



ARTIST

Keith Piper

TITLE

No title

DATE

1991

DIMENSIONS

8.75 in H x 6.75 in W

MEDIUM

Inkjet Prints

CATALOGUE NUMBER

1991.028

CURRENT LOCATION

1114-1D

KEITH PIPER

BORN

1960

BIRTHPLACE

Malta

GENDER

Male

CITIZENSHIP

United Kingdom

CULTURAL HERITAGE

African-British

LIGHT WORK RELATIONSHIP

Artist-in-Residence, 1991

LIGHT WORK PUBLICATIONS

Contact Sheet 73

Contact Sheet 97

ESSAYS

Since its invention the primary use of photography has been to record, to examine and to describe what is immediately present before the camera. Within these conventional parameters the contemporary photographer could only help us with what is now, not what was before. But as more artists migrate to the tools of photography, the traditional boundaries of the medium have begun to evaporate into the visual viscosity of the artists' imagination. Keith Piper creates multi-media installations using slide projections and computer generated images composed of photographs of paintings and illustrations completed hundreds of years before the invention of photography. By extending his visual vocabulary backward in time he is free to roam through history to examine contemporary issues and struggles. In a recent installation titled *A Ship Called Jesus*, Piper looks at the relationship between people of African descent and the Christian Church. Starting in 1564 with Queen Elizabeth's gift of the sailing vessel *The Jesus of Lubeck* for the first English slave trading voyage, Piper pauses throughout history to acknowledge and criticize the role Christianity has played in the dislocation, migration and recovery of the Black community. He incorporates text from historical documents with reproductions of paintings and illustrations in fluid collages that position that first vessel as a ship the Black community has been riding ever since. By using photography to capture images from other sources Piper extends his palate across generations, over borders and through closed doors, while his use of slide projections, laser copying techniques and computer collages carries his concerns to this minute in our modern age. By bringing the viewer to issues through centuries of distilled images, allegations and inquires, Piper locates a clear path forward to explore ongoing struggles as complex as Christianity, Black culture and race relations. Keith Piper lives in London, England and participated in our Artist-in-Residence program in August, 1991. Jeffrey Hoone (c)1991