

Slow Looking: Julie Cockburn Introduction

Audio Description © Eleanor Margolies

These three images are made up of found photographs, sometimes a combination of more than one, with added collage and embroidery. Julie Cockburn says of her technique: *“Working with old photographs is similar to engaging in a dialogue. I am not working on a blank canvas. Rather, I am entering into a pre-existing conversation that took place between the photographer and sitter, and where I experiment with a personal visual language.”*

Julie Cockburn was born in 1966 in the UK, and is renowned for re-imagining and re-configuring found objects and vintage photographs into meticulously constructed and unique contemporary artworks. Having trained as a sculptor at London’s Central Saint Martins, she approaches each work as if creating a three-dimensional form. Her photographic process involves exploring and reacting to nuances such as colour, pose, composition or texture in found archetypal images and transforming them through embroidery, collage and painterly techniques. Rendering the original almost unrecognizable she opens up the work to new possibilities of narrative and interpretation. She has exhibited extensively in the UK, Europe and the United States and her work resides in a number of public collections, including the Yale Center for British Art (USA) and the Wellcome Collection (London, UK).

It should be said that the three-dimensionality of Julie Cockburn’s artworks benefit from being seen in real life. For those living in or near London, there is a small exhibition of her work on until 25 October in the Print Sales section of The

Photographers' Gallery. This audio-described event has been timed to coincide with her exhibition.