image, or the physical positive and/or negative print as metaphor and picture sign. Light-tight, a term for the totally black environment necessary for color darkroom printing, requires a nimble, intuitive way of working with discipline and experience; also it names photograms that use lines-as-open-form on metallic color paper (2006).

My own version of *drawing with light* — to borrow the Victorian phrase for photography — is echoed in this image of *Dings & Shadows*. Crisp black forms dramatically criss-cross the raised surfaces of the "dings" in angular, pointy and jagged lines. Pale versions of color theory fade as the intensity of light diminishes, leaving behind light trails of their saturated hues. The light looks poured, colors whisper and whisk through the composition and its shiny glossy surface adds a hard-edged chroma to the color field ground.

I love to experiment, and in this context, my work proactively establishes many linkages among end results. Stellar compositions, inclusive of a diverse, broad palette, underscore and highlight my investigations into abstraction with new forms and newer ways of creating them.

Please note: What is not seen in this photogram and others in the *Dings & Shadows* series are the varied and diverse nuances of the paper that was folded, crushed, scrunched and so forth to create the experimental ground for the "dings" to landscape and catch the "shadows" onto the paper.

#9. *Dings & Shadows*

Date: 2012

Size: 24"H x 20"W (each) or 24"H x 100"W (all)

Medium: Color Photograms – Unique – 5 total

Collection: Private Collection, NY, NY

Description: Unknown to me while printing this suite of color photograms, my first using the concept of color theory with the idea of "split-filters," seen against the backdrop of these brightly hued passages and expressive marks, was the happy art accident of my "dings" and "shadows" with an outline of my thumb. This shape was reminiscent of the conical loops of my *Pulls* and serves as a document of the artist-hand-maker, a self-portrait in white that connects to the glossy, white ground of the paper and the over-all composition.

This coincidence was a breath of fresh visualized air. I was struck by light — inspired — literally and figuratively, by an image that not only contains my hands, a reference to both the physical art making and my identity as a camera-less artist, while pointing the way to another unplanned coincidence, that of the hand leitmotif, well-known in Man Ray's "ray-o-grams."

His own handwriting was also used to draw with a penlight, creating white lines of looping curlicues, for his small black and white photograph, a self-portrait titled *Space Writings* (1935) where his "hidden" signature was discovered by me (2008) some 75 years later (Google: Man Ray Discovery/Ellen Carey). This discovery has been published and cited in numerous features/essays/catalogues and the original photograph by Man Ray, perhaps the only one in existence, is in the collection of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art.

#10. ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2012

Size: 40"H x 30"W (each) or 40"H x 90"(all)

Medium: Color Photograms - Unique – 3 total

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: Light-sensitive color darkroom printing and paper demands a “light-tight” environment with a small amount of time for light upon exposure. With this understanding my struggle to make photograms in darkness echo words from the philosopher, Martin Buber (1878-1965): “Every journey has a secret destination of which the traveler is unaware.”

This triptych of over-sized vibrant color sees ***Dings & Shadows*** as fresh interpretations partnered with free wheeling experiments, freed from rules, formal structures or conventional procedures. These monumental pictures in bold colors and expressive abstract compositions present a palette that maximizes photographic theory across size and scale. Surfaces made tense and dense with visceral interventions capture “shadows” from the “dings”; all the colors are represented.

Paper photography, discovered in 1834 by the British inventor, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877) was initially called “photogenic drawing” or a “sun picture,” eventually becoming the “photogram” a term that continues today. The word ‘photography’ derives from the Greek phôs, or light, and graphos, or writing. The Irish name Ellen, with Celtic roots in Gaelic, means “bringer of light” adding fate to destiny, birth name to visual artist.

#11. ***Pulls and Rollbacks with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***

Date: 2012

Size: 100"H x 22"W

Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24 Color Positive Print

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: The discovery of my ***Pull*** (1996) was quickly followed in my ***Rollback*** (1997). They are historically unprecedented in both photography and art, falling under my Polaroid practice ***Photography Degree Zero***. They introduce the parabola (or hyperbola), a new form to the medium, seen as a black conical loop, a different form of document, a record of exhausted Polaroid dyes, now iconic and considered a Carey signature. In nature, it is the front tip of a comet or the curving end in a pinecone’s silhouette. In geometry, it belongs to the cone family, fitting in a circle. In my Polaroid work, it denotes an end to the 20 X 24 rectangular image, its exposure, color and light. The “afterimage” (so to speak) continues in looping black forms, the “zero” of my practice has multiple meanings, allowing the process of its performance to end.

This artwork is a metamorphosis of the original ***Pull*** and ***Rollback*** introducing an organic, fluid asymmetrical form, breaking from the conical loop of the past, to wide-to-narrow striations flowing between them. Color experiments and mixing Polaroid "pods" with off-set placements without exposure render glossy, ink blacks and yellow, honey-amber hues outlined in the elongated composition by irregular, coastal formations of line and shape, that are repeated throughout. The huge scale of the artwork is visceral, the physical embodiment of my pulling and rolling back the film/paper through the camera; size and scale are important elements in my work.

#12. ***Dings & Shadows***

Date: 2011

Size: 40"H x 30"W (each) or 40"H x 180" (all)

Medium: Color Photograms - Unique – 6 total

Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: History finds the photogram (1834) belonging to the British inventor, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877) and Talbot's process in color, known as the cyanotype, belonging to his contemporary, the Victorian, Anna Atkins, the first woman practitioner and its first in color.

Struck by Light follows a trajectory from this dawn of photography through Man Ray and Moholy-Nagy, to current camera-less and/or photo-based artists such as Susan Derges, Adam Fuss, James Welling, Chris McCaw, Christian Marclay, and Ryan McGinley.

Unusual combinations, made in non-traditional ways, variously explore color paper as artistic tool, the theme of illusion and reality, the physical versus the "picture sign," add complexity in tandem with different light sources. As a colorist, I bring out visual sensation in hues as innovative as they are strange. As non-linear and non-representational as they are, biomorphic and anthropomorphic shapes and patterns are subtly suggested, familiar yet alien, beautiful and grotesque, while they blend the full range of light with dark. Six huge photograms that use photographic color theory — RGBYMC — in tandem with abstract forms and flashes of black.

#13. Title: ***Pull and Rollback with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***

Date: 2011

Size: 70"H x 22"W

Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24 Color Positive

Collection: David Evangelista, NY, NY

Description: How is this picture made?" followed by "What is this a picture of?" are questions asked about my work. The first addresses process, and it is that very process which becomes the subject. The second finds an image without a subject, neither portrait nor landscape. My lens-based, experimental artwork purposely challenges our culturally and historically prescribed expectations around the light-sensitive photograph. What is the picture describing? How does it get made? What is recorded? The 'what' that is in front of the lens as its "camera vision" is reversed. I intentionally upend traditional methods of making or "rendering" an image with unusual approaches, which emphasize visceral properties of the medium. Only light is documented within the aesthetic rigors of my conceptual ideas and this forces a break from the past, freeing a picture from a hierarchy of things to be captured to a picture that is made.

I use the large-format Polaroid 20 X 24 camera, one of five in the world, to introduce a new form to the medium, the parabola, seen as the conical loop, my signature, now iconic. This discovery and inventive term is named a ***Pull*** often followed by the ***Rollback***, which doubles this high impact image. My innovations fit under my practice ***Photography Degree Zero***. My free wheeling, iconoclastic methods dig deeper into color's mother-lode, by mixing and matching the "pods" to create new bright hues with striations of monochrome tones. The signature Polaroid "tulips" delicately sit on top; black bands frame my abstract and minimal composition. The white Polaroid receiving paper acts as a ground for a bold pucker, a window of form, symmetrical and asymmetrical, against the saturated red-on-red ***Pull and Rollback with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***.

#14. ***Pulls with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***

Date: 2010

Size: 80"H x 22"W (each) or 80"H x 88"W (all)

Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24 Color Negative Prints

Collection: Ellen Carey - The Artist

Description: Polaroid and instant technology meet photography and process in the innovative discovery of the ***Pull*** in 1996. These experimental artworks fit under my umbrella concept and artistic practice ***Photography Degree Zero***. I freely explore the less-is-more tenets of Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism and Conceptual Art, sometimes with little or “zero” exposure. My ***Pulls*** were followed by my ***Rollbacks*** and are historically unprecedented in both photography and art. They introduce the parabola (or hyperbola), a new form to the medium — a conical loop — a different form of document, a record of exhausted Polaroid dyes, now iconic, a Carey signature.

The picture plane of the Polaroid positives (seen next in #15) is cut in half at the horizon line; top for color, bottom as an irregular shape. This is a new form, an addition to the now classic loop of the original ***Pull***. This is a more complex picture, referencing chaos and order, symmetry and asymmetry, the unexpected doubling of two compositions in one, two colors in one (positives) and the dripping forms of liquid chemistry, rich surface patinas or a tree shadow from nature (negatives). They stand in stark contrast to their positives — tar-like surfaces trace a memory, an echo of its opposite — as a non-reflective void. Polaroid’s instant one-step, peel-away process, develops in 60 seconds; Land’s transfer method from negative produces a positive contact print.

Like all negatives, Polaroid’s are light-sensitive but unlike all traditional negatives, they can not be used to reproduce an image. They are opaque, not transparent. These are considered my art objects as well, on warm grounds that support the ghost-like dark shapes, a reference to Talbot’s photogram method and a link to my other practice in photogram. They also celebrate the beauty of Dr. Edwin Land’s Polaroid invention in instant technology. These are Polaroid 20 X 24 color negatives and unique to the process, giving equal status to them in tandem with their positives. Both are exhibited, thereby contributing to the medium’s history as well as adding discourse in contemporary photo-based art.

#15. Title: ***Pulls with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***

Date: 2010

Size: 80"H x 22"W (each) or 80"H x 88"W (all)

Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24

Collection: Ellen Carey - The Artist

Description: Instant technology and Polaroid met abstraction and minimalism in 1996 with my breakthrough discovery of my ***Pull***. My name for this convergence in my new practice became ***Photography Degree Zero***, a reference to French philosopher Roland Barthes’s Writing Degree Zero, a critical discourse on the departure from descriptive narrative in French avant-garde literature. In related fashion, my art represents a departure from the picture and sign duality found in the still life, landscape and portrait. Instead, my ***Pulls*** are photographic images made without a subject and without reference to any object, place, or person, and processed in a mere 60 seconds.

Pulls with Mixed and Off-Set Pods, a suite of four color positives as — yellow, red, blue and green — records a different document through chemistry, mixing and off-setting the Polaroid pods, envelopes that hold the dyes, to create new, inventive colors and shapes. Organic in form and fluid in line, patterns reminiscent of wood, moiré or photographic “Newton rings” have a

distinct, emphatic palette that offer a range from bright to subtle. Dark, irregular shapes float through the vertical **Pulls** while a horizontal line across the picture plane intersects. This declares a break between exposure or no exposure, light or its absence, color and its opposite, and new hues or non-color in a palette mix traditionally known as photographic "cross-processing."

In **Photography Degree Zero** meanings multiply as titles of my solo exhibitions with context added to content. The phrase conceptually mirrors a photographic aporia and visual paradox first seen in my pioneering lens-based art (1996). I use the large-format Polaroid 20 X 24 camera, one of five in the world, located in New York, and renown for expanding our picture culture, as also seen in the work of William Wegman and Chuck Close. I too am considered a "Polaroid artist." These **Pulls** are Polaroid 20 X 24 color positives; all my experimental work is unique.

#16. Title: ***Pull with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***
Date: 2010
Size: 90"H x 22"W (each) or 90"H x 44"W (all)
Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24 Color Prints
Collection: Renee Samuels, West Hartford, CT

Description: This diptych shows both the Polaroid color negative (left) with the color positive (right). The mixing of a black and white pod, together with a color one, then off-setting them, allows for an unusual combination in palette and form. There was no exposure used, this underscores the "zero" in my practice and technique of picture making versus picture sign.

#17. Title: ***Monochromes with Mixed & Off-Set Pods***
Date: 2009
Size: 34"H x 22"W (each) or 34"H x 88"W (each row) or 68"H x 88"W (all)
Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24 Color Positives and Negatives – 8 total
Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: The aesthetic idea of color gained momentum over time, evolving to an even brighter, bigger, and bolder "blow-up." Revisiting a technique in color film/chemistry, known as "cross-processing," I began to imagine an expansive and expressive use of *painting with light*, found in the Polaroid pods-as-tubes. My palette digs deeper into color's mother lode, borrowing ideas from traditional photographic terms. With each new technical change by Polaroid, challenged, I responded. ***Monochromes with Mixed & Off-Set Pods*** presents my creative solution within a dramatic dilemma hidden in the Polaroid sealed envelope known as "pods."

In 2009, Polaroid changed the pods due to damage in transportation. The dyes in a single pod (\$200.00 each) went to two pods, divided into three sections each (6 total), so if one section broke, it could be replaced. Seeing an opportunity for creative growth and inspiration, the Polaroid 20 X 24 Studio invited me to test their new "pod" system. My experiments yielded an array of unseen colors in tandem with variations in form; off-setting and mix-matching the pods.

Each positive picture contains asymmetrical, stitch-like forms, unexpected and striated. A single color shows two surface versions: one is grey-dull (black/white pod) co-existing and mirrored by its super-slick glossy counterpart (color). These smooth areas change to a porphyritic slice of non-glare matte. Polaroid negatives hang below their positives, the tar-like patinas see deeper variations of color, form, texture, surface, and invention; different images, from the same source.

My earlier Polaroid 20 X 24 rectangles, a series of monochromes, were seen as a series of glossy — yellow, red, green, blue — symmetrical exposures in large, unique blocks. The top finds the

signature Polaroid-shaped “tulips” and the bottom a thick band, each edged in black. The sides, which have the thinner relics of the camera’s rollers, frame the Polaroid instant process. These signature Polaroid trademarks were interrupted throughout the compositions, top and bottom, allowing for the dyes and striations to complete and overlap, adding an unexpected “frame.”

These experiments opened up advances for color and camera vision, unexpected processes uniquely photographic, further possibilities around the meaning and making of “picture signs” within the context of abstraction and minimalism in lens-based art. I often exhibit the one-of-a-kind positives with their negatives, giving equal status to both, and the only Polaroid artist to do so. This highlights the axis found in all photography, located in the historic photogram which was first a negative, later contact printed to make its positive (1840) as well as light — positive — and negative — shadow — a theme of great interest to me.

This Polaroid session was done at the newly located studio in Tribeca, which moved after several decades in SoHo (1985-2008). Now, the Polaroid studio is privately held as an LLC, and its website is: www.20X24Studio.com. The original and continuing director, John Reuter, who has begun a documentary film on Polaroid 20 x 24 artists (Chuck Close, William Wegman, Mark Ellen Mark) continues to make film/chemistry for the large format camera and work with these artists. Nevertheless, its future is uncertain, hence my Guggenheim proposal.

#18. Title: ***Pull with Flare & Rollback***
Date: 2008
Size: 60"H x 22"W (each) or 60"H x 66"W (all)
Medium: Polaroid 20 X 24 Color Positive and Negative Prints
Collection: Ellen Carey – The Artist

Description: This triptych sees the ***Pull with Flare & Rollback*** as one color positive (center) with two negatives (left and right), all rendered in monochromatic colors, all forms, both dark and light. The flare is another of my experimental ideas. I take the negative partially out of the camera, pre-exposing the ***Pull*** to the white light of the Polaroid 20 X 24 studio, an unconventional source, then make a ***Pull*** exposing it for a second time, re-rolling it (when dry) back into the Polaroid 20 X 24 camera for a ***Rollback***; here a double-exposure.

The horizontal edge, like the setting sun, sees a glowing band of radiant orange as the positive picture sets into a black oblong shape, with swirls of crusty surfaces and deepening hues for a solid, abstract shape and a non-representational picture. The colors of lilac and sea green, pale purples and ecru are extremely unusual in my palette, informed by the Easter holiday, when this session took place. Reminiscent of the playful hunt for Easter eggs, also festively dyed, a ritual and activity from my childhood.

As one raised Catholic, Easter symbolizes an ending as well as a beginning, a perfect metaphor. This was to be the last session at the Polaroid 20 X 24 Studio, then located in SoHo. This closed a great chapter in instant technology (Polaroid officially filed for Chapter 11), a golden age for our picture culture and Polaroid artists. John Reuter, its original and current Director, is involved in a documentary film project on this camera, the artists and the story of the unique, large format Polaroid 20 X 24 Studio; re-located twice (2008-14), privately backed (www.20X24studio.com).

