

LISA BLAS – CHROMOGENIC PRINTS  
*ROUND THE OLD OAK TREE*

In this series, images and objects from museum archives are excavated for the narratives of the American 19<sup>th</sup> century. Research and travel to locations such as Antietam National Battlefield, the Smithsonian and the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia serve as departure points for my investigations. Utilizing mixed-media collage as a drawing tool, graphic images are formed with colored drawing paper and ephemeral materials such as slide labels and stars. Through the repetition of titling and cataloging, notions of authorship co-exist with the framing of historical truths and myths. Each image utilizes a saturated background color standing in for Union blue, Confederate grey, or Hallmark lavender. Via photographic reproduction, the luminous color and sculptural nature of overlapping materials and language is collapsed within one continuous surface.

Throughout these works, historical and cultural mythology are mined for heroes, villains, markers of infamy and tragedy... Contemporary culture and its sign systems become departure points for engaging in revisionist history. Icons such as the Yellow Ribbon possess a culturally charged meaning---its original function replaced by popular myth. Over time and through the repetition of such icon, its purpose is newly constructed---giving way to individual meanings and mythologies.

LB • 2004-2006