

PAN

AMSTERDAM

PER VAN DER HORST GALLERY



Chtysaora fuscescens

Platinum print

THE PLATINUM PRINT: THE MOST NOBLE PRINT

For people who collect photographs, platinum prints are known for their beauty, gracefulness, archival stability and unique, one-of-a-kind print statement. Made from the salts of platinum, these prints are also called “platinotypes” or “platinum” prints.

Platinum is a noble metal on the Periodic Table and are resistant to oxidation. The platinum salt emulsion is imbedded into the fiber of the paper during the printing process.

As with most historical photographic processes, a platinum print is made by placing the negative and emulsion-coated paper in direct contact. Platinum prints have a different “look” from silver gelatin or digital

prints.

All platinum prints have a matte, not glossy surface, because the sensitizer is absorbed into the paper rather than sitting on the surface. A platinum print also has a more gradual tonal change from black to white. To the eye accustomed to the punch of a silver gelatin print, a platinum print will often feel “softer” or lower in contrast. In reality there are actually more steps between pure black and pure white in platinum prints than in a silver gelatin print. This contributes to the deeper, richer feeling you experience when looking at these prints.

Jan C Schlegel's platinum prints are made from hand-mixed and hand-coated emulsions. These sensitizers are mixed just prior to use, coated on the paper with a brush. Once dry, a negative is placed in direct contact with the paper, and then exposed to sunlight or ultraviolet light. Exposure to the light source takes an hour or more, depending on the density and contrast of the negative.

The image tone of a platinum print can vary in color. These prints can range from a cool, slightly purple black to split tones of brown and warm black, to a very warm brown. The proportions of the different components in the emulsion, choice of developers and the temperature of the developer control the final color.

The platinum prints of the series are double layered like Irving Penn did it for some of his iconic images. To increase tonality and depth I also added in some of my images as a second component to the sensitizer some Iridium which makes the picture even more noble and creates more richness in the mid tones. As these emulsions are mixed and coated by hand no two prints are exactly alike and become unique art pieces.