



SALTHOUSE





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CURATOR

Richard Rinehart

CATALOG DESIGN

Andy Gabrysiak

COVER

Knot III (horse armor)

2011

Pigment print

All images courtesy of Stephen Althouse



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SALTHOUSE

JANUARY 19 through **MARCH 20 / 2016**

Samek Art Museum, Bucknell University

Stephen Althouse was raised on a farm in rural Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he earned a working familiarity with the land, animals, and the tools of farming. He went on to work in a stone quarry, on the railroad, and in concrete construction and road building. It comes as no surprise that, when he pursued his artistic studies and practice, he focused on sculpture – on objects and the human hands that make them. Rather than fabricate new objects that would embody his own labor, he chose to work with found objects that told the stories of others, and this contingency remains a key aspect of his work. Photography became an extension of his sculpture, highlighting the flow of time in an object by attempting to fix it in a moment of light and shadow.

These photographs seem to present objects at a distance, platonic and symbolic, distilling the *ding an sich* (the essence of the thing unto itself.) The strategies of this distancing include: representing each object through a photograph rather than directly; freezing the history of an object in time; arranging objects ritually rather than functionally; and composing objects against a black void, devoid of context. But such maneuvers are checked by the aforementioned sense of contingency. Each object is carefully selected for its long use and then photographed in a raking light that reveals a patina of scratches or worn and rounded edges as evidence of labor that is as important as the object itself. These objects are selected for their material rather than symbolic function and they are pounded, frayed, and splayed by their devotion to their purpose.

Acknowledging Althouse's practice as a sculptor and to the subject matter within them, the photographs in this exhibition are presented not as disembodied images flatly framed behind the sheen of glass, but as objects themselves. Here the detailed images of bridles, hammers, and wheels float in front of the velvety black printed backgrounds because of contrast that would be nullified by glass that flattens the surface through reflections and unified texture. Here the white linen that gathers and bunches in the images is echoed in the curling white paper of the photographs pushing off the wall toward the viewer.



Knot III (horse armor)
2011
Pigment print
87.5 x 60 in
222.25 x 152.4 cm



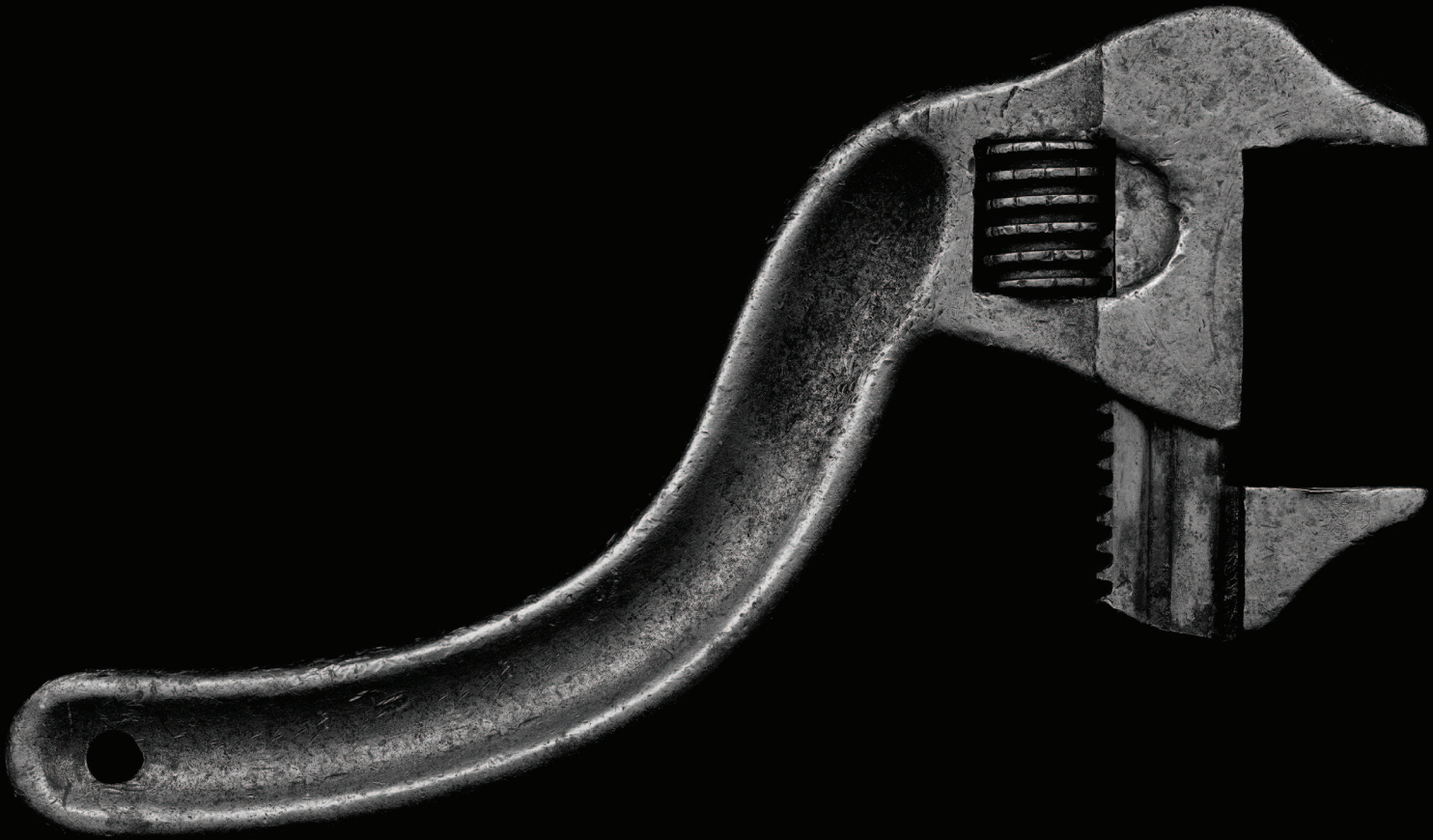
Broken Bow
2013
Pigment print
60 x 87 in
152.4 220.98 cm





LEFT *Weaning Halters*
2009
Pigment print
60 x 60 in
152.4 x 152.4 cm

ABOVE *Closed Tongs*
2004
Pigment print
60 x 87.25 in
152.4 x 221.615 cm



Adjustable Wrench
2003
Pigment print
44 x 63.25 in
111.76 x 160.655 cm



Bull Blinders
2009
Pigment print
64 x 44 in
162.56 x 111.76 cm



Wheel I
2008
Pigment print
60 x 87 in
152.4 x 220.98 cm



Rusted Crown
2013
Pigment print
60 x 87 in
152.4 x 220.98 cm

Chairs Diptych
2015
Pigment print
95 x 60 in (ea.)
241.3 x 152.4 cm (ea.)







Clamp and Shroud
2013
Pigment print
44 x 33 in
111.76 x 83.82 cm



Iron Wedge
2011
Pigment print
33 x 44 in
83.82 x 111.76 cm

LEFT *Mallet with Braille*
2006
Pigment print
44 x 33 in
111.76 x 83.82 cm

RIGHT *Shoe II*
2011
Pigment print
44 x 44 in
111.76 x 111.76 cm









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