

### ***Preludes***

The prints were made before I had began to use a computer and at a time when the colour copier was my primary means of producing singular reproductions from other forms of print media. The series is more than thirty years old, and it is interesting to measure the remove at which developments in technology seem to place it.

The series comprised banal images, reproduced and enlarged on the colour copier, depicting small groups or couples meeting, conversing and drinking together. Nothing, apart from the exhibition's title: *Preludes*, gave any indication that they were introductory frames of mid 1970s hard-core pornographic magazines. Although they depicted nothing explicitly sexual, it was possible to see from the magnified dot screen and engorged colours that the images themselves had been reproduced from print. By excluding contextual clues, I had hoped to make the viewer both curious and uneasy. I thought they might wonder why such a banal image should ever be published and be curious, not just about what was outside each picture's frame, but also how its scenic content might unfold from that point into a narrative.

A single photographic image can be erotic because of its relative intimacy - reserving itself, so to speak, for individual viewing. A published image, on the other hand (and remember that this was written before the mass exposition of the internet) is shameless. Its revelation of skin, genital form or whatever, takes place on a glossy page for a theoretically unlimited audience. Looking at these images now, I think I was hoping to make conspicuous the signs of the image's pornographic function occurring synonymously with the signs of its publication - an obscenity I felt was inherent in the medium of offset-litho print itself.

Like the silver nitrate grain in Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow-Up* (1966), the process colour dot also illustrates something about the limits of representation. The name of the film refers to a photographic negative magnified to the point that it fails to reveal the essential secrets of a murder - the explicitness of the grain, in effect, chokes that of the image. In the case of the *Preludes*, the CMYK dot signifies a kind of curtain behind which the details of the event are hidden, but the existence of which simultaneously signals the presence of the secret.