

Likeness and Legacy: A photographic survey of early portraits

Photographs by James Hull

April 1 - May 22, 2016

Laconia Gallery

433 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA. 02118

Opening Reception: SOWA First Friday, April 1, 2016, 5:30- 8:30 PM

Gallery Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 12 - 4 PM

info: 857-222-0333

www.laconiagallery.com / www.jameshull.com



(L to R): Cabinet Card verso, Flavian Era Bust 1st Cent. C.E., 1875 Cabinet Card

In this follow up to his solo exhibition, "Personal Propaganda", at Harvard Medical School's Transit Gallery last Fall, James Hull focuses on the standardized photographic portraits called "*Carte de Visite*" and "Cabinet Cards". These portraits, created in artistic studios and exposed and printed with sunlight, were the first widely collected photographs in America. Thin albumen and bromide paper prints were mounted to a durable paper card stock creating accurate, portable, reproducible recordings of the likenesses of everyday citizens.

Hull uses these 130-year-old photographic portraits found in his family attic in Atlanta to feature a constellation of friends from an album kept by the artist's great grandmother and various studio portraits of family members from that time. There are also examples of other early photographic forms: glass collodian positive prints, Ferrotypes or Tintypes, and albumen sepia prints that were common paper print formats.

Hull connects this popular card format to images of the 1st Century Roman sculptural busts that he believes to be the origins of the formal poses used by the commercial photographers of the 1870's and 1880's. These two connected forms of portraiture are examined through engaging side-by-side enlargements featuring photographs produced in Virginia, North Carolina, Massachusetts and Texas and sculptures from the Vatican, Capitoline and Naples Archeological Museum collections.

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