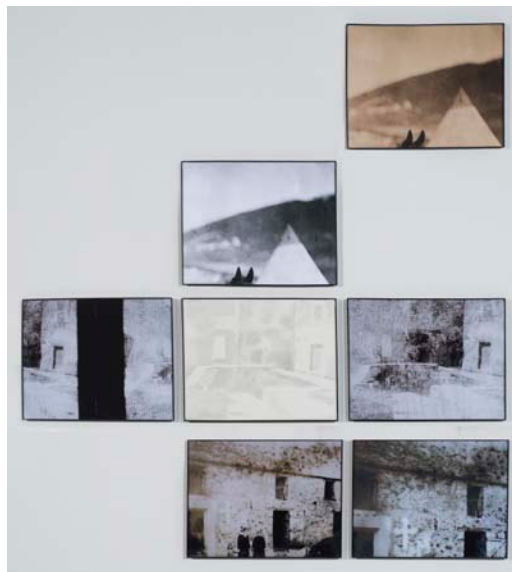


ARTNEWS  
REVIEWS – NEW YORK



Michelle Stuart, *Vaucluse*, 2014, six framed archival ink-jet photographs, one framed drawing, ca. 38" x 35" overall.

## MICHELLE STUART

LESLIE TONKONOW ARTWORKS + PROJECTS  
NOVEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 20

Michelle Stuart's exhibition "Silent Movies" focused on photography—the artist's own, and vintage images by others. These works, conjuring a world before global travel was routine, were more dreamscape than documentation, although imitations of colonialism were inherent. Installed as a series of grids, the photos suggested film stills unspooling disjunctive but associative images.

The prints, in understated black-and-white, sepias, and pale tones, as in *Field Notes* (2013), have a haunted air, steeped in objective scenes and personal memory. One work, *Ghost/Memory/History (For Sebald)*, 2013, is dedicated to the writer W. G. Sebald who often used images to flesh out his text. Indeed, Stuart's project seems closely allied to Sebald's blend of autobiography, historical investigation, fiction, and travelogue.

The largest work present, *Hear the Mermaids Sing* (2013), seemed even larger with its galactic point of view filled with pictures of a starry cosmos alternating with what might be clouded skies or nuclear detonations, and instruments for probing the universe's mysteries, including an observatory. A solitary figure appearing in several frames might represent the spirit of Homer's Odysseus, Galileo, Caspar David Friedrich's wanderers, Joseph Conrad's anti-heroes, and Stuart herself—lured by the siren song of existential meaning.

—LILLY WEI