

f F O T O I M A G E

JOHN LUCAS

(b. London, England)

John Lucas studied physics at Bristol and Sussex Universities in the UK. He subsequently received a doctorate in materials science, and in 1970 left England for Canada to continue research into magnetic materials. He then became a scientist for the resource sector where he contributed numerous patented inventions for process-sensing. Several were commercialized and used around the globe. Through this research, John explored the inner workings of immense smelters, refineries, mines and sawmills, and the people and small towns behind them. More recently he has consulted for the Canadian Space Agency, evaluating applications of the laser spectroscopy techniques he had developed for factories to Martian exploration.

Lucas has been a lifelong photographer. His photographic assignments as a young student included covering visits of the Queen, and Montgomery of Alamein. While engaged in doctoral research in physics, John was invited to exhibit at Sussex University's Arts Centre, until then the exclusive domain of established artists. His early work was documentary, "street photography" of the life around him in England and while travelling in Europe, Turkey, and Morocco.

During the 1970s Lucas suspended his pursuit of photography, finding it incompatible with the demands of a scientific career. Then, in 1981, a journey to Russia inspired a series based on Polaroid and colour transparency film. While this project was pursued with characteristic intensity, it took until 2007 to bring it to life through a combination of a strong sense of "unfinished business" coupled with advances in digital processing and, most precious of all, time. Revisiting those early photographs was instrumental in shifting Lucas' interest towards the more painterly, formal, emotive - and sometimes abstract - approach which informs his treatment of both human subjects and industrial settings.

EXHIBITIONS

- 2015 Snooker: Thailand & Burma, Stephen Bulger Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2014 Industrial Still Lives, Galerie Youn, Montreal, QC
- 2013 Soviet Restaurant Polaroids, Griffin Museum of Photography, Winchester, MA
Tram Portraits, Stephen Bulger Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2012 Soviet Restaurant Polaroids, FotoFest, Houston, TX
- 2009 Soviet Nostalgia: Images of a Forgotten Era, group exhibition, Galerie Blue Square, Paris