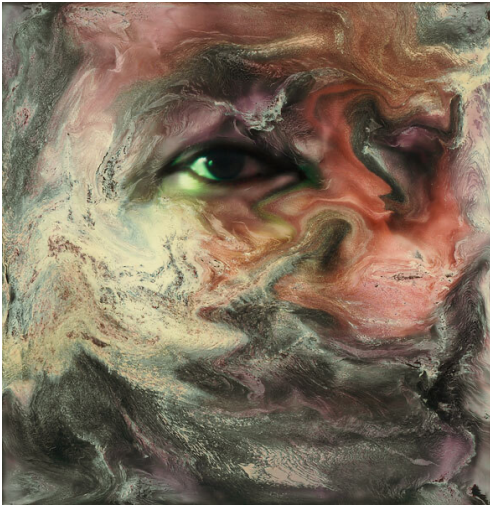


Lucas Samaras: Albums

June 28 – August 19, 2022
540 West 25th Street
New York



Lucas Samaras, *Photo Transformation*, November 3, 1973 © Lucas Samaras, courtesy Pace Gallery

New York – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of new and historical work by Lucas Samaras, a pioneer of photography, sculpture, installation, and digital art, at its 540 West 25th Street gallery from June 29 to August 19. Throughout his career, Samaras has pushed the boundaries of image making, and Pace’s latest exhibition of his work centers around six new volumes of the artist’s Albums (2015-2022), each comprising hundreds of images created over the past decade. Presented in their natively digital format, Samaras’s Albums chart new aesthetic terrain by reimagining earlier bodies of work, in particular the artist’s iconic Auto Polaroids (1969-71) and Photo Transformations (1973-76).

In tandem with the Albums, the exhibition features a selection of Samaras’s Polaroid works from the 1960s and 1970s, including the *Sittings* series (1979-80), in which Samaras photographed various prominent figures in the New York art world posing naked in his studio. The presentation draws connections between the artist’s pioneering and perverse manipulations of the Polaroid in the 1970s and his use of digital media over the past two decades. Focusing on art making as a daily practice, the exhibition underscores Samaras’s unflinching commitment to audacious and provocative experimentation with technologies of the image and of the self.

Presented on custom screens that preserve the rectangular format of the works as originally composed—while mirroring the original shape of Polaroid film—Samaras’s Albums serve as an auto-retrospective. The artist collects, scans, and reproduces works from his entire oeuvre, many of which have long since dispersed into museum collections and are available to him only through exhibition catalogues in his studio. These become the basis for myriad new works, which reshape, reimagine, and recontextualize the original images in ways that capture the artifice of the digital. Samaras’s six new Albums chronicle the artist’s own evolution, transforming more than seven decades of his artistic life into material for an illustrated auto-history, refracted by the lens of contemporary technology.

Samaras considers each of his six new Albums individual artworks. As digital archives of his daily practice, they interweave straight documentation of earlier works with entirely new digital artworks that the artist has created over the past decade using digital imaging software. Often recomposing visual elements in a bricolage of his own past together with new self-portraits taken on his iPhone inside his home and studio in midtown Manhattan—as well as images overlooking the city taken from his sixty-second story windows—Samaras remains a scavenger of the self.

He consumes and absorbs his own history, digests it, melts it down in a crucible of a restless and unceasing imagination, before recrystallizing it in his ever-expanding archive of self-imagining.

Lucas Samaras (b. 1936, Kastoria, Macedonia, Greece) has produced an expansive body of work across media and discipline—including photography, painting, installation, assemblage, drawing, and sculpture—united by a focus on the body and psyche, and often emphasizing autobiography. A student of Allan Kaprow, Samaras emerged as a key figure in the Happenings of the late 1950s and early 1960s, collaborating with Robert Whitman and Claes Oldenburg and participating in Kaprow’s seminal *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* in 1959. Underpinned by themes of self-depiction and identity, Samaras’s practice proposed a radical departure from the presiding ideas of Abstract Expressionism and Pop art during the 1960s. Samaras is recognized as a vanguard figure in assemblage, producing reliefs and boxes comprised of elements from his immediate surroundings in a turn away from traditional art media, reflective of the blurring of art and life. He is also acknowledged for his innovative use of photographic media; in 1969, he began using a Polaroid camera to create portraits and images, and altered these images through collage, with the addition of hand-applied ink, or, in the mid-1970s, by manipulating the wet emulsion of the film. An extension of his early experimentation, he later adopted a Leica digital camera and began using Photoshop to digitally alter his images.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. Pace’s presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its Web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has ten locations worldwide including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis. In 2022, the gallery opened its West Coast flagship in Los Angeles, and continues to operate its gallery in Palo Alto.



For immediate release


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