

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CARA COLE | *ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT*

July 6 - August 5, 2018

Opening Reception Friday, July 6, 6-8PM

(New York – July 6, 2018) **HIGH NOON** will open a unique and daring exhibition by **Cara Cole** on July 6, 2018, on view until August 5. *Illuminated Manuscript* derives from all of which what Cole refers to as her Rape Narrative, a narrative sanctioned by the university after it was discovered she was being sexually assaulted and abused by her professor. Cole brilliantly and daringly reclaims the process of redaction and transforms her Rape Narrative into what she refers to as the *Illuminated Manuscript*.

"The redaction of official documents relating to my Rape Narrative have been systematically used during the university investigative process to render me powerless" notes Cole. "For a long time, my narrative was taken away from me and belongs to the university and the perpetrator. It was subject to public debate without my participation. I have reclaimed the power of redaction to tell my story, on my terms, for the first time through this exhibition".

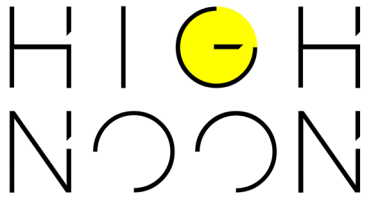
To date, Cole has been denied access to the investigative report that resulted from her Rape Narrative.

Illuminated Manuscript is the first creative endeavor following Cole's self-imposed hiatus from the creative process, one of the many losses she faced as a result of her Rape Narrative.

Through creating this impelling sequence of hero-scaled images, Cole emboldens concepts explored throughout various past series. *Gods and Heroes* depicts larger-than-life images sourced from scientific medical texts, showing unidentifiable children interacting with various natural phenomena, implying that our relationship to both the micro and macro-cosmic stems from the same longing for control. *An Immortality of Bliss* deals with the concept of sacred versus profane as well as consent, as seemingly pornographic images (a combination of real models, dolls, and magazine photos) are diffused and reduced to a "type," echoing Bernini's *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa*. In *Illuminated Manuscript*, Cole explores new territory in working with subject matter that is auto-biographical, re-contextualizing a personal narrative into something universal.

The scale of the work is considered as such that the viewers' own body intuitively serves as an examining agent against the imposition of the 48" x 37" panels which become ominous, screaming, relentless in their gridded repetition. They're displayed for the rumination of all on the destructive cultural institutions of power and indulgence, like Martin Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*, nailed to the cathedral door in violent opposition.

In this interpretation, the title *Illuminated Manuscript* finds it's irony. Historically, manuscripts are handwritten whereas Cole's are digitally rendered, 21st century style, though the imperfections in the digital methods of redaction imply a human hand. Faint traces of boxes and softly off-tone blacks create a sort of patchwork, like memory. Manuscripts are religious texts, law and government texts, texts to uphold and glorify social order. Cole's manuscript is a non-linear narrative which oscillates between starkness and lyricism. It speaks to absence as presence and existence as a double-edged sword. It's a manuscript to disrupt the current illusion of social order.



It's a way to address the terror of trying to exist in the world again and regain visibility through one's own sense of proprietary. It's a blatant message to those who have experienced sexual violence: you are able to create. You are visible in the world. This work is for you.

Cara Cole's work has been included in more than seventy exhibitions internationally, including *Young Photographers*, curated by Lalla Essaydi at The School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, *Visual to Political* at the NYU Photo Center, and *disJointed* at Maumau Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey. She received her undergraduate degree at OCAD University in Toronto, Canada and her MFA at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. She has been fortunate enough to receive numerous grants including awards from the NEA, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Banff Writing Studio Residency. Cole has lived in Nepal, Indonesia, Romania, Turkey and Morocco. Her desire to understand cross-cultural differences, and oppression, has had crucial impact upon her work. *Illuminated Manuscript* will mark her NYC solo exhibition debut.

Cole is currently completing her first novel, *Dangerous Prey*, which draws from her life as a photographer. "This dreamlike novel explores themes of death, fear, religion, god, salvation, filling up, emptying out, foreignism, and the endless search."
--Chelsea Rooney author of *Pedal* (Finalist for the 2015 Amazon First Novel Award)