

*FAMILY IN COLOUR: INTEGRATING COLOUR INTO
SALLY MANN'S FAMILY PICTURES*

by

Zoë Antonia Lepiano, B.F.A, Concordia University, Montreal, 2010

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Abstract

Over her forty-year career photographer Sally Mann (b. 1951) has become synonymous with black-and white large format photography and nineteenth-century processes, used to depict her family, their environment, and the landscapes of the southern U.S.A. Yet Mann has worked with a variety of processes including colour. This thesis focuses on the printed Cibachromes and unprinted colour transparencies, taken between 1990 and 1994, that make up Mann's *Family Color* collection, part of *Family Pictures* series, the well-known black-and-white photographs of her three children. It outlines work done *in situ* in the artist's archive, the consequent discovery of a number of unprinted colour transparencies, and their integration into Mann's studio through digitization and organization of the collection. An exploration of the production and exhibition history of *Family Color* is followed by a close-reading of a selection of printed colour photographs from the series, as well as the newly discovered, unprinted images. These comparisons enable the series to be situated within Mann's larger practice opening up areas for future research.

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In Memory of Emmett Mann

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A Note on Terminology

A number of titles, technical terms and materials are used within this thesis to describe Sally Mann's collection; the following definitions are included for clarity:

Collection is used in place and alongside the word archive to refer to the materials housed in Mann's studio. Mann's collection housed in Lexington, Virginia consists of multiple photographic formats including black-and-white and colour negatives, transparencies, collodion glass plates, ambrotypes, tin-types, gelatin silver and silver-dye bleach master prints and artist proofs, digital surrogates and their derivatives, as well as born digital files.

Colour Transparencies indicate an original resulting from the development of positive colour film (as opposed to negative film), also known as slide film. In the case of Mann's *Family Color* the originals have not been slide mounted. These objects are referred to as transparencies, positives, and originals, below.

Digital surrogates are digital files resulting from the digitization, (scanning) of analogue originals. The digital derivatives created from the original raw scan are further identified by file type, for example: JPG, TIF, PSD. The methodology for this breakdown of digital files and their structure within Mann's collection is discussed in Chapter 2.

Family Color is a sub series within the *Family Pictures* collection taken between 1990-1994, using colour positive Agfa Chrome 200 RS film. *Family Color* is used to define the colour transparencies and the silver-dye bleach prints discussed below.

Family Pictures is the name first used by Mann to describe the entirety of the series taken between 1984-1996, a selection of which has been exhibited in various forms since 1987. The body of work consists of over two hundred black-and-white prints as well as the colour images of Mann's family (immediate as well as extended).

Immediate Family is the title of the publication printed by Aperture in 1992 and defines a selection of sixty black-and-white prints that are part of the larger *Family Pictures* series. These images were also part of an accompanying traveling exhibition and make up the majority of what is written about the series.

Originals describe negatives, direct positives and positive transparencies taken by Mann and used to create printed work for exhibition and sale.

Silver dye-bleach print is the technical name for the positive-to-positive process used to create prints from colour transparencies popularized in the 1970's. These prints are commonly referred to by their brand name, Cibachrome. Cibachrome became Ilfochrome after 1992; both define a specific brand of paper with a polyester substrate and the chemical process required for their development. The term Cibachrome is used frequently to describe Mann's early prints made from the colour transparencies.

Unprinted Transparencies are the colour images from the collection that have not yet been physically realized as photographic prints.

Introduction

Photographer Sally Mann has used a variety of photographic processes over her prolific forty-year career: A job as photographer at Lexington's Washington and Lee University, and time spent in 1972 organizing and archiving Michael Miley's glass plate negatives, played an integral role in her self-taught relationship with various photographic techniques and laid the foundation for photographs taken over the next four decades.¹ Her first monograph, *The Lewis Law Portfolio* published in 1977, reproduces images taken at night with an 8x10 camera to document the construction of the university's new law building.² Between the early 1970s and 1980s Mann experimented with the human figure—hers and young women in her community—still life and landscape photography, using gelatin silver, platinum palladium and colour to render her subjects. Mann's early work reveals an interest in depicting the things closest to her, paired with a preoccupation with utilizing the particular qualities of each process to create images that blur, accentuate, hide and transcend.³ This thread can be followed throughout Mann's career; she has continued to depict her immediate surroundings: her husband Larry, their grown children, the landscapes of the South and the complex histories embedded within it; and

¹ Mann discusses Miley's early influence in her memoir. Sally Mann, *Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs* (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company, 2015), 94–98. As does Jane Livingston in her introduction. Sally Mann, *Second Sight: The Photographs of Sally Mann* (Boston: David R Godine, 1984).

² Mann's first monographs reproduce both early gelatin silver and platinum prints: Sally Mann, *The Lewis Law Portfolio* (Washington, DC: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1977). Mann, *Second Sight*. Sally Mann, *Sweet Silent Thought: Platinum Prints* (North Carolina Center for Creative Photography, 1987). All of these publications were published in short runs with limited editions.

³ John B. Ravenal opens *Flesh and the Spirit* with the proclamation: "One of the apparent paradoxes in Sally Mann's work is her desire to show what lies beyond vision by using a medium invented to record reality's surface". John B. Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann: The Flesh and the Spirit* (Richmond, VA : New York: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts ; Aperture Foundation, 2010), 1.

has used a number of photographic techniques to do so, her name now synonymous with expert printing and her use of nineteenth-century processes.⁴

Within this trajectory, the black-and-white photographs that appear in the publications *At Twelve: Portraits of young women* (Aperture 1988) and, perhaps most notoriously, *Immediate Family* (Aperture 1992) established Mann's name internationally.⁵ In 1979, following the birth of her first child, Emmett, Mann began photographing young women in her home of Rockbridge County, Virginia. The photographs depict girls between childhood and adulthood and precede the *Family Pictures*, which span a decade and document her three children at play around their Lexington home and their cabin outside of town throughout the summer months. The exhibition of a selection of images from *Family Pictures* gained Mann increasing notoriety in the late 1980s—the cultural climate at the time caught up in concerns surrounding photographic representations of the body.⁶ The negative response to the images was further fueled by the subsequent traveling exhibition and publication of *Immediate Family*.⁷ The publication contains sixty duo-tone reproductions of black-and-white photographs selected from the over two-hundred prints that make up the *Family Pictures* series. It is a selection of these images—often those depicting her children in the nude—that have garnered the widest circulation, both within

⁴ The entry on Sally Mann in the Getty Union List of Artist Names reads: “Known for her large-format photographs of children and the American South made using the wet collodion process to create glass plate negatives.” J Paul Getty Trust, “Sally Mann,” Getty Education, *Union List of Artist Names*, (2016), <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/>.

⁵ Mann originally published a selection of the *At Twelve* photographs as a sixteen page exhibition catalogue: Sally Mann, *Sweet Silent Thought* (North Carolina Center for Creative Photography, 1987).

⁶ For a discussion about the cultural wars at the time of Mann's rise to notoriety see Carole S. Vance, “The War On Culture,” *Art in America*, no. September (1989): 39–45. Specifically to Mann see Richard Goldstein “The Eye of the Beholder,” *The Village Voice*, March 10, 1998.

⁷ Sally Mann, *Immediate Family*, (New York: Aperture, 1992). This controversy is outlined below in Chapter 2, 17-22

the series and throughout Mann's succeeding work over the last twenty years, their reproductions appearing in art magazines, law reviews, daily newspapers and scholarly texts.⁸

Between 1990 and 1994 Mann began to take colour images alongside these better known black-and-white photographs, using a Mamiya 6 camera and colour Agfa Chrome RS 200 transparency film. Some of the images from this sub series, referenced by Mann as *Family Color*, were exhibited prior to the release of *Immediate Family*; for example, five appeared in a group exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) in 1991.⁹ The monograph, *Still Time* (1994), includes reproductions of black-and-white and colour images from the series, as well as some of Mann's early experiments with Cibachrome prints and Polaroids. Most recently, selections of Cibachromes were shown at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and are reproduced in the accompanying catalogue, *The Flesh and the Spirit* (2010).¹⁰ While completing an internship in Sally Mann's studio over the summer of 2015, I began to organize the Cibachrome prints and original transparencies that make up the *Family Color* collection. Grouping the transparencies by location—an organizational method utilized by Mann—led to the discovery of a selection of unprinted frames that spurred further interest in this largely unstudied body of work.

This thesis focuses on Mann's *Family Color* series, addressing both the practical organization and resulting methodology required to digitize the transparencies found onsite in

⁸ A selection of these reproductions and the varied conversations they frame can be seen in Allen Ginsberg and Joseph Richey, "The Right to Depict Children in the Nude," *Aperture* Fall, no. 121 (September 1990): 42–51; Price Reynolds, "Neighbours and Kin," *Aperture* 115, no. Summer (1989): 32–39; Raymond Sokolov, "Critique:Censoring Virginia," *Wall Street Journal*, February 6, 1991, sec. Leisure and Arts; Janet Malcolm, *Diana and Nikon: Essays on Photography*, (New York, N.Y: Aperture, 1997); Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006).

⁹ A three sentence review for the exhibition was found under "Photography," *The New Yorker*, July 22, 1991. No other information about this show is available in Mann's exhibition history or print sale records.

¹⁰ Sally Mann, *Still Time* (New York: Aperture, 1994); Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*.

Mann's studio, as well as the theoretical consideration of the objects themselves, the creation of the body of work, and the cultural climate it was presented within. This required practical handling and digitization of the transparencies: The eighty-three printed Cibachromes and one thousand nine hundred and fifteen colour transparencies that make up the collection were accessed over two separate stays *in situ* with Mann's collection and made available to me remotely through their digital surrogates. The existing publication and exhibition histories of the *Family Color* prints and their more widely known black-and-white counterparts are supplemented by new research, including correspondences and discussions with Mann and representatives from her galleries, Edwynn Houk and Gagosian.

The first chapter offers a literature review outlining resources that inform the practical digitization and cataloguing of the transparencies, literature pertaining to working directly within an artist's archive, as well as an overview of the history of the response to Mann's *Family Pictures*—both black-and-white and colour. The second chapter addresses Mann's studio, the history of collections management begun by former F+PPCM student, Ola M. Dlugosz, and summarizes the various materials within Mann's collection, providing context for the structure and methodology implemented to complete the digitization and cataloguing of the transparencies. Examples are used to outline the process implemented to number and digitize the colour originals and the integration of the resulting surrogates into Mann's studio.

The third chapter shifts from the practical organization of the *Family Color* originals to the objects themselves, looking at the circulation of the *Family Pictures*, the exhibition history of the printed colour Cibachromes, and the timeline for the making of the images alongside the larger *Family Pictures* series. Finally, this chapter compares a selection of printed Cibachromes with their black-and-white counterparts, followed by a selection of unprinted transparencies

uncovered during their organization. The burst of colour provides new context for, and insight into Mann's working process, opening up the narrative surrounding the production of the *Family Pictures*— the new visibility allowing them to be understood as a collection for the first time. As well, this research brings to light Mann's hybrid use of photographic processes and presents openings for further examination into Mann's practice within the context of recent American histories of photography; specifically, our changing understanding of photographic representation precipitated by the ubiquity of digital images, contemporary with a renewed interest in the photographic object and the history of colour in art photography.¹¹

¹¹ Representation here refers to the use of the photographic medium to create an image that represents the equivalent of something; in Mann's photographs this is often the human figure or the landscape. Throughout history the photograph has been understood as a document and conflated with truth or evidence. The role of photographic artists throughout the twentieth century was in part the challenging of this understanding; either in their manipulation of the medium (as was seen with the photo-secession and pictorialism) or through the subject (Cindy Sherman's film stills are an example).

Chapter 1: Literature Review

The first section of this literature survey addresses resources referenced for the practical portion of this thesis; the cataloguing and digitization of the one thousand nine hundred and fifteen colour transparencies that comprise Sally Mann's *Family Color* series. The second section outlines scholarly texts that reference Mann's black-and-white *Family Pictures*— most written amidst the 1990s cultural wars over public funding in the arts—and frame the photographs in support or against issues surrounding representation of the body and censorship. The final section offers a brief investigation of exhibition catalogues and publications that have included *Family Color* photographs.

Cataloguing and Archiving

Mann's prolific career and the lengthy production required in working with predominantly antiquated processes has resulted in a variety of types of prints in varying stages of production within her studio and collection. With the proliferation of home database management systems and various production-based software throughout the early 2000s, and with the future of her estate in mind, Mann shifted attention towards these accumulated physical prints and their records, a project undertaken with the help of Ryerson graduate student Ola Dlugosz. Dlugosz's resulting master's thesis, *Digital Application Solutions in Collections Management: The Photographer's Catalogue Database: Case Study: Sally Mann*, presents a FileMaker Pro template for working artists' archives, modeled from Mann's collection, designed

through the organization of the black-and-white *Family Pictures* between 2006-2007.¹² The thesis provides invaluable information about Mann's archive, particularly with regards to the black-and-white images from *Family Pictures*; the digitization of the colour work would not have been possible without this framework. However, the FileMaker Pro database at the centre of this project was not realized; instead, the print sales and catalogue records created were recorded using Excel; originals (negatives and transparencies) are not included in this flat file database system and Mann did not catalogue or number any originals until 2015. The practical component, outlined in chapter 2, expands the Excel database template—originally designed to function as finding aid as well as catalogue raisonné—by integrating the addition of numbered originals and their digital surrogates into the catalogue records.

The digitization of the colour transparencies represents only a small fraction of collections management strategies already in place within Mann's working studio. The handling of Mann's colour transparencies requires an understanding of both the organizational structures in place, as well as institutional cataloguing and archival strategies to insure that Mann's archive can be easily translated in the future. *MRM5: Museum Registration Methods*, includes information on intellectual hierarchies within archival organizations, providing an overview of numbering and rules of description used in institutions.¹³ Although the numbering of objects within an artist's archive is not directly addressed, the text provides accessioning and digitization examples of objects and offers suggestions for the organization of the resulting digital files. As well, the chapter outlining the organization of digital derivatives and file types has proven an

¹² Olga M. Dlugosz, "Digital Application Solutions in Collections Management: The Photographer's Catalogue Database: Case Study: Sally Mann" (M.A., Ryerson University, 2007). Although her MA thesis is published using the first name Olga, Dlugosz is more commonly known as Ola, which is the name I've used throughout this thesis.

¹³ Rebecca A. Buck, Jean Allman Gilmore, and American Association of Museums, eds., *MRM5: Museum Registration Methods*, Revised 5th edition (Washington, DC: AAM Press, American Association of Museums, 2010).

excellent resource in organizational structuring, and has helped me to record and clarify my own methodology so that it can be linked into institutional use in the future. In a similar vein, *Registration Methods for Small Museums* provides an in-depth breakdown of different numbering standards for objects within an institution, with examples of those most frequently used in smaller collections.¹⁴ Expanding on these resources, in person conversations with the Digital Imaging Assistant at the Ryerson Image Centre, Laura Ramsey, who brings with her several years of expertise working within artist's collections and Julianne Pascoe, professor of Digital Applications for Collections Management and metadata architect at Canadiana.org, have proved invaluable and also helped in developing the numbering system for Mann's transparencies prior to their digitization.

Understanding the specifics of working within an artist's archive was also important for this work: Sue Breakall and Victoria Worsley outline an alternative framework to the standardized institutional modes of collecting. In the article, "Collecting the Traces: An Archivist's Perspective," they advocate for the importance of researching the artist's process when constructing an archive.¹⁵ The book of essays published by ARLIS (Art Archives Committee), *All this Stuff: Archiving the Artist*, includes both case studies and alternative views of the role of artist archives, offering theoretical as well as creative perspectives on how to write about an artist's body of work from the context of their collection.¹⁶ The PhD dissertation by Amy Louise Furness: *Towards a Definition of Visual Artist's Archives: Vera Frenkel's Archives as a Case Study*, looks at the relationship between artists' collections and the institutions that acquire them. Furness uses interviews with Frenkel and the Queens University Archive to

¹⁴ Daniel B. Reibel, *Registration Methods for the Small Museum* (Lanham, Md ; Toronto: AltaMira Press, 2008).

¹⁵ Sue Breakell and Victoria Worsley, "Collecting the Traces: An Archivist's Perspective," *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 6, no. 3 (October 2007): 175–89.

¹⁶ Judy Vaknin et al., eds., *All This Stuff: Archiving the Artist* (Oxfordshire: Libri Publishing, 2013).

discuss the importance of conversation between artist and archivist to assure the preservation of contemporary art.¹⁷ These texts helped frame my experience and research in relation to post-modern archive theory and were important in understanding my own role as archivist within a living collection. The sources above equip the practical portion of the research and inform the digitization and cataloguing of Mann's *Family Color* collection, while bridging the handling of the physical objects with the theoretical portion of this thesis.

Immediate Family and Family Pictures

Much has been written on the culture wars that played out alongside the emergence of *Family Pictures*. While the full history of the press and public reaction to the *Family Pictures* is outside the scope of this project, it is important to understand the cultural tensions that influenced the reception of Mann's work, and resulted in Mann's fall into notoriety during this period.

Between 1989 and 1990, the American art world was reeling from a court case against Dennis Barrie, curator at the Cincinnati museum, for exhibiting "pornographic" works.¹⁸ The photographs, part of a touring Robert Mapplethorpe retrospective, had already been subject to censorship. Prior to the court case, the exhibition had been cancelled by the Corcoran gallery in Washington D.C. for fear of controversy and negative coverage from the press.¹⁹ Throughout the late eighties and early nineties the U.S. was consumed by similar issues concerning public funding for the arts, with an increasingly vocal and conservative right, ranging from

¹⁷Amy Louise Furness, "Towards a Definition of Visual Artists' Archives: Vera Frenkel's Archives as a Case Study" (Ph.D., University of Toronto, 2012).

¹⁸Dennis Barrie, "Pandering? That's Nonsense...", *The New York Times*, April 18, 1990.

¹⁹Gamarekian, "Corcoran, to Foil Dispute, Drops Mapplethorpe Show"; Vance, "The War On Culture". During the writing of this thesis Corcoran's decision and the resulting protest were revisited in the article Amy Argetsinger, "Here's What the Dazzling 1989 Robert Mapplethorpe Protest at the Corcoran Looked like," *The Washington Post*, April 4, 2016, sec. Arts and Entertainment, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/arts-and-entertainment/wp/2016/04/04/the-robert-mapplethorpe-protest-at-the-corcoran-was-one-of-washingtons-most-stunning/>.

fundamentalist anti-abortionists to North Carolina senator Jesse Helms.²⁰ Photographs by Mapplethorpe, Jock Sturges and Andres Serrano, among others, came under attack for challenging notions of heteronormative sexual desire, childhood innocence and religious iconography. Fraught with criticism of the changing representations of the body in art, opponents used both anti-porn feminism and anti-pornography child laws to defend their positions.²¹ As a result, much of what was written in response to Mann's black-and-white *Family* series is focused on the select images that depict the children in the nude, and centre on concerns of the body and censorship.

Unlike Sturges and Dennis Barrie, Mann was never officially investigated. However, the response to her work in this period was generally both negative and personal.²² Reviews from this time frequently criticize Mann as a mother, and present concerns around consent, issues of child abuse, or use the photographs to demonstrate shifting ideologies intersecting childhood and the body.²³ Another growing narrative at this time concerned Mann's use of large format black-

²⁰ America's conservative rights influence on this controversy is addressed in multiple articles. Robert Enright, "Questioning Bodies: A Symposium on Censorship and Representation," *Border Crossings* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 1991): 15–26; Ginsberg and Richey, "The Right to Depict Children in the Nude"; Goldstein, "The Eye of the Beholder"; Vance, "The War On Culture."

²¹ Much literature is available on this see Connie Samaras, "Feminism, Photography, Censorship, and Sexually Transgressive Imagery: The Work of Robert Mapplethorpe; Joel-Peter Witkin, Jacqueline Livingstone, Sally Mann, and Catherine Opie," *New York School Law Review* 38 (1993): 75–92; Kim Masters, "Obscenity Trial Asks: 'Is It Art?': Jurors Examine Mapplethorpe Works," *The Washington Post*, October 2, 1990. The latter addresses anti porn legislation, for a further discussion see Nadine Strossen, "A Feminist Critique of 'the' Feminist Critique of Pornography," *Virginia Law Review* 79, no. 5 (August 1993): 1099–1190.

²² Anne Higonnet looks at a gendered and personal reading of Mann's work as part of the reason for both Mann's rise to fame and how this negative narrative has effected the understanding of the images, while Sara Parson's discusses the role the circulation of the images played in the reaction of the public. Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (New York, N.Y: Thames and Hudson, 1998). Sarah Parsons, "Public/Private Tensions in the Photography of Sally Mann," *History of Photography* 32, no. 2 (June 1, 2008): 123–36.

²³ Concerns for the children and personal attacks on Mann as a mother are numerous and span decades, for an example of the varied response see Susan Freudenheim, "It May Be Art, but What about the Kids?," *San Diego Tribune*, no. March 29th (1989). Melissa Harris, ed., "The Body in Question," *Aperture* 14 article special section, no. 121 (Fall 1990): 2–78. Richard B. Woodward, "The Disturbing Photography of Sally Mann," *The New York Times*, September 27, 1992.; Luc Sante, "The Nude and the Naked," *The New Republic*, no. 18 (May 1, 1995): 30.; Anne Higonnet, "Private Pictures, Public Dangers," in *Pictures of Innocence : The History and Crisis of Ideal*

and-white negatives, her printing and technical prowess becoming part of the argument—either for or against—the acceptance of the work as art. Mann’s use of composition and the construction of the photographs further complicated consent between mother, artist and child.²⁴ The sixty-duotone images that appear in the publication *Immediate Family* are the most extensively written about images within Mann’s oeuvre. The narrative surrounding the work exists in multiple discourses—newspaper and magazine reviews, law reviews, scholarly dissertations as well as history of photography textbooks. While these sources are intended for diverse audiences, the rhetoric accompanying the work is almost without exception caught up in the need to defend or reprimand it. Most widely cited against are three articles: “Critique: Censoring Virginia,” by Raymond Sokolov, written in 1989, includes a reproduction of *Virginia at Four* appearing censored with black bars over her eyes, nipples and genitalia. “The Disturbing Photography of Sally Mann,” by Richard Woodward, published in *The New York Times Magazine* following the release of *Aperture*’s monograph, paints Mann as an eccentric, and asks questions about her right to take the photographs as a mother. Mary Gordon’s “Sexualizing Children, Thoughts on Sally Mann” targets the image *Hayhook* and *The Perfect Tomato* specifically, challenging Mann’s assertion that the images were taken without the intention to make sexual her children’s bodies.²⁵

Childhood (Thames and Hudson, 1998), 133–58.; Sarah Boxer, “The Maternal Eye of Sally Mann,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 2015.; Terry Gross, “Making Art Out Of Bodies: Sally Mann Reflects On Life And Photography,” *Fresh Air* (NPR, May 12, 2015), <http://www.npr.org/2015/05/12/405937803/making-art-out-of-bodies-sally-mann-reflects-on-life-and-photography>.

²⁴ The reception of Mann’s images and how this fits within her use of the medium can be found in Anne Higonnet, “Sally Mann: The Price of Success,” in *Women Artists at the Millenium*, ed. Carol Armstrong and Catherine de Zegher (Cambridge, Massachusetts: October books, MIT Press, 2006), 418–422. Both Luc Sante and Woodward acknowledge Mann’s aesthetic, and the mastery of the prints. Woodward, “The Disturbing Photography of Sally Mann”; Sante, “The Nude and the Naked”; Parsons, “Public/Private Tensions in the Photography of Sally Mann.”; James Christen Steward, “The Camera of Sally Mann and the Spaces of Childhood,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 39, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 365–75. Both address the complicated relationship between the prints and their reception.

²⁵ Mary Gordon, “Sexualizing Children: Thoughts on Sally Mann,” *Salmagundi*, no. 111 (Summer 1996): 144–45; Woodward, “The Disturbing Photography of Sally Mann.” Sokolov, “Critique: Censoring Virginia.”

Much has also been written to contextualize Mann's photographs; Janet Malcolm wrote in defense of *Immediate Family* in the review "Family of Mann," published in *The New York Review of Books* in 1994, claiming that Mann's photographs prove that the medium "is not of reassuring realism, but of disturbing surrealism", drawing attention to Mann's use of framing and printing to create ambiguity. This same piece was later published in Malcolm's anthology *Diana & Nikon* alongside essays concerned with the aesthetic of photography, their relationship to painting, modernism, and photographic work produced and exhibited by John Szarkowski in the 1970's and 1980's.²⁶ Anne Higonnet's 1998 book, *Pictures of Innocence*, examines the history and ideals of childhood in western culture, calling attention to the controversy of Mann's *Family Pictures* in the context of changing concepts of childhood.²⁷ Similarly, "The camera of Sally Mann and the spaces of childhood," by James Christen Steward, outlines the ways in which viewers have centered their interpretation of images around concerns of consent, pointing to Mann's use of an 8x10 camera and the black-and-white photographs as proof of the staged and fictional nature of the photographs.²⁸ All of these writers attempt to place Mann's photographs into the canon of art history using art historical references and themes from philosophy, feminism and art history amongst others. Mann's own voice has also occasionally played a role: in her response to Mary Gordon in "An Exchange on 'Sexualizing Children,'" she defends the making of the photographs, challenging the notion that the photographs should be judged by personal as opposed to artistic merit.²⁹

²⁶ See Janet Malcolm, "The Family of Mann," *The New York Review of Books*, February 3, 1994.; Malcolm, *Diana and Nikon*, 170.

²⁷ Higonnet, "Private Pictures, Public Dangers, 133–58."

²⁸ Steward, "The Camera of Sally Mann and the Spaces of Childhood."

²⁹ Mary Gordon and Sally Mann, "An Exchange on 'Sexualizing Children,'" *Salmagundi* 114/115, no. Spring-Summer (1997): 228–32.

More recently, Ann Higonnet's essay, "The Price of Success," addresses the myths and fictions attached to the *Family Pictures*, presenting a closer look at Mann's rise to notoriety against her larger practice and print sales. Higonnet argues for a better reading of the images within a larger history of photographic representations of childhood, naming Mann's predecessors while drawing particular attention to those photographers that came after, such as Rineke Dijkstra and Anna Gaskell. As well, Higonnet highlights the importance of the photographic object and Mann's 'propensity to make marks', drawing attention to the craftsmanship of the prints, and linking the black-and-white *Family Pictures* to Mann's landscapes and more recent work.³⁰ Similarly, "Public/Private Tensions in the Photography of Sally Mann," by Sarah Parsons, Professor of Fine Art at York University, re-addresses the earlier controversy of Mann's *Family Pictures* by looking at the reception *Immediate Family* elicited outside the boundaries of the art world it was intended for. Parsons points to the circulation of the images in newspapers and magazines, and the division between private and public spheres as contributing factors to the initial readings of Mann's images.³¹ Similar concerns are raised in the PhD dissertation, *Framing the Familial in the photography of Imogen Cunningham, Nell Dorr, and Sally Mann*, by Stacey McCarroll Cutshaw. Cutshaw's dissertation questions how the concept of family in Mann's images is used to circulate, or control circulation, and to generate controversy.³² These sources bring valuable insight into the relationship between the controversial reading of *Immediate Family* and its reproduction and circulation, as well as open new ways of discussing the work twenty years after its production.

³⁰ Anne Higonnet, "Sally Mann: The Price of Success.," 418-423.

³¹ Parsons, "Public/Private Tensions in the Photography of Sally Mann," 123-36.

³² Stacey McCarroll Cutshaw, "Framing the Familial in the Photography of Imogen Cunningham, Nell Dorr, and Sally Mann" (Ph.D., Boston University, 2010).

Last May, the *New York Times* article “Sally Mann’s Exposure,” published following the release of Mann’s memoir, *Hold Still*, addressed in her own terms many of these debates, for the first time, providing context for the works initial reception, particularly the unexpected and sudden rise to notoriety that came after the release of *Immediate Family* in 1992. Mann wrote:

I thought my relative obscurity and geographic isolation would shield me, and I was initially unprepared to respond to the attention in any cogent way. And all of this was worsened by the cosmically bad timing of the book’s release, which coincided with a debate around an exhibition of Robert Mapplethorpe’s photographs that included images of children along with sadomasochistic and homoerotic imagery, stimulating widespread discussion about what constituted obscenity in art. Into this turbulent climate, I had put forth my family pictures. Although barely a quarter of them depicted a nude child, I was unfailingly described as the woman who made pictures of her naked kids, an assertion that inflamed my critics, many of whom had never actually seen the work.³³

Mann speaks in eloquent simplicity to the history outlined above and brings attention to the lack of information, outside of Mann’s own monograph, available on the series. Beyond these reactionary narratives surrounding Mann’s *Family Pictures* series, there has been little discussion about the photographic objects themselves, when reproduced in the press, as separate from their reception; nor has a distinction been made between the notorious black-and-white images and the colour images that began to be shown around 1990.³⁴

Although contemporary histories of photography recognize the importance of Mann’s *Family* photographs, the photographs as a collection or series have never been published or addressed holistically. This is due in part to the volume of prints and the way the images were first exhibited—the earliest *Family Pictures* shown alongside *At Twelve* and other of Mann’s early works, while the series was still in progress, not yet finalized. *Immediate Family* was an attempt at presenting a cogent selection of the works in the midst of the growing tension

³³ Sally Mann, “Sally Mann’s Exposure,” *The New York Times*, April 16, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/19/magazine/the-cost-of-sally-manns-exposure.html>.

³⁴ Mann began photographing in colour in 1990. This is discussed further in chapter 3.

surrounding the photographs, and has thus been the most consistent source of reference on the series. The publication of the photographs appeared in various publications and discourses following the release of *Immediate Family*, which also favoured some images over others. Although this thesis is focused on the colour work, the history outlined above and in chapter 3 further adds to the context for the *Family Pictures* series.

Family in Colour

The exhibition history of the colour work has been derived from Mann and representatives from her galleries, Edwynn Houk and Gagosian, and gathered from catalogues and reviews of Mann's exhibitions. These materials help to inform the context for their production and provide a frame for the series contemporary to when it was created and in relation to the black-and-white prints. *Family Color* are not the first photographs Mann has taken in colour; colour Cibachromes and Polaroids from early in her career had already begun to be exhibited in the 1980s; the traveling exhibition *Still Time* toured widely in varying forms from 1988 to 1999, incorporating photographs from *Family Pictures* in both black-and-white and colour in the 1990s. The accompanying monograph, printed in 1994 and again in 2008 by Aperture, reproduces early colour Polaroid still life studies and five Cibachromes from *Family Color*.³⁵ As early as 1990, *Family Color* prints began to be exhibited, first in Washington D.C. at the Tartt Gallery, in a show titled *Immediate Family* in 1990, and then in a group show, *Contemporary Color Photography, Selections from the Collection* at the MET in NYC 1991.³⁶ In 1995, a selection of eighteen-8x10 colour Cibachromes from the *Family* series were exhibited in

³⁵ Originally published in 1988 as a small catalogue for an exhibition with the same title that travelled through Virginia in 1988, organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA). Mann, *Still Time*.

³⁶ Sally Mann, *Immediate Family* (Washington, DC: Tartt Gallery, 1990); *Contemporary Color Photography, Selections from the Collection. The Metropolitan* (New York, N.Y: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991.).

Osaka, Japan, alongside *At Twelve*, although no catalogue is available of the exhibition and many of the prints have not been exhibited since.³⁷

Published alongside an exhibition held at the Virginia Museum of Fine Art (VMFA) in 2010, the catalogue for *The Flesh and The Spirit* includes twelve reproductions of Mann's Cibachromes under the title *Family Color*. In his opening essay, the curator of photography at the VMFA, John B. Ravenal, picking images from the prints found in Mann's studio, describes the *Family Color* as "little-known Cibachrome counterparts of the black-and-white."³⁸ In a following essay, "Living Memory," Anne Wilkes Tucker discusses Mann's use of colour in her earlier photographic work, *Family Color*, and in the later 2000-2001 series, *Matter Lent*, also shot in both black-and-white and colour. Here, Tucker considers the importance of technique in Mann's oeuvre and highlights the lack of bibliographical or catalogue information surrounding her work, despite her success. She suggests that the colour work brings together two of Mann's recurring motifs: body and place.³⁹ The catalogue for the show offers insight into how the *Family Color* series fits within Mann's larger oeuvre outside of the original *Family Pictures* reception. *A Matter of Time*, the exhibition by Fotografiska, in Stockholm, Sweden in 2012, showed a selection of six colour photographs from the VMFA exhibition in 2010.⁴⁰

Still Time and the early exhibition history provide information about the original reception and intention of the colour photographs, important context for both the catalogue and the largely unexamined history of the series. The more recent publication is evidence of a renewed interest in the *Family Color* photographs within the context of her career, adding an

³⁷ Sally Mann, *Sally Mann: At Twelve and Color Work* (Osaka Japan: Picture Photo Space, 1995).

³⁸ Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 24-39.

³⁹ Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 171-177.

⁴⁰ Sally Mann, *A Matter of Time* (stockholm, Sweden: Fotografiska, 2010).

impetus for attention to and organization of the colour series within her studio.

While the *Family Pictures* as a series has received the most extensive critical coverage, *Family Color*, a sub-set of it, is still largely unknown. There are multiple factors that have led to the colour work being overlooked: Mann's rising notoriety following the release of *Immediate Family* focused attention on the reception of the black-and-white photographs and resulted in the mass circulation primarily of these images. Another contributing factor is the long duration of the work's production: taken over a period of ten years and exhibited in stages throughout, the volume of work produced was presented in progress, making it difficult to see as a series until its completion. And finally, Mann's own exploration of the colour medium making the work secondary to the primacy of the black-and-white.

Working within Mann's archive to make visible the *Family Color* series, the following chapter will address Mann's studio and the practical elements required in cataloguing and digitizing the colour transparencies. The final chapter then uses this history to provide context for the examination of a selection of printed Cibachromes that have been exhibited, as well as a selection of unprinted transparencies discovered through this process. In presenting a more inclusive view of the series, these images draw attention to the limited public and institutional understanding of the full scope of this body of work and Mann's subsequent career despite her notoriety. The inclusion of the colour photographs in this narrative highlights Mann's creative breadth, offering a glimpse into new areas for research within Mann's practice and her place within the history of photography at large.

Chapter 2: Digitizing and Cataloguing the *Family Color* Transparencies

The handling and digitization required for the practical component of this study was undertaken *in situ* at Mann's studio and house in Lexington, Virginia over two separate stays. Initially begun during an internship with Mann over the summer of 2015, the discovery of the colour photographs fueled my interest and in January and February of 2016, I returned to complete the digitization and numbering of the one thousand nine hundred and fifteen colour originals. The *Family Color* transparencies are the first originals of any series to be completely numbered, ordered, and digitized within Mann's collection. While the methodology outlined below was designed to mirror institutional collection management standards, the labeling had a plural purpose: to create a template for the organization of originals and their surrogates within Mann's studio; to record this process so that it can be understood and utilized; and to make the originals accessible for future production and scholarly research.

The first section of this chapter will provide an overview of Mann's studio, the history of collection management standards already in place, and the shift in Mann's practice from analogue to her current use of digital files within the collection. The second section outlines obstacles and practical components of digitization, numbering and cataloguing required for the purpose of this research, and the integration of the resulting digital files into Mann's collection.

In the Studio: Mann's Archive

The bulk of the *Family Pictures* were taken at either the Mann's first house in Lexington or at the family cabin on the banks of the Maury River, situated on their farm about twenty minutes outside of town off a winding road that has recently been paved. It is this farm, first

bought and owned by Mann's father that is now the location of her home and studio.⁴¹ Mann designed the house herself, including the studio located within it, which is equipped with a black-and-white darkroom that can accommodate up to 40 x 50-inch prints, and with a post-production print area with press, storage and viewing wall. The office and digital processing area is attached to the main studio and consists of an Apple computer—installed in 2015—a flatbed scanner, and an Epson colour printer. There is also an attic where larger prints are stored, and which in the humid summer months can reach temperatures of upwards of ninety degrees Fahrenheit. As well, she has a darkroom equipped for nineteenth-century photographic processes, safely away from the main compound, due to ventilation requirements and the hazardous materials required to make the photographs. Mann's collection, housed on site, consists of glass plate negatives, ambrotypes, colour polaroids, transparencies, 8x10 gelatin silver negatives, ortho film, mounted tea-toned gelatin silver prints, platinum-palladium prints and tintypes, as well as digital derivatives, born digital files and their prints.

Inside the studio, much of the print organization is ordered by location and subject.⁴² However, the management of Mann's studio has evolved and changed at various intervals, with input from those who have worked alongside her. Throughout the last four decades Mann has had a number of live-in assistants—most often young women with degrees in photographic production—hired to help maintain the studio and manage the creation of new work. Occasionally there have been multiple interns at one time working with Mann on a single project; more commonly there has been one assistant working on all elements of Mann's studio practice and collection over a number of years. The records—notes written in pencil and pen, or

⁴¹The location of an archive and the importance of place to an artist's work and organization is discussed by Furness. Furness, "Towards a Definition of Visual Artists' Archives," 95.

⁴² For example, the black-and-white negatives are housed in boxes according to child, and each child has a box according to place: House, Farm, Cabin, Bequia, Italy, etc.

recorded electronically—of many of these assistants are evident in the legacy of Mann’s collection.⁴³ The result is that a variety of organizational and naming practices have been instigated, which can be difficult to understand when first entering the collection.

In addition to production assistants, Mann has had three interns focused on collections management, including myself. In 2006 and 2007 Ola Dlugosz set out to create organizational standards for Mann’s print collection, cataloguing all of the black-and-white *Family Pictures* prints. Dlugosz’s resulting thesis is a template for a photographer’s catalogue database using the software FileMaker Pro, and consists of a database design modeled on the prints found in Mann’s studio, and constructed in the form of a catalogue raisonné that tracks the process and creation of the work alongside past and future sales and exhibition history.⁴⁴ However, due to the complex nature of the software—time-consuming to develop and difficult to maintain in a working studio where new prints are added regularly—the FileMaker database was never implemented. Instead, the final project has been integrated into Mann’s studio as a word file document recording print sales, and a catalogue built with Excel. These documents have become the standard within Mann’s collection, ultimately intended to serve the dual purposes of a finding aid to assist the artist and future assistants, and recording information that could be useful in the future assessment of the artist’s estate.⁴⁵

The organization and care of Mann’s collection has developed over four decades of production and is the result of the requirements specific to the techniques she utilizes. Until

⁴³ Anna, Betsy, Caitlin, Danika and Lorelei, are all names that appear in Mann’s photographs and that reference previous interns. Amy Louise Furness discusses the issues with having multiple interns in an artist’s archive in her chapter “The limitations of studio assistants.” “Towards a Definition of Visual Artists’ Archives,” 159. This relationship between archivist, curator and artist is discussed in Vaknin et al., *All This Stuff*, 6–7.

⁴⁴ Dlugosz, “Digital Application Solutions in Collections Management,” 9–12.

⁴⁵ The interest in artists’ estates and an increase in their presence within institutional collections is mentioned by Dlugosz as one of the functions of her database. Dlugosz, “Digital Application Solutions in Collections Management,” 9–12.

2009-2010, Mann had far fewer digital derivatives or born digital files to manage. Past assistants had not been required to deal with digital surrogates generated from unprinted originals, or digital objects that had not yet been exhibited or were in the midst of being created.⁴⁶ While Dlugosz's system utilized the flat file database system recorded in Excel to help gather and organize information about the physical prints in the collection, the structure implemented did not take into consideration that Mann's computer itself would become an extension of her collection—digital objects functioning as both references of handmade prints, and originals for digitally printed work. The subsequent interest generated from the rediscovery of unprinted colour transparencies and the resulting digital files, represents a unique opportunity to address the integration of digital surrogates from the *Family Color* originals. The result has been the structuring of Mann's digital archive, including implementation of numbering conventions and file type standards that can be easily accessible through Mann's desktop finder system, and the inclusion of both print and original information into the Excel catalogue, expanded from the structure set up by Dlugosz.

Digital Image Strategies

While conducting research for the memoir *Hold Still*, published in 2015, Mann revisited black-and-white negatives taken alongside the *Family Pictures* but not chosen to print, to illustrate her selection process and provide historical context within the book.⁴⁷ This required the scanning of negatives, and brought Mann's attention back to the *Family* work twenty years after

⁴⁶ While Dlugosz discusses the incorporation of originals into her database in her thesis, and Mann occasionally outsourced the scanning of originals, the flat file Excel sheets never incorporated this, as Mann only began scanning regularly after acquiring a scanner between 2010-2012. Dlugosz, "Digital Application Solutions in Collections Management," 22.

⁴⁷ Mann, *Hold Still*, 99–130.

its production. The possibility of including some of the lesser known photographs in an upcoming retrospective promoted further interest in the organization of the originals. Early in my internship we began to organize the black-and-white negatives and to re-scan some of Mann's initial selections. Following the organization of black-and-white negatives, I suggested that we examine the colour transparencies, though Mann was initially unconvinced of the value in revisiting the colour work, as she discusses in our interview (Appendix A) and which she often referred to as "family snapshots".⁴⁸ Arranging the transparencies by location revealed several images that caught my eye, and which I began to digitize. This quickly led to a number of digital surrogates that had not been printed but are now in consideration as part of the *Family Pictures* series. A need for an organizational method to deal with these files became apparent. While the project unfolded organically, the numbering of physical originals and their digital surrogates was unfamiliar territory for Mann and her studio systems. Outlined below are the considerations taken in structuring the methodology for the digitization of transparencies, and the resulting catalogue. It is important to note that although the digitization of all the transparencies—even those deemed rejects never to be printed—was required to create a template for the organization and cataloguing of the series, it is unlikely that another body of work will ever be digitized in its entirety by Mann or her studio. More likely, selected works will be scanned individually—either as they are made, or as additional photographs are selected. This is reflected in the numbering system below.

The digitization of the *Family Color* work required addressing Mann's present computer capabilities, existing data organizational structures, as well as future needs of the studio.⁴⁹ While

⁴⁸ Sally Mann, *Family Color*, interview by Author, Tape Recording, February 13, 2016.

⁴⁹ Buck and Gilmore address the importance of digital assets management by outlining its function and the role of digital preservation in collections management. *MRM5*, 184–90.

Mann's workflow now incorporates more digital material, most of her work is still predominantly analogue prints or other originals, which are later scanned or printed for reproduction for press or publication. In the case of the colour work, as the digital c-print has now replaced the obsolete Cibachrome for future printing needs, the best practice involves the creation of a master file large enough to accommodate the desired output size.⁵⁰ However, with a terabyte of memory as well as various external hard drives, Mann's computer capabilities can accommodate growth over the next five to ten years, but are still relatively small compared to that of a larger photography studio dealing with predominantly born digital files.⁵¹ Considering the scope of the colour work—most of the transparencies to remain unprinted—and the restrictions of a desktop computer, the digital surrogates created for the purpose of this project are scanned at 600 pixels per inch, and are meant to be used as reference TIF files only. Each frame is roughly 6 centimeters square, resulting in a possible printed image area of roughly 11 x 11 cm square (Figure 1). The digital surrogates function in the same way the printed contact sheets do in the dark room; larger scans can then be made for printing and re-scanning only after an initial selection process has been completed.

⁵⁰ *MRM5*, 185.

⁵¹ A commercial photography studio dealing only with digital files would most likely have multiple computers, and external hard drives that are backed up to a number of locations, on and offsite. Robert Burley discussed the issue of digital file storage in relation to his own practice in a lecture in the winter of 2015. Robert Burley, "Photographic Processes and Materials-20th Century" (Ryerson University, Winter 2015).



Figure 1. *Up a Tree*, 1990-94. Example of print size, 11.08 x 11.10 cm.

Descriptive and Numeric Systems

The naming conventions used to identify works within the studio mirror Mann's practice: originals are often separated out and sorted by location or person, as opposed to the museum-preferred chronological approach.⁵² This is true for *Family Pictures* as well as most of her subsequent work: arranged by series, and alphabetically by each print's descriptive title, often referencing location, moment or subject. The transparencies are arranged by descriptive title and by category—printed edition, orphan prints (printed work no longer considered to be part of the edition series), and unprinted work. The naming method is instinctual: the first colour

⁵² Reibel, *Registration Methods for the Small Museum*, 39–47.

transparencies selected and digitized during the summer of 2015 were given descriptive titles: *The Big Jump Color* (Figure 2) and *The Wet Pink Dress* (Figure 3) are two examples.



Figure 2. *The Big Jump Color*, 1990-94.



Figure 3. *The Wet Pink Dress*, 1990-94.

While this identification system holds up when referring to published printed work within each series—the edition number on the back acting as the object identifier for each printed work is easily locatable within the Excel catalogue. However, as a practice for digital surrogates, when dealing with many hundreds of files and file types from both printed and unprinted originals, it becomes haphazard and cumbersome. For example, searching for “*Jump*” in Mann’s archive brings up *The Big Jump*, *Running Jump*, *Jumping Tree*, and *Jumping from the Tree*, each with multiple file types. Descriptive naming makes it difficult for anyone other than the person who named the work to keep the files straight: it is possible to forget which descriptive title you have given the file after its been digitized, leading to misnamed and then misplaced files, filling the

computer with unnecessary duplicates. Such is the fate of many of the unprinted black-and-white *Family Pictures* first scanned.

Modeling Mann's digital archive after the two-part numbering system, used by many smaller institutions, offers one solution to this issue. In this system, the digital files are named using a control number followed by a sequential number, linking them first to a series, then to their original frame, the frame taking on the single sequential number from 1 to 1915. Commonly, the control in institutions is the year the object was acquired, followed by a number beginning with the first object accession that year, for example 2016.001.⁵³ In the case of Mann's archive this number corresponds to both the digital surrogate and catalogue number used to identify and track the object in the Excel sheet. Mann's physical collection, however, is not set up in chronological order. Instead, the transparencies have been numbered in the order they were housed: alphabetically by descriptive title, according to their print and edition status.⁵⁴

For the digital files, a control group is required, as simply giving the files sequential numbers would complicate the addition of digital files in the future. Considering Mann's collection as an archive group in itself, I used the acronym FP (*Family Pictures*) as the control, and the medium as the classification number for each digital file—02 representing the colour transparencies (01 indicating black-and-white work). The result is a collection of digital surrogates from FP_02_0001 to FP_02_1915. This naming system can be easily replicated for other series throughout Mann's collection, and in the case that new transparencies are found, the order they were entered would not be affected. These numbers link the digital surrogates to their originals, and also link to the print, exhibition and bibliographical histories, the number indicated

⁵³ Reibel, *Registration Methods for the Small Museum*, 39-41.

⁵⁴ This method of numbering was discussed and confirmed as best practice with metadata specialist at Canadiana.org Julianne Pascoe, and Digital Imaging Assistant at Ryerson University's Image centre, Laura Ramsey.

in each of Excel catalogue entry. The methodology for the organization of this digital archive and the expended catalogue are further outlined below.

The advice for best practice is to keep the numbering and digitization as simple as possible by using what is already available, while also being aware of who will be required to maintain and enter the data in the future.⁵⁵ In this instance, using Mann's desktop computer as the main tool for the management of digital files, the simplest structure and that currently in place is Apple's finder interface. Taking into consideration Mann's current folder structure, once named and digitized the transparencies need to be searchable using Finder's basic search function. Following the naming convention applied, the folder FP contains two sub folders, 01 and 02. Within each subsequent folder, corresponding to the numbers of those frames that have been printed and/or have been selected to print, are additional folders containing all the file types available for each file. For example, frame FP_02_046 and all of its derivatives can be found within the folder 046. Each digital derivative then has a qualifier, identifying its function: FP_02_046_Repro.tif indicates that the file is a reproduction of the Cibachrome print and is a larger file as it is a TIF. FP_02_046_RefScan.tif, indicates the digital derivative is a scan of the transparency created for reference.⁵⁶ The remaining digital surrogates, for example 044 and 045, created for the purpose of this project but not intended to print, are located in the folder marked 'archive.' If files from the archive are chosen for printing at a later date, the file can be moved, a folder with the file number can be created, and any master files and their subsequent derivatives

⁵⁵ Buck and Gilmore stress the importance of considering how the information is stored, who will enter the data and how it will be used when figuring out system requirements. MRM5, 184–190. Mann, her assistants, the manager of her estate, and future institutions are those most likely to use and benefit from this system. Similarly, Reibel refers to the "KISS" rule for developing number systems in chapter three (keep it simple stupid). *Registration Methods for the Small Museum*, 39.

⁵⁶ Buck, Gilmore, and American Association of Museums, MRM5, 185. The structure for this naming convention was established predominately through several conversations with Laura Ramsey, who used her experience working in photographer Edward Burtynsky's studio to build his digital archive, as a template for the naming system above.

can be easily added to the folder. This structure also helps keep track of which images have been designated as ‘of interest’ for possible printing, publication or exhibition.

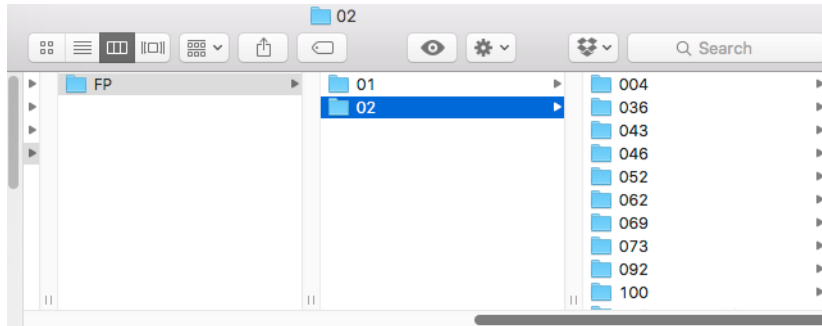


Figure 4. Screenshot of digital archive folder structure, FP_02, May 2016.

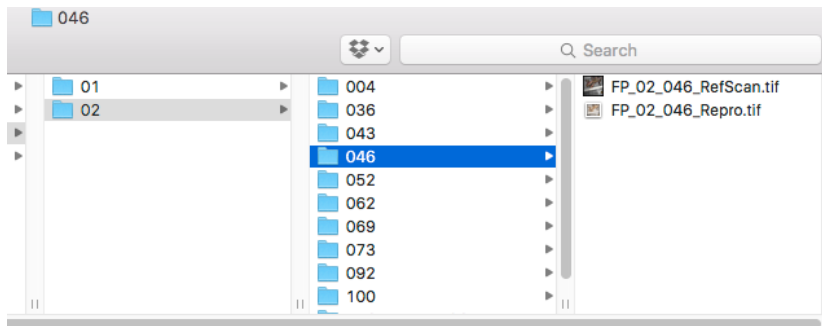


Figure 5. Screenshot of digital archive folder FP_02_046, May 2016.

The corresponding catalogue, an example of which is included below in Figure 6, combines the model set up by Dlugosz with the numbering outlined above and includes a reference image with information pertaining to negative date, published title, bibliographic and exhibition history. For the purpose of Mann’s working collection, the catalogue was adjusted to function as both a key to how to read the digital archive, as well as the print status of each frame. The catalogue includes: a thumbnail of each digitized frame; the number of the original; the digital file name; working as well as published titles; the date the original was taken; the status of the original (printed, unprinted, selected to be printed etc.); the edition sizes available; the print

medium; related frame numbers that portray similar themes; subject; location; and exhibition and bibliographic histories. A hyperlink has then been embedded into each image with a print sales history, automatically opening the relevant Excel sheet with information on print editions.


Image	Negative #	Digital File Name	Working Titles	Published Title	Negative Date	Status	Edition Sizes	Print Medium	Related Images	Subject	Location	Exhibition History/ Notes	Media	Media Metadata	Bibliography
	046	FP_02_046_90		Cut Leg	1990	Printed Edition	20x24 and 8x10	Cibachrome	_044-046	Emmett	McLaughlin street	The Flesh and The Spirit: VMFA, Osaka Japan	Ref. TIF: 600 DPI, Repro TIF, REPRO.jpg		The Flesh and The Spirit

Figure 6. Screenshot of Excel catalogue entry for *Cut Leg*, FP_02_046, February 2016.

Although Mann is not currently using database software to manage her digital files or physical collection, it is possible that she will use one in the future. By setting up a straightforward system based on Mann's current digital needs and operating system, the organization of the accumulation of digital files and the growth of the library can function either independently or alongside a database structure. The catalogue now takes on the dual purpose of supplying metadata information for each digital surrogate and acting as a finding aid for Mann, including notes as to the status of the original. The restriction of colour materials brought on by expense, and difficulty of developing and printing one's own transparencies made it difficult to view the entirety of a collection at the time of their creation. The digitization and subsequent organization of the digital surrogates brings the entirety of the *Family Pictures* into the present, making Mann's working process, and the history of these objects visible in ways not originally possible. The historical context, exhibition and publication history of the *Family Pictures*, as well as a selection of the printed and unprinted work are explored in the following chapter.

Chapter 3: *Family Color* in Context

Sometime between the fall of 1989 and the winter of 1990, Mann was given a Mamiya 6 camera.⁵⁷ The model, released to compete with the Hasselblad system, produces 6x6-cm square frames using medium format roll film.⁵⁸ Having received the gift, Mann loaded it with colour positive Agfa Chrome film, supplied to her by Agfa, and began photographing alongside the 8x10-inch camera that by the summer of 1990, had become a fixture in the everyday. A selection of black-and-white images from *Family Pictures* had already been exhibited; the series six years underway.⁵⁹ The following history of the *Family* series—the materials used and the exhibition of the printed Cibachromes—sets out the context of the photographs at the time of their making, parallel to the primary black-and-white prints. A closer reading of a selection of printed and unprinted transparencies demonstrates Mann’s working process and asks how this visibility illuminates the series and her practice.

Materials, Production and Exhibition History

Prior to the availability of professional home scanners, and the advent of digital chromogenic printing, silver-dye bleach was the process available for enlarging positive colour transparencies and translating them into photographic prints (positive original to positive print). Cibachrome paper became popular in 1974 following the brand’s introduction of home developing kits marketed to amateurs—adapted for professional use in 1980—making it the only

⁵⁷ Mann, *Family Color*, 67-72.

⁵⁸ Mamiya released the camera in 1989. Ken Rockwell, “Mamiya 6,” *Ken Rockwell*, August 11, 2009, <http://www.kenrockwell.com/mamiya/6.htm>.

⁵⁹ The series began in 1984; the MET first acquired *Jessie Bites* from the series in 1987. By 1990 the work in various stages had been shown in a number of venues. An exhibition list of Mann’s work can be found on the Gagosian gallery website: <http://www.gagosian.com/artists/sally-mann>, 2016. There is also a list of selected exhibitions see Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 195.

process that combined the printing control familiar to black-and-white with the superior colour tones available in positive film.⁶⁰ During the decades of its early introduction, when the instabilities of chromogenic colour photography were a major concern, the silver-dye bleach print also benefited from exclusive colour stability.⁶¹ It is this process that provided Mann with an introduction to colour printing, and which she used to produce both her early colour work from the 1980s as well as the first 8x10-inch (20.3x25.4 cm) test prints for the *Family Color* series.⁶² Like the black-and-white *Family Pictures*, Mann's primary edition and largest prints of *Family Color* are 20x24-inches (50.8x61 cm) at sheet size, the image size varies due to cropping.⁶³ However, the home kits constraining print size, and the complexity of the process—the print contrast difficult to control manually—required Mann to outsource the larger Cibachrome prints to a commercial lab with her oversight.

Unlike the over two hundred black-and-white *Family* master prints and artist proofs carefully organized in archival folders, separated by interleaving tissue and housed by alphabetical order within her studio, I found the *Family Color* Cibachromes and transparencies largely unsorted. Exhibition and master prints were housed alongside test prints in old photographic paper boxes. Although some transparencies were labelled and placed in archival boxes, unprinted rolls of film were mixed together with unsorted rolls and those that had been printed. The secondary nature of this work is evident in its priority of care. Yet, eighty-three of the transparencies have been printed as silver-dye bleach prints, in various states of production: of the eighty-three frames that Mann originally selected to print, thirty-six can be found in her

⁶⁰ Sylvie Pénichon, *Twentieth-Century Color Photographs: Identification and Care* (Los Angeles, California: Getty Conservation Institute, 2013), 206–231. Mann also articulates this in the interview. Mann, *Family Color*, 67-83.

⁶¹ Pénichon, *Twentieth-Century Color Photographs*, 216–219.

⁶² Mann, *Family Color*, 67-83.

⁶³ A selection of both the black-and-white and colour cibachromes are available as 8x10- inch prints as well as 20x24. A smaller number of both series are available only as 8x10 – inch prints.

studio as 8x10-inch test prints, and the remaining forty-seven have either been both exhibited and sold, or sold but never exhibited.⁶⁴

Early interest in the colour images, made clear by the numbers selected and printed, is not reflected in the press. Although Mann began exhibiting and selling Cibachromes immediately after receiving the Mamiya camera, published information on the works is difficult to find, the images are rarely reproduced outside of the *Still Time* monograph and the more recent accompanying catalogue to the VMFA exhibit.⁶⁵ There are four principal factors that contribute to a reading of the *Family Pictures* series that largely ignores the colour work: not printed by Mann herself, the Cibachromes do not carry the power of Mann's renown as a master printer; second, the gestation period of the *Family Picture* series—taken over ten years and appearing in various forms throughout—makes it difficult to follow as a cogent series.⁶⁶ These aspects were compounded by the timing of the emergence of the colour in relation to the increased circulation of the black-and-white prints after the release of *Immediate Family*.⁶⁷ The final circumstance is the exploratory nature of the series evident in the unprinted transparencies examined—Mann herself referring to them as snapshots.⁶⁸

The *Family Color* series emerged in much the same way as the early black-and-white *Family Pictures*: Mann exhibited the first photographs alongside other early work, the series still

⁶⁴ This information comes from the physical organization of the transparencies and through conversations with Mann during the summer of 2015. The “official edition” consists of twenty images, but will most likely shift and change with the visibility of the transparencies.

⁶⁵ Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 24–39.; Mann, *Still Time*. As well, in 1996 a reproduction of the Cibachrome *Raspberries at the Cabin* appeared on the front cover of *Aperture* magazine “Everything That Lives, Eats,” *Aperture*, 1996.

⁶⁶ In a phone call Houk mentioned that Mann was already known as a master printer at the time he first saw the colour work, and he was unsure of the colour work's significance given the power of the black-and-white prints. He noted they had an argument about it. Houk, Edwynn. Interview by author. Phone conversation. Toronto, Ontario, May, April, 2016.

⁶⁷ See Chapter 1 for a full discussion of this controversy and the timing.

⁶⁸ See Mann, *Family Color*.

taking form as the images began appearing on the exhibition walls. The exhibition history of the series confirms this overlap; *Family Pictures* was first exhibited in 1987 at Marcuse Pfeifer Gallery, the same year *Sweet Silent Thought: Photographs of Twelve-Year Old Girls*, was shown at Washington and Lee University, and exhibited throughout Virginia and North Carolina in University and local galleries.⁶⁹ In 1988 *Still Time* traveled through Virginia the same year the monograph *At Twelve* was published.⁷⁰ Similarly, the earliest exhibition of the colour prints appears to have occurred in 1990—the year that Mann received the camera—at the now closed Tartt Gallery in Washington DC. Three images, *Jessie as Madonna* (Figure 7), *Orange Virginia* (Figure 8) and *Raspberries at the Cabin* (Figure 9) were likely shown alongside the black-and-white prints in a show titled *Immediate Family*.⁷¹ During the summer of 1991, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) exhibited five of Mann’s silver-dye bleach prints as part of the group show *Contemporary Color Photography, Selections from the Collection*, alongside photographs by artists Andrew Bush, René Sultra, Larry Sultan and Philip-Lorca diCorcia. This close proximity between receiving the camera and exhibiting the prints is further evidence of public interest, as well as Mann’s early excitement around the colour images. With only nine Sally Mann works in their collection, these five colour prints represent the majority of the MET’s

⁶⁹ *At Twelve* first appeared under the title *Sweet Silent Thought* and was first exhibited in 1984. Although Mann’s early exhibition history is difficult to confirm, with several published sources offering differing information, the first review of the *Family Pictures* confirms the Marcuse Gallery exhibition. Vince Aletti, “Sally Mann,” *The Village Voice*, October 22, 2003, sec. Art.

⁷⁰ *Still Time*, was organized by the VMFA in 1988 as touring exhibition with accompanying catalogue in 1988, first showing at Allegheny Highland Arts and Crafts Center. Clifton Forge, VA, according to the exhibition history listed in Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 187.

⁷¹ Mann recalls that the first exhibition of colour prints was held at Tartt Gallery. This was gathered from correspondence between myself and Mann in March of 2016. Though exhibition records for this show are incomplete, print sales records show that that Tartt Gallery exhibited *Jessie as Madonna*, *Orange Virginia*, and *Raspberries*. A selection of listed exhibitions indicates the exhibition, *Immediate Family*, was shown at Tartt in 1990.

holdings. Only one print has been accessioned since 1991— *Untitled (Virginia)*, the negative dated from 1993, printed by Mann in 1997, and acquired in 1998.⁷²

⁷² The MET's catalogue identifies the colour Cibachromes as *Emmett with Hose*, *Fish Cleaning on Beach*, *Card Players*, *On the Porch*, and *Virginia Being Carried*—all of which titles are incompatible with Mann's own archival records. This information was gathered from Lisa Muzzin, photographic collections intern at the MET from January-June of 2016. The online catalogue accessed in May and again in July of 2016, simply refers to them as *Untitled* Silver-dye bleach prints, acquired in 1991.



Figure 7. *Jessie as Madonna*, 1990.

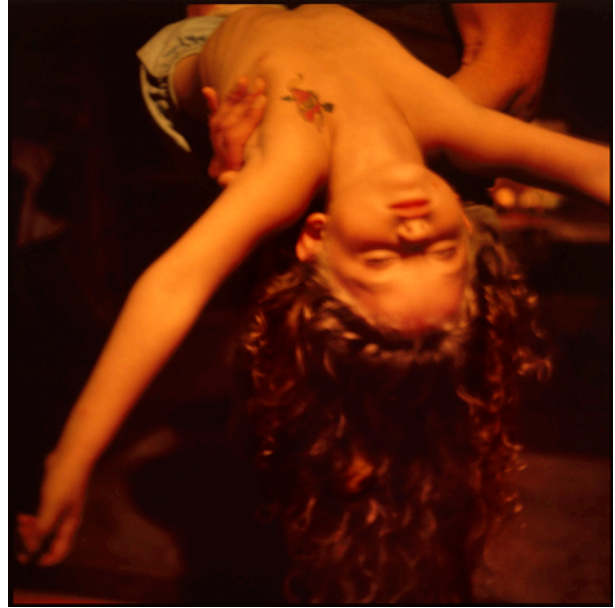


Figure 8. *Orange Virginia*, 1990.



Figure 9. *Raspberries at the Cabin*, 1990.

Between 1987 and 1990 when the *Family Color* were first shown at Tartt Gallery, Mann exhibited photographs ranging from black-and-white prints taken with a large format camera, platinum-palladium prints, Cibachromes and Polaroids. This history not only highlights the diverse photographic processes used throughout Mann's early practice, it points to the emergence of the *Family Pictures*: first exhibited amidst early work, and presented still in progress and as Mann's professional identity shifted from a mid-career artist into an internationally known name, the controversy over the black-and-white *Family Pictures* taking centre stage. Mann began introducing the Cibachromes alongside black-and-white work from *Family Pictures* preceding the publication of *Immediate Family*. This history traces the changing narrative and growing caution surrounding the *Family Pictures* at this time. Perhaps fearing retribution from a public that funds them, after 1993 there is an abrupt end to the majority of acquisitions of Mann's photographs across a number of public institutions—many of which had been Mann's earliest supporters.⁷³ The visibility of *Immediate Family*—discussed fervently and dissected across multiple discourses—hindered not aided the visibility of *Family Pictures* to the public.⁷⁴

The publication *Still Time* included an overview of the first twenty years of Mann's career: early landscapes, figurative studies, colour, still lifes, platinum prints. The exhibition

⁷³ The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City lists eight *Family Pictures* online in their collection, only two of which were acquired in the early 1990s. Their most recent acquisition was *Candy Cigarette* in 2010. Similarly, the Museum of Fine Art Houston (MFAH), acquired one *Family Picture* in 1991, and then six in 2002, suggesting they waited some of the controversy subsided before acquiring additional prints. The Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C acquired three *Family Pictures* in 1988, but has no required online of acquiring any since. Private sales during this time express a different trend. Many of which have ended up in public institutions through gifts. The *Family Pictures* are no longer on the market and can only be purchased through auction on the secondary market. Information pertaining to print sales and collection was gathered from Mann's records and through museum online search catalogues where possible.

⁷⁴ Although many images from *Immediate Family* sold out, the photographs gaining momentum on the secondary market through auction, most of the work was bought by private not public funds. Higonnet addresses the falsely assumed income gained from prints sales of *Immediate Family* in Anne Higonnet, "Sally Mann: The Price of Success," 407–408.

toured in various iterations from 1988-1999, Mann adding images from *Family Pictures* as they were produced between 1988-1994. Five of the colour works appear in the 1994 publication: *Bloody Nose* (Figure 10), *Fish Heads* (Cutting up Fish) (Figure 11), *Surgey in the Hotel Room* (Margaret in the Hotel Room) (Figure 12), *Raspberries at the Cabin* (Figure 9), *Sister's at War* (Figure 13). Most recently, curator at Virginia Museum of Fine Arts John. B. Ravenal, renewed interest in *Family Color* work by exhibiting a selection of twelve prints; Figures 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 in *Sally Mann: The Flesh and The Spirit*. As well as exhibiting colour Cibachromes from *Still Time*, Ravenal included *Cut leg*, and *Bean's Bottom*, printed as 20x24-inches (50.8x61 cm) Ilfochromes by Mann and published for the first time.⁷⁵ Texts in the accompanying publication by Ravenal, David Levi Strauss and Anne Wilkes Tucker highlight one of many oppositions that come into play in the discourse around Mann's work; the personal and the universal; tracing Mann's representation of the human form (flesh) and her unflinching use of photography to examine familiar subjects, (childhood, death, love) through those closest to her.⁷⁶ The *Family Color* images are placed amidst more recent work; images of her Husband Larry from the series *Proud Flesh*, portraits of Mann's grown children from *What Remains*, ambrotype self-portraits, battlefields from *Deep South* and colour images of decomposing bodies from the series *Matter Lent*.

Of the eighty-three images Mann originally chose to comprise the colour portion of the series, only thirteen (Figures 8-20) have been published and are thus easily accessible to viewers

⁷⁵ *Cut leg* was shown as an 8x0-inch print in Mann, *Sally Mann: At Twelve and Color Work*.

⁷⁶ Throughout the catalogues text Mann's depiction of the human form and the manipulation of the photographic print are used to tie early work with her more recent portraiture. Ravenal links the human figure (Flesh) in Mann's photographs to other non-photographic artists working in the 1980s and 1990s, including Kiki Smith and Robert Gober. "Spirit" is alluded to in the essay by David Levi Strauss, "Eros, Psyche, and the Mendacity of Photography". Strauss describes the lyrical and sensual elements in Mann's photographs, suggesting Mann is able to present historically taboo subject matter through the photographs surface. Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 1-8; 179-84.

and researchers.⁷⁷ Several more are available online through searching “Sally Mann Family Color”; some are images that have come up at private auction, reproductions finding their way online, and are often separated from any consistent information.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *Bloody Nose, Fish Heads, Surgery in the Hotel Room, Raspberries at the Cabin, and Sister’s at War* can be found in Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*. All of these except *Sister’s at War*, and with the added addition of *Dog Scratches, Orange Virginia, Cut Leg, River Dance, Bean’s Bottom, Busted Ear and Tattoo* are published in Mann, *Still Time*.

⁷⁸ A quick Google of “Sally Mann Family Color”, brings up images from both publications as well as; *Melissa’s Question, Long Braid, Shiva on The Deck, Night Blooming Cereus, Dog Scratches, Orange Virginia, Green Hose (Water Play), Big Burger and Twisted Napkin*, the last two recently auctioned on the secondary market.



Figure10. *Bloody Nose*, 1991.



Figure 11. *Fish Heads (Cutting up Fish)*, 1990.



Figure 12. *Surgery in the Hotel Room, (Margaret in the Hotel Room)*, 1990.



Figure 13. *(Sisters at War)*, 1990.



Figure 14. *Dog Scratches*, 1991.



Figure 15. *Cut Leg*, 1990.



Figure 16 *Green Hose*, (Water play), 1991.



Figure17. *Bean's Bottom*, 1991.



Figure 18. *River Dance*, 1990.



Figure 19. *Tattoo*, 1990.



Figure 20. *Busted Ear*, 1994.

The Early Colour Prints

In Mann's early *Family Color* prints, the influence of the larger camera and gelatin silver processes is visible; many mimic the staging of the black-and-white work, demonstrating Mann's attempt to translate the series from one medium to another. As well, the early colour prints expose Mann's experimentation with the specific qualities of the positive colour film and its resulting Cibachrome print. This exploration of colour is particularly evident in the Cibachromes made shortly after Mann received the camera between 1990 and 1991, before the release of *Immediate Family*. The photographs suggest Mann began composing the colour alongside, and in much the same ways as, the images she was already taking; the staging and positions of the figures in several feigning their black-and-white counterparts, as we can see in Figures 21, 8, 22, 7, 23 and 14.



Figure 21. *Flexible Child, (After the Party)*, 1991.

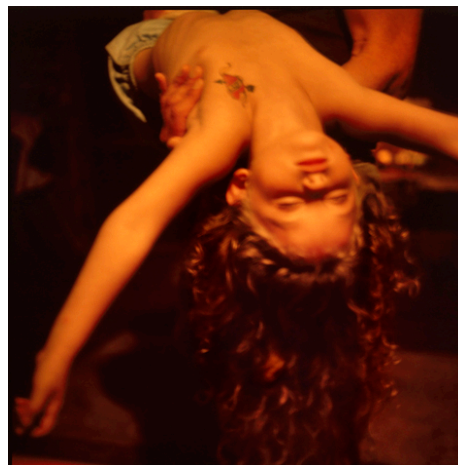


Figure 8. *Orange Virginia*, 1991.



Figure 22. *Jessie as Jessie, Jessie as Madonna*, 1990.



Figure 7. *Jessie as Madonna*, 1990.



Figure 23. *Dog Scratches*, 1991.



Figure 14. *Dog Scratches*, 1991.

While all three have black-and-white counterparts, it is difficult to say of each pair, which came first. The square format and portability available with the Mamiya provide a distinct composition to the 8x10 camera; Virginia's chest fills the frame in *Orange Virginia*, her outstretched arms seeping out of the edges, the motion of her body evident in the softness of the focus. Was *Orange Virginia* a restaged colour version? Or, did Mann catch the moment with the easier to maneuver Mamiya and return to reframe the pose later with the 8x10 camera, this time including the relationship of the two figures, and the reference to the broken leg—Mann's play on the Pietà? Although *Jessie as Madonna* (Figure 22 and 7) is most certainly posed in both, it is difficult to know whether the colour acted as a sketch for the final diptych, or if the question of what Jessie's made-up face would look like in colour came second. In both cases the accessibility and interest in developing new ways of seeing the *Family Pictures* are clear. *Dog Scratches* is perhaps the only colour image where it seems impossible to imagine that the black-and-white and colour were *not* taken at the same time in the same sitting. Indeed, in both versions outtakes exist that attest to their collaborative making; frames taken before and after depict alteration in the position of Virginia's hand.

The use of colour in the images—reproductions of the printed Cibachromes—appears at first to be almost secondary. But Mann is training her eye to see anew— asking the simple question: *What would this look like in colour?* Mann's articulation of light—from the positive Agfa Chrome film to the printed Cibachrome—has similar import, albeit with very different outcomes from the black-and-white: The positive film temperature sensitivities become the power of the print in *Orange Virginia* (Figure 8); the tungsten orange in the image hints at the memory of lamp or evening light. The chiaroscuro of *Dog Scratches* is amplified by the brown of the couch, the deep purple and blue of the pillows becoming part of the tableau (Figure 14).

Similarly, Jessie's performance of Madonna (Figure 7) is complicated by the red of the lipstick, forced to interact with the green foliage in the background, her sculpted chest and tan-line ramping up elements of drag.

Essential to silver-dye bleach prints are saturated colour and the high gloss of the print. These specific qualities perform an important role in the images above; they further complicate the viewers' relationship to the image, playing into oppositions between the mundane scene and its staging, the authenticity of colour and its artificial rendering in the print.⁷⁹ Mann's technical prowess and her ability to paint with silver and light are the power at the centre of the black-and-white prints; the images seem beyond time, iconic. The black-and-white claim to universality occurs to the viewer through the separation from their ordinary way of seeing, and an association with art photography.⁸⁰ The colour images offer something else; the dexterity of colour and the vibrancy of the prints reveal the body in real time (past or present), relentless with attention to the mundane. While a deceptive timelessness is likewise at the root of many of Mann's black-and-white photographs, the presence of colour interrupts the archetypal by rooting the images in the everyday, blatantly acknowledging the tension between fiction and real, staged scenes and moments of spontaneity. This uncertain opposition between high art and domesticity becomes a conflict between public and private, further complicating issues of consent and real versus fiction, and the spontaneous versus the staged.

⁷⁹ The history of photography has been revisited by a number of Museums exhibiting their collection, *A century of Colour* is one catalogue that provides an overview of the specifics of each process alongside this history. Pamela Roberts, *A Century of Colour Photography* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd, 2008), 202. The process itself is discussed in depth in Pénichon, *Twentieth-Century Color Photographs*, 216–217.

⁸⁰ Colour photography was thought to be separate from art photography, which tended towards the control of black and white. The history of this is discussed in Sally Eauclaire, *The New Color Photography* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1981). As well, for Mann's use of black-and-white and its associations with romanticism see Parsons, "Public/Private Tensions in the Photography of Sally Mann," 125.

The printed work illustrated above, alongside the exhibition history outlined earlier in this chapter, give context to the *Family Color*, providing insight into how the series came to fruition and first appeared to the public. The popularity of *Immediate Family* and the handmade nature of the black-and-white photographs—Mann printing each herself—dictated focus and production. The lack of information available on the colour prints also points to the complicated narrative that began to surround the work at the very moment Mann received the camera and began introducing colour into the *Family Pictures*. It is possible to imagine that because of its associations with the everyday snapshot, the colour prints may have felt more dangerous, adding to the growing anxiety attached to the *Family* series.⁸¹ By 1992 Mann's printing of Cibachromes ebbs, the series never gaining the same exposure as the rest of *Family Pictures*. Although the images remain secondary, Mann did continue to take photographs in colour until 1994, suggesting that either she believed in the work, or that even if the work was not being printed, the process of taking the images was important enough to continue. The unprinted transparencies introduced below open up a conversation about Mann's process, revealing how the colour connects with and informs her subsequent practice.

The Unprinted Transparencies

In an interview conducted in February of 2016, following the digitization of the *Family Color* collection, I asked Mann about a number of transparencies from among those uncovered, that seem significant in bringing new context to the series and her practice. Mann noted that:

⁸¹ Sally Eauclore in her important texts on colour photography, published contemporary to their exhibition, addresses colour's connection to realism and the difficulty in asserting the medium as art. *The New Color Photography*, 9–24.

It was shocking to me [to find the images]; what I am trying to figure out is whether or not when I was taking those pictures, I thought, or was thinking, that they were going to be good, or if I was just shooting. I think I was just shooting so freely because I could, because someone had given me the camera and Agfa was throwing the film at me, and it seemed to have less consequence, was less fraught, had less import than black-and-white.⁸²

Last summer I witnessed Mann use the Mamiya camera, in a similarly carefree way, to reset a scene she had already taken several times with the larger 8x10 camera (Figure 24). It is easy to imagine the camera around her shoulder or close at hand over the summer months the *Family Color* was made:



Figure 24. Sally Mann with the Mamiya 6 camera, July 2015.

Family Color was the first time colour was available to Mann without the financial constraints associated with the materials giving her the freedom to shoot rapidly and in the moment. An abundance of colour film allowed Mann access to the medium in a way that she had not

⁸² Mann, *Family Color*, 77.

experienced previously. This, combined with the portability of the camera—the size much more flexible than the 8x10-inch Mann is accustomed to—accounts for the snapshot quality of many of the unprinted works, and hints at how Mann was taking the photographs, and why she continued to use the camera even though many of the images remain not yet printed. The integration of all one thousand nine hundred and fifteen transparencies through their digitization further expands an understanding of Mann's working method, and the larger themes that permeate her work.

In her memoir, *Hold Still*, Mann describes the making of a number of the black-and-white *Family Pictures* as an evolution coming from a failed attempt: the final image built from disparate frames, Mann pulling out elements from each into the final image. In the same sentence she also notes that the making of some images occurred spontaneously.⁸³ Looking through the transparencies, most of the unprinted work falls into the second category, manifest in the chronology of the frames. This is especially visible in the three frames that make up *The Dive* (Figure 25, 26 and 27); she seems not to have created the sequence deliberately with intention, but stumbled upon it:

⁸³ Mann, *Hold Still*, 120–130.



Figure 25. *The Dive 1*, 1990-94.



Figure 26. *The Dive 2*, 1990-94.



Figure 27. *The Dive 3*, 1990-94.

The sequence calls attention to the process of looking, and a curiosity at the foundation of the series. Mann once articulated this in a letter to a friend: *You wait for your eye to sort of “turn on,” for the elements to fall into place and the ineffable rush to occur.*⁸⁴ While this work was not printed, there must have been an important element in the spontaneous act of taking the colour that related to this “turning on” of Mann’s eye.⁸⁵ The sequence suggests that Virginia’s first pose—the pink suit perfectly in line with the figure in the water—could have been staged; or at least, it is easy to hear Mann’s voice in the background imploring, “*hold still.*”⁸⁶ The peek-hole in the second frame is more suggestive of this spontaneity; the curiosity is confirmed in the third frame, where both the spontaneity and the staging seem to come together to reveal the scene.

The printed Cibachromes discussed in the earlier section were most likely chosen to print because they reference certain themes present in the already established black-and-white series—for example, references to art history.⁸⁷ The spontaneity in many of the unprinted images removes some of this apparatus; instead they offer a closer insight into Mann’s exploration of the medium through the human form; her use of light, shadow and cropping to create tension within the images frame. Once again, at the centre of the *Family Pictures* is the very act of looking; Mann’s searching eye finds, and presents in these images, lyrical associations that disrupt the familiar.

⁸⁴ Mann, *Hold Still*, 129.

⁸⁵ Ravenal points to this through the selected Cibachromes in the essay accompanying the colour plates. Mann, *Family Color*, 24–39.

⁸⁶ Mann, *Hold Still*, 128–131.

⁸⁷ Both Higonnet and Malcolm draw comparisons between *Family Pictures* and painting, photography and literature. Higonnet, “Private Pictures, Public Dangers,” 136; Malcolm, “The Family of Mann,” 8.



Figure 28. *Berry Picking*, 1990-94.

Here Emmett (Figure 28), like the frame cut by the branch, is cut in two: half his body hidden behind the tree, his head missing. The colour of his bathing suit reflects the grass; the branch in the left foreground and the berries threaten to subsume him, yet his hand, active and poised for picking, is perfectly defined and lit. In the figures below the pink Barbie that holds Jessie's and Virginia's gaze (Figure 29), is made strange by the rhyming wood grain and the blurred wings and ribs of Jessie's bare back that holds ours. Emmett's body, in mid throw, curves, mimicking the flow of river in the background (Fig 30). In both, Mann uses the square frame to fragment and hide the children, whilst leading our eye through the composition, exposing both in play.⁸⁸ Somewhere in the tension, between the awkwardness of the body—often contorted, frozen in-between motion— both insecurity and a sense of whimsy are created.

⁸⁸ Mann states her interest in creating ambiguous images “if it doesn't have ambiguity, don't bother to take it.” “Sally Mann in ‘Place,’” *Art in the Twenty-First Century* (PBS, September 21, 2001), <http://www.pbs.org/art21/watch-now/segment-sally-mann-in-place>.



Figure 29. *Barbie from Another Time*, 1990-94.



Figure 30. *Throwing a rock*, 1990-94.



Figure 31. *Football and Berries*, 1990-94.



Figure 32. *Cracker at Pawley's*, 1990-94.

Although the flexibility of the smaller camera and colour film is evident of Mann's exploration into the colour medium, the elements also link the seemingly more candid images above back to the ambiguity found in the black-and-white work: the camera blur leaves the viewer's focus torn between Jessie and Virginia's back and the Barbie at the centre of their gaze (Figure 29). The dappled sunlight on Larry's back and the arch of Jessie's body reaching for the football (Figure 31); Virginia's proud stance, taking center stage, merging with Emmett (Figure 32); communicate Mann's almost obsessive return to certain forms and occurrences, with an interest to see them anew each time. While only a small selection of the unprinted *Family Color* are pictured above, they reveal Mann's active eye, the exploratory nature of the work bringing us closer to the artist's process.

The colour further establishes this connection to process and fleeting time through its relationship to lived memory: the top of bare shoulders, the length of a torso, the dappled light in summer. And so *Family Color* also becomes rooted in time. In its reception, *Family Pictures* was assumed to be personal, illustrative of Mann's children and her relationship with them, and thus exploitative.⁸⁹ Today, it is possible to look at the work from a safe distance; the photograph's ability to make invisible its object by holding the viewer in the facsimile on its surface has been lessened by the passage of time, the analogue colour materials now obsolete. The obsolescence of the Cibachromes makes their process part of their character, with the result that the surface is only one part of our interaction with it. Tonal shifts caused by aging Agfa Chrome film also carry a nostalgia that ties hue and material to its decade. This distance from present modes of

⁸⁹ See Anne Higonnet, "Sally Mann: The Price of Success," 420–422. Parson's also picks up on these oppositions: "Public/ private is only one of the tensions that fuel this project, however. Fact/fiction, mother/child, artist/subject, innocent/known, safety/danger, and free/coerced are all at work and often gain intensity as the photographs circulate. Perhaps the most romantic aspect of Mann's work is her often contradictory embrace of these tensions, rather than adopting a more postmodern, internal, critical analysis of their false constructions." "Public/Private Tensions in the Photography of Sally Mann," 125.

making allowed me to view the *Family Color* prints and transparencies as part of Mann's process within a larger collection, the distance of two decades giving space for new readings and meanings in the series, outside of those originally ascribed to the black-and-white *Family* prints.

Much of the controversy surrounding *Immediate Family* concerned perceptions of domestic and familiar versus art and timelessness; oppositions often falsely imposed upon female artists.⁹⁰ As early as 1984, in the introduction to *Second Sight*, Jane Livingston articulates two threads that follow through Mann's practice: "Sally often uses the human body as still-life.... (sic) and second she employs an inherently exotic medium, which produces images radically different (from her earlier work)."⁹¹ While Livingston is referring here specifically to Mann's platinum-palladium prints, this observation is articulated again almost thirty years later by Ravenal: "Hers is a physical photograph that draws attention to itself as an object and to its own process and materials and artifice."⁹² While the notion of materiality and the photographic object have always played a part in Mann's photographs, *Family Pictures* has often been described as romantic in the literature reviewing the images, the handmade quality and large format camera cited either to support or complicate their reception. But formal concerns and technical processes are never far apart in Mann's practice. Attending to their intersections allows us to separate the tensions she explores from those that grew up around the series reception. *Family Color* draws attention back to Mann's interest in varied photographic processes as a tool to accentuate, blur, hide and reveal the subject and the surface. The series exposes the binaries often presented in

⁹⁰ Higonnet hints at that in the passage that asserts, "Hypothetically, Mann's work needs no feminist defense because her work is not hampered by gender, because her work is not about any one person's life or circumstances. Historically, it has needed some defense from what it is not. Anne Higonnet, "Sally Mann: The Price of Success," 422.

⁹¹ Mann, *Second Sight*, x.

⁹² Ravenal et al., *Sally Mann*, 8.

histories of photography: familiar and the timeless, art and vernacular, the object and the surface, and elucidates Mann's challenge to them.

Conclusion

Artist's archives are an area of increased interest within recent photographic histories, notebooks, contact sheets, and test prints often exhibited in retrospectives to reveal their practice.⁹³ The *Family Color* work provides a new opening for not only analyses of Mann's *Family Pictures* but for a more thorough understanding of her career and her place within the history of American photography. The organizational process undertaken to digitize and make visible the colour transparencies is also an effort to make these images available in the future, both within Mann's studio for production, and for further scholarly research. This has been achieved by providing access to the unprinted work through digitization and a description of the database structures in Mann's studio in chapter two, as well as a closer reading of existing prints in chapter three. This research raises areas for further study concerning Mann's subsequent practice, her varied use of photographic processes, Mann's influences and those she has influenced, and the significance of these connections.

The practical portion of the thesis came out of working *in situ* within the artists archive and informed subsequent investigation. The outcome of numbering the *Family Color* transparencies and the organization of their digital surrogates has been the development of a methodology for managing originals within Mann's studio and archive. The catalogue created as a result functions as a key to the archive and is a record of the work completed within it. *Family Color* originals have been housed, numbered and digitized; their exhibition history, and Mann's

⁹³ The recently published pre review of an exhibition opening on July 12th at the MET Breuer is an example of the common practice and popular interest. Hannah Ongle, "Discover Diane Arbus's Early, Unseen Photographs of NYC Eccentrics," Online Magazine, *Vice*, (May 27, 2016), https://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/discover-diane-arbus-early-unseen-photographs-of-nyc-eccentrics. The recent interest in artists' process is apparent in the way exhibitions are conceived and translated to public intuitions — that tend to focus on a holistic understanding of the artist, both personal and studio based. The work on display is often made possible through acquisition of artists' estates and collections. This cuts through much of the post-modern archival theory referenced in the literature review in chapter 1 of this thesis. It is also apparent in my own relationship to Mann's archive, which at its root is concerned with the future of these objects when they leave the studio and enter a public institution.

interest in them (which frames she has expressed interest in printing, and which are of personal significance), are documented and recorded in the excel catalogue. The structure functions as a template for future digitization of originals; the methodology outlined for file naming and the updated catalogue have already been adopted by Mann and her studio and used in the production of *Remembered Light*, an exhibition to take place in September of 2016. Finally, the handling and sorting of the materials required for this project sparked Mann's renewed interest in the series—some of the images now included in an upcoming retrospective—and led to research into the exhibition history of *Family Pictures* and the first closer reading of the unprinted work, presented in this thesis.

The digitization of *Family Color* allows the series to be viewed as a collection for the first time and questions the positioning of Mann's work in terms of art historical categories: crossing lines between representations of the body, the surface of the photograph, the domestic, the familiar and the universal, the mundane and the artificial. The connoisseurship of the black-and-white *Family* prints connects Mann to photography's modernist predecessors, while the photographs' contents place the series within the postmodernist theory and gender politics lionized at the time of their making.⁹⁴ This dual loyalty made the black-and-white *Family Pictures* difficult to analyze within the binary categories of the art market and contributed to their complicated public reading.

The use of colour in American photography shifted drastically in the 1980s and 1990s, of which Mann's access to film for the *Family Color* would have been part. In the interview included in the appendix, Mann and I further discuss the history of her use of colour, as well as

⁹⁴ Malcolm also picks up on this dichotomy, suggesting the Mann's "beautiful" photographers to an older way to a history of photography pre Szarkowski's MoMA, sighting this as part of the tension in her images. Malcolm, *Diana and Nikon*, 170–71.

touch on some of the influences from her early career. These include Marie Cosindas, Olivia Parker and Rosamond Purcell. All three of these women were producing colour work between the 1960s and throughout the 1980s when Mann first turned her attention to the medium. This history also places Mann's *Family Pictures* as influencer amongst a younger generation of photographic artists—many of whom are also women—using colour to explore childhood and adolescent bodies, those of their own children and others.⁹⁵ These artists include two of Mann's former assistants, Anna Gaskell and Betsy Schneider.⁹⁶ *Family Color* exposes the ways in which Mann's career bridges both an earlier era and the more recent, and has not yet been widely addressed. Mann's role in this is important; her photographs and practice bridge both a new and old way of making images, demonstrating our changing understandings of photographic representation at the advent of new technologies.

⁹⁵ Higonnet, points to a connection between Mann's *Immediate Family* and the 1999 Yale MFA programs exhibition organized by Gregory Crewdson *Another Girl, Another Planet*. One of the exhibiting artist's included Mann's former assistant Anna Gaskell. Anne Higonnet, "Sally Mann: The Price of Success," 413.

⁹⁶ Betsy Schneider worked as an assistant to Sally Mann from 1993 – 1995. She currently teaches photography at Arizona State University and is known for her photographs of her own daughter that also garnered controversy. Anna Gaskell continued on to Yale after interning with Sally Mann for a year at the height of the *Family Pictures*. Her series *Wonderland*, brought her to acclaim in the late 1990's. Anna Gaskell appears in Mann's image from *Immediate Family*, *Anna and Virginia*, 1991.

Appendix A

Family Color: Sally Mann Interview

Feb. 13th 2016

This interview was conducted while staying *in situ* in Lexington, Virginia from January 24th – February 14th 2016. The audio recording opens in the middle of a conversation concerning the dating of the Family picture colour transparencies. Mann and I are trying to ascertain when she first received the Mamiya 6 medium format camera use to take the pictures with.

Zoë Lepiano

This interview is happening on February 13th two-thousand sixteen, in Lexington Virginia. The purpose of it is to get information regarding the Family Picture Color series for my Master's Thesis. And I am Zoë Lepiano, and this is Sally Mann.

Laughter.

Sally Mann

That sounds good, that sounds very NPR... This is brought to by "Squarespace."

More laughter

ZL

And you are making chili.

SM

And I am picking oregano leaves off of oregano branches, and pretty soon I am going to be chopping garlic, but we can talk while I do that, because I can't talk without doing something.

ZL

OK, so the dating of the images. Should we start with when you got the camera? *I am referring here to the Mamiya 6 Mann used to take the photographs with.*

SM

We don't even know that for god sake, why don't we Google to see when that camera came out, or, I could go into my guarantees and instructions and see when it was copyrighted... I think it was brand new when I got it.

ZL

You got it brand new, you bought it?

SM

I didn't buy it they gave it to me...

Both

Mamiya

ZL

So Mamiya gave you a Mamiya 6, square format camera?

SM

A guy named Martin Silverman who then killed himself, not because of me we trust. Not because he was so frustrated trying to get me to sit still for an interview.

Ok so I am looking it up right now.

Mann is looking at her phone

Pause

Introduced May of 89. So that seems to fit doesn't it?

ZL

May of 89, yes it does.

SM

So when did Virginia go to Kindergarten? She was born in February of '85, but I don't know when kids go to Kindergarten so...

ZL

Um, four?... Is that right?

SM

Mmm, Only in Canada, not in America,

ZL

Younger or older?

SM no, no, older, older, we don't educate our children. I would think five, so that would fit, right?

Both

Yes.

SM

So that helps, so the summer of 89, that would be my guess, or the fall, and not only that they... OK, there is also another way that we could maybe figure this out. They gave me a. *Pause* Who gave me that big camera the big 8x10 that I still love, that I still have floating around?

ZL

I don't know who gave you that.

SM

This is going to take obviously a little more than I am going to be able to find on my phone.

ZL

That's Ok, we can jump back... The question is then; Mamiya gave you a camera, knowing you had already started the series? But, *Immediate Family* hadn't happened yet, the book hadn't happened yet?

SM

I guess not.

ZL

But you had already shown some of the photos?

Here I am refereeing to the B&W images from the series taken with an 8x10.

SM

Yes, hmm, is that true? Of course I had! I showed them at Cuse's really early, Virginia was in a stroller. No wait, that was *At Twelve*. But yes, I showed them at Cuse's, let's say 89.⁹⁷

ZL

But you didn't take any *Family* in color until you got the Mamiya?

SM

Yes, that's right, safe to say.

ZL

You had of course used color before then; there are the early Cibachromes, before that?

Here I am referring to the still life studies published in Still Time.

SM

Right, yeah

ZL

But that was 8x10?

SM

No, those were, oh god - wait a minute.

⁹⁷ Mann is referring here to now closed Marcuse Pfeifer Gallery in New York. Malcolm, "The Family of Mann," 170-171. The exhibition *Portraits of Twelve-Year-Old Girls* was shown in 1985 also at Marcuse's. Sally Mann, *Family Pictures* (New York, N.Y: Marcuse Pfeifer Gallery, 1987).

Mann is thinking

ZL

I think I just found some (the other day) ... I opened a binder the other day and I thought they looked like medium format.

SM

I think they are Mamiya, in that binder, those still lifes, they are the same format as these?

ZL

They might have been

SM

Then they are probably the same camera

ZL

And those were in, *Still Time* (Referring to the publication by Aperture in 1994)?

SM

Yes.

ZL

I am just trying to get...

SM

There were also Polaroid's, there were two versions of those, some of them were Polaroid's and some of them were...

Sally Mann has gotten up from the table and is going to the library above her desk to find the Still Time publication.

But what's that?!

Sally has the book open and is pointing to the Cibachrome plates at the back of the book.

What the hell is that?

ZL

Well exactly, that's upstairs and that is a Cibachrome print

SM

But why are they in that format? The Mamiya is square right?

ZL

Yes, so they're a different format, so those are from a different camera

We continue to look through still time between the 8x10 Polaroid plates and the plates labeled Cibachrome

SM

These are 8x10 polaroid's, so what are these? These are Cibachromes,

Mann reads the book caption "Cibachromes 81- 83."

ZL

81 – 83 was when you made those Cibachromes, so that's a different camera.

SM

yeah, so that's a different camera. OH! It's the RB67,
I gave it to Betsy.

ZL

You gave it to Betsy.

SM

Yes.

ZL

Betsy Schneider?

Betsy Schneider worked as an assistant to Sally Mann from 1993 – 1995. She currently teaches photography at Arizona State University and is known for her photographs of her own daughter that also garnered controversy. Schneider works in colour.

SM

Yes, Betsy Schneider, phew, what a memory you have, yes Betsy Schneider, so she has my RB67.

ZL

You are often talked about as a black-and-white photographer, but it seems you have kind of always in some way, here or there.

SM

Yes.

ZL

I notice the image of your Fathers hand is also in color.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ The photograph I refer to is printed in *Hold Still*, a print hangs in Mann's black-and-white darkroom. Mann, *Hold Still*, 454.

SM

yeah

ZL

And that was in 88.⁹⁹ But that's also a different format, would that have been the same, would that be the RB then?

SM

I think that might be 35mm, yeah, I am pretty sure that is what that was. I had all those Nikon's left over from working at W&L, I don't think I had a Leica at that point, I think that was probably a Nikon picture in 88.

Here I am trying to get a feel for the different ways Sally has utilized colour photography.

ZL

The bigger question then is how were you using color alongside the B&W? I mean was it sort of secondary?

SM

Color was expensive and we didn't have any money. I could print black-and-white, it was cheaper, obviously and I could do it myself. Although, I did all those Cibachromes myself for a while.

ZL

You did?

SM

I did'em myself

ZL

The 8x10 as well as the 20x24?¹⁰⁰

ZL

Oh, the 20x24 Cibas, no I did not do those, but the 8 x10's of the abstracts that are in *Still Time*, those I did myself...

With the little roller thing, remember?... No you don't know.

Laughter

⁹⁹ Mann's father, Robert Munger, died in May of 1988.

¹⁰⁰ Here I am referring back to the *Family Picture* colour which was printed in 8x10 and 20x34. Mann had been referring to the 8x10 still lifes that we had already established she printed between 1980 - 1983

SM

The chemicals were completely deadly; I guess that's why they discontinued it. They had a little roller, you pour them in and roll it and pour them out, all the while breathing deeply.

ZL

Because you wanted to shoot positives if you were going to do color?

SM

Because for some reason I had the wherewithal to print it myself. It may have been W&L (Washington and Lee University) bought it and I was just using theirs, but I don't think it would have ever been possible for me to print negatives, to print those myself. They would have been c-prints back then

ZL

And you would have needed an industrial machine.

SM

Yes, and I didn't have any of that. But Cibachromes, they had a little home kit you could do, that's really what it was, so yeah that's why I did it. And I bet you W&L bought that. The very same Frank Parson's who would buy anything I needed to further my artistic career, he would pull out of the W&L slush fund and buy for me.¹⁰¹

ZL

Did you think of them, the colour, as different from the black-and-white? How did you think of them when you were doing it?

SM

Let's phrase that question differently, the question you are asking is: If I could have afforded it, would I have preferred to shoot in color?

ZL

No not preferred...

SM

I think you'd have to ask, or I'd have to ask myself what kind of pictures would I have taken, would I have wanted to take. How badly did I want to take color pictures, obviously not badly enough to forgo food so that I could buy color film, but, um I did, I really like color, I really enjoyed doing it. I took a color - I've got a picture from it too - I took a Polaroid workshop with Marie Cosindas, do you know who she is?

¹⁰¹ Frank Parson's died a few days after I arrived, Sally attended the funeral on January 30th 2016.

She lived in Boston; she was sort of a Boston brahminy kind of person. She took beautiful pictures, Polaroid, early Polaroid. I took a workshop with her one time and loved it, just loved it. There were three color photographers that I really admired: One was Marie Cosindas, one was Olivia Parker, she did a lot of color, and one was um, Rosie (Rosamond) Purcell, you've heard of all these names, right?!

Mann smiles...

And they all, maybe not Marie Cosindas, but I think Rosie and Olivia Parker had far more resources than I did. And now I'm gonna to tell you an Olivia Parker story:

I one time asked her; so Olivia—she was older than I am so I was totally intimidated—and I asked her where did you grow up and She said “oh I grew up in New Hampshire,” and I was just trying to get a feel for how she could afford all of this: She had this fabulous house and all this colour film, and she was able to work and publish books, Godine (David) published her, it was big deal back then right, and she said, “oh I grew up on a dairy farm,” and I thought; *dairy farm, how in the world did a dairy farmer's daughter have this amazing house up on Beacon Hill in Boston*. And I come to find out that her father was the owner of Hood milk, which is Sealtest of the North.

Laughter

ZL

Right kind of Dairy Farmer.

SM

Anyway, that's Olivia Parker.

I can show you the books, I so admired their work, actually I admired her black-and-white too, Olivia Parker. But I mean, I can't say that I wouldn't 've been doing color if I could have afforded it. And it was really key to me that I do it myself, I really liked the process and the control. Colour didn't allow that, it was hard to do myself, except for Cibachromes.

ZL

I remember in *Hold still*, you say there were a couple of moments when you didn't want to make photographs, one of them is Emmett's car accident, and the other one was your father dying. But then of course the photograph you do have (of your father) is in color.

SM

Um hmm,

ZL

It's of his hand, and so I am wondering about that.

Pause. Sighs

ZL

Was 35mm color just sort of there, and it just happened like that, or did it feel less like art making, because it was in color?

SM

Um, yeah. Hold on. Yeah, 88 so I wouldn't have driven out to Boxerwood with a camera I don't think. Cause Mama called and said your father is dying, come out and I am pretty sure, no I had a camera just a couple hours before to take the picture of him and Ron...¹⁰² I am just wondering if it wasn't some sort of snapshot like camera. I know I could lay my hands on that film and the pictures to either side of that would answer that question, but lets just say for the time being that it was some kind of

Mann is thinking

I am not prevaricating; I am just trying to think this through. I don't think I took a camera out there, I don't think I left Boxerwood and went home between the time I got there and the hours and hours later before they removed the body. So what camera did I pick up and take those pictures with? Let me also just say, there is a role of black-and-white too, of that same scene. But there is no to my knowledge, there is no 8x10, so I didn't go home and get an 8x10, or I didn't have it in the back of the car, or if I did have it in the back of my car - which I often did back then - I didn't pull it out.

Long answer to a short question: I don't know which camera it was, but I obviously had two cameras or two rolls of film and one camera, because I did take it in black-and-white too. But obviously the colour is far superior, I mean the colours, I mean that's a beautiful picture of that maroon Brooks Brothers bathrobe.

ZL

When we were looking through the Family colour pictures this summer, you can see that happens throughout a lot of the colour, you will find a shot that was also taken in black-and-white.

SM

Right, yes. Are there any that are just better in colour? Yes, there is one called better in colour, so there are some that just cry out to be in colour.

ZL

You touched on this in relation to the availability of colour and the home processing, but in general colour photography at the time you working—I am assuming there was a bit of a difference? Was colour photography as an art form, was it seen as something different than black-and-white, was it still perceived differently?

¹⁰² Mann is referring to Ronald Winston, the pictures on either side can be seen in *Hold Still*. Mann, *Hold Still*, 454.

Pause

ZL

I know in the 1970's the Eggleston big MoMa show happened, and that is regarded as the first moment that colour was being accepted as fine art, but...

SM

Y'um yeah

ZL

But was there some of that separation still, between black-and-white and colour, was that still palpable at the time you were working? Or was it more just kind open experimentation if you could afford to do it, and there was no real boundary or barrier.

SM

I mean we are talking the 90's,

ZL

What about the 80's seem when you started, unless you took colour before then?

SM

I took 35mm slides, a lot of slides, oh god. I wouldn't want to think, I think there is just a shit ton of slides; you don't even know about this; as I think of it, there is a ton of them stuffed away in the cabinet behind the big trays where we do the 40 x 50s, so you wouldn't have been likely to run across them.

ZL

Were those more personal?

SM

I don't remember what's in there

ZL

But not attached to a specific series?

SM

If anything they would be abstracty kind of flowery stuff, nothing cutting edge, no Nan Goldin, nothing good

ZL

This past summer, as we were cataloging things and organizing and pulling images for future use, what was your experience of at looking at them after they were taken? How did that bring about a different way of seeing that body of work?

SM

Well you brought it about.

We both laugh

SM

What do you mean, I was ready to throw the whole goddamn thing in the garbage heap, seriously, no I wouldn't have seen those things. I mean I might've if I'd taken the time, but there was no reason for me to even think that taking the time would be worth it.

ZL

So you think the process of going through and organizing and cataloging and getting things ready for the future, that the revisiting, the relooking at the images...

SM

It was shocking to me, and what I am trying to figure out is whether or not when I was taking those pictures, whether or not I thought, or I was thinking that they were going to be good, or if I was just shooting. I think I was just shooting so freely because I could. Because someone had given me the camera and Agfa was throwing the film at me and it seemed to have less consequence, was less fraught, had less import than black-and-white, because I had established myself and had already started the series had the series well under way, I guess.

Anyway, must have been very freeing cause they seem, they seem fairly snapshoty... Not snapshoty enough, I wish I did more of that. Because obviously those are the most successful ones, are the truly off the cuff ones. You know the girls walking up the stairs to the cabin. You just couldn't know that it was going to be so perfect (Figure 33).



Figure 33. *Rocking Chair at Cabin*, 1990-94.

ZL

In that way this camera WAS kind a kind of secondary camera, in the way you were able to take a snapshot without composing, just experiencing something.

SM

Right, Yeah, um hum

ZL

But you did do that with the black-and-white as well, but less so.

SM

You mean with the 8x10

ZL

I mean it's harder to do with the 8x10,

SM

But there are examples of it, as you know.¹⁰³

Here I move to her use of colour in more recent work.

ZL

Now, you used color again in the *Body Farm* series, and now with this CY show, getting to know you, I realize you just use everything, it seems less about a singular method.

SM

You want to be catholic that way, you want to embrace all of these things, yeah, my problem right now—and this is not quite germane—is that I've got such established work behind and it always, like I said in *Hold still*, it is always in service to an idea, or not always, but almost always is, none of it is just whimsical. I don't just anymore pick up a camera cause there's a gorgeous splash of light on the floor, because I think: what's this about, where's this gonna go, what series is this gonna go in, what am I gonna do with this negative, how am I gonna catalog this? It's just, I am at that time of life where you know, because we are cataloging, I'm less willing to just take pictures for the fun of taking pictures, although all those ambrotypes; are that's just for sheer fun.

ZL

You mean the still lifes (*in studio taken late 2015*).

SM

Yeah, the still lifes, god those things are fun to take. It's hard to realize I can still take pictures

¹⁰³ Here we are referring to the B&W photograph *The Perfect Tomato* depicting Jessie dancing as described in *Hold Still*. The photo was the centre of controversy after an article written by Mary Gordon. Mann, *Hold Still*, 130, 154.

that have no consequence, you know that's it's perfectly all right to take pictures, inconsequential pictures, just for the fun of it. Just because a flower is hit by the sun, or you know the ladybug; lands on the cornstalk, whatever it is, just take the picture for fun! I mean that's what's so interesting about the iPhone is that you do that, you take the pictures of the champagne at Christmas, or your Christmas stocking and all the silly things, without any idea that it might be art. But you take them because the color is beautiful. Your not, I'm not, thinking in terms of black-and-white, it's the color that invites those kind of pictures, so does that make them more trivial, I don't know.

ZL

Well, thank you, I think we've hit on all of the questions I had.

SM

Well we still got a couple more days, I mean there is a terrible snow storm on Monday, we can sit around and talk all day on Monday, you shouldn't be driving Monday.

Now I am going to drag out the Olivia Parker books.

ZL

Actually about that: Your influences, it is interesting that they are three women.

SM

I know, I was so jealous of them, so jealous.

ZL

Three women, and they all worked in color predominantly or some of them both?

Mann walks over and is looking at her bookshelf trying to find a book.

SM

I think Olivia Parker was, probably, let's just find Rosie Purcell first of all
Mann finds the book and brings it over to the table When did this book come out?¹⁰⁴
Mann continues to look through the book to find publication date

ZL

So you took colour classes, but when would you have done that, you did that in the early 80s, before children?

SM

I did that with Marie Cosindas, no I was nursing, I had to rush home I was nursing Emmett.

ZL

¹⁰⁴ The book we are looking at is Rosamond Wolff Purcell and Stephen Jay Gould, *Illuminations: A Bestiary* (New York: Norton, 1986).

But before the *Family pictures* had started

SM

Sally pointing to book

See she did black-and-white too, lots of black-and-white (Looking at Purcell I believe).

SM

She did really interesting work I thought, back then I did, some of it, not all of it
Continue to look through book.

Um, well that, I always love that. And I love that.

ZL

And very much so about the process, the opposite of straight.

SM

Yeah, true, and um, those kind of things I really loved, I loved that, I didn't love all of her work.
I loved that; I thought that was pretty great.¹⁰⁵

Here I will have to find the images we were looking at

You know that picture that's in my studio of the Orchids, it's 5x7 split toned, it's in a frame
11 x 14, yup here, that's Olivia Parker and now we can look at see if I have anything on her.

Goes back to library

SM

Yup here:

Takes out Olivia Parker book

and look, Mark Strand wrote her introduction and designed by Katy Homans.

ZL

And Katy Homans, that's a connection to Wendy Snyder MacNeil.¹⁰⁶

SM

That's right, exactly and those were my markers (bookmarks are falling form the pages).

¹⁰⁵ Here we are looking at Olivia Parker and Mark Strand, *Under the Looking Glass* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1983).

¹⁰⁶ Wendy Snyder MacNeil took a portrait of Katy Homans. The print is platinum palladium and was on exhibition at the Ryerson Image Centre as part of the exhibition *The Light Inside: The Photographs of Wendy Snyder MacNeil* at the time this interview was conducted. I also was working on the cataloging and organization of the WSM archive housed at the Ryerson Image Centre.

We continue to look through the pages she had marked some images will be included below.

SM

So you can see her influence. There! Isn't that gorgeous?! I'll show you the one I have, oh I thought that was beautiful too, and don't forget this is all early stuff.

ZL

And you would have been influenced by this in the 1970s?

SM

I think so , yeah.¹⁰⁷

*She is now looking for Cosindas book on her shelf.*¹⁰⁸

ZL

And how were you getting this information? Was that just part of being part of the community and knowing about these women, how was that?

SM

It was so hard back then to know about the women, just think about what it was like, you had to subscribe to magazines... and I guess....

Looking at image of Marie Cosindas of Tom Wolfe.

OK, so I did the workshop with her (Marie Cosindas)

Mann and I are looking at Cosindas image "The sailors Key West 1966."

And now I'll show you, she made a portrait of me at that workshop.

ZL

Emmett was born in 1979, is that right?

SM

um hmm, and I was still nursing him... Let's see if it's under Cosindas

¹⁰⁷ Cosindas worked in the 1960s and 70s but the books by Parker and Purcell were published in the early 80s. All three were influence to Sally before the Family pictures began.

¹⁰⁸ Marie Cosindas, Tom Wolfe, and Susan Feldman, *Marie Cosindas, Color Photographs* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1978). Mann mentions hers is from 1966. She had a solo show in 1966 at MoMA this is confirmed in Roberts, *A Century of Colour Photography*, 154.

Now looking for image of herself by Cosindas on the computer... you know someone might have sent it to me.

SM OK, so it was 1980, that was at the Marie Cosindas workshop. *Looking at Image of Ray Cass and Sally Mann. Did he ever show up? Sally is referring to Ray Kass showing up in the colour images.* So that would be 1982.

ZL

So you started with Polaroid, color Polaroid

SM

Yes

ZL

And 8x10 color polaroid?

SM

No I also have a whole box of little box of polaroid snap shots, you know the ones that spit out... Hmm there are not very many.

ZL

So you would just hear about workshops that would happen.

SM

It happened in Virginia and Ray Kass put it together and invited me.

(About the picture she is looking for)

She was using me as a demonstration; I was wearing that green shirt. Anyway these were important people working in Colour.

Showing me a Marie Cosindas book

SM

And this gorgeous picture of Tom White

Oh and look at Andy Warhol.

So she was the original, this came out in 1966.

ZL

Yes, way before the kind of strait male, straight colour.

SM

She influenced everybody.

ZL

So interesting that yet she just gets lost, all of the women.

SM

I know

ZL

What is that about?

SM

Someone should do an exhibition on those three women...

I think Marie Cosindas is enjoying a little renaissance.¹⁰⁹

So now that I've been a good girl and answered all of your questions will you show me any other pictures that you've found.

From here we go to the computer and begin to look through the transparencies.

¹⁰⁹ Marie Cosindas' photographs were shown at the Bruce Silverstein Gallery, NYC in 2014.

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