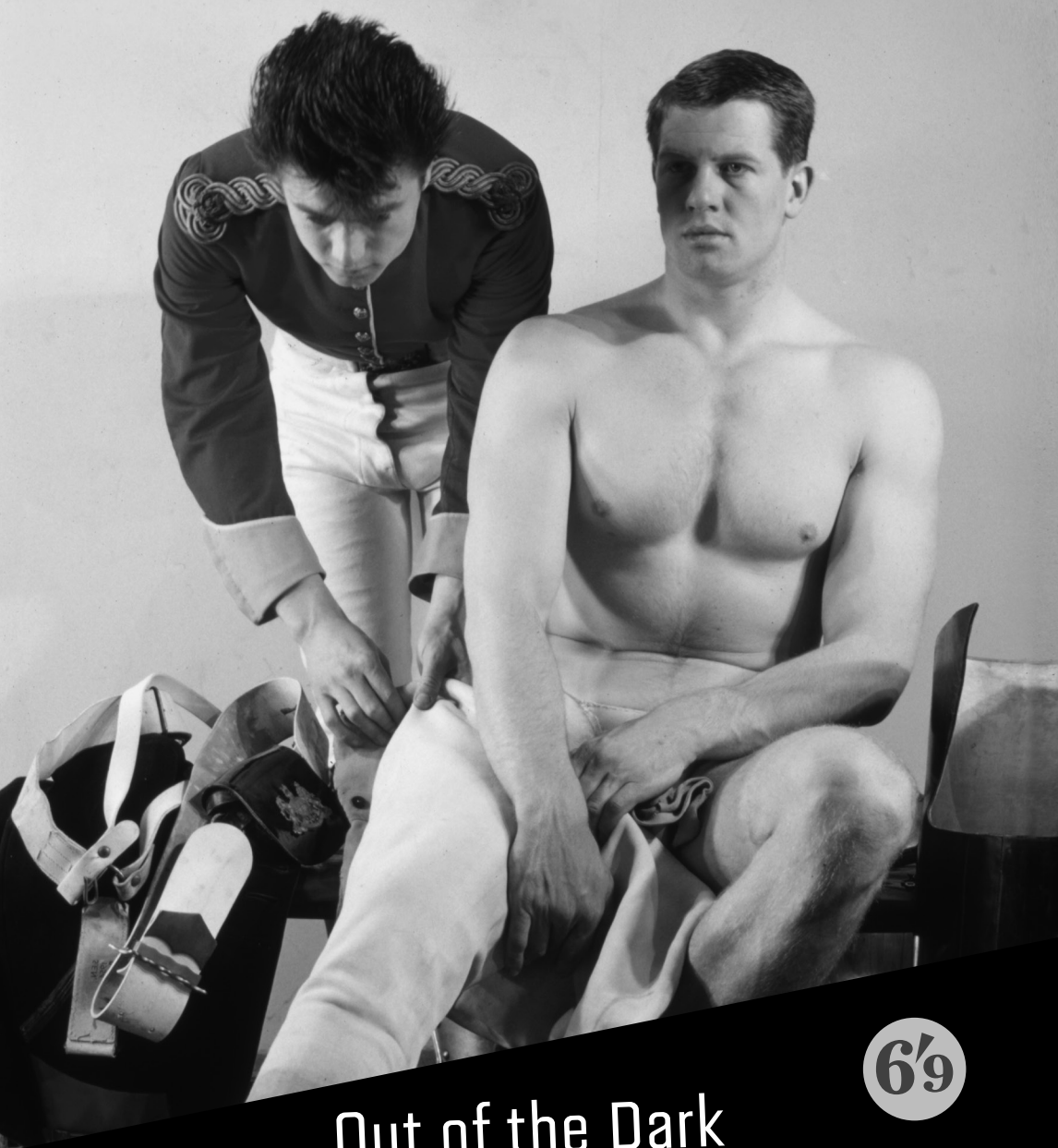


# *Royale* **HUSSAR**

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Out of the Dark

10 - 29 JUNE 2016

The Lost Images

69

# Out of the Dark

## The Lost Images

Basil Arthur Scott Clavering (1910-1973) is recognised as the most prominent British post-war photographer, who specialised in the development and production of a genre of photography centred on body-builders, the male uniform, and military discipline.

Clavering established Studio Royale followed by Hussar in Pimlico and Soho, London, which were used to promote his work commercially, albeit with a low public profile. Royale specialised in body-builders and physique imagery, and Hussar in military themes, with both studios producing photo-sets, which were advertised in specialist periodicals (this catalogue is provided in a similar style). Hussar developed the images into *Sensational Playlets* and Royale famous *Storyettes*, which were then sold through magazines by mail order.

John Charles Parkhurst (1927-2000) worked alongside Clavering in the production of the photographs from the early 1950s to the mid 1960s, continuing his photographic activities on a more informal basis through to the early 1990s. It was not only their technical prowess behind the camera and their mastery of lighting effects which make their images so significant, but also the social and political context surrounding the production and circulation of the images. Up to that point in time, no other commercial photographer had attempted to focus exclusively on this

genre or produce images in such consistent volume.

The photographs were mainly produced in the basement of Clavering's house in Chelsea, which he had converted into a well-equipped studio. The photographic images paid great attention to detail and stylisation, with Clavering and Parkhurst using authentic uniforms and props, representing Guardsmen, the Royal Horse Artillery, Royal Navy and Army.

Clavering and Parkhurst's work reflects in both imagery and subject matter the drawings of Tom of Finland (Touko Laaksonen, 1920-1991). Laaksonen met Clavering during a visit to London and Studio Hussar commissioned a series of 17 panel drawings from him entitled *The Thieving Cowboy* (1957).

No other photographers of the time were extracting so much visual drama from the clothed male figure. Other physique photographers were viewing the legal restrictions of the time as a challenge, whereas Royale and Hussar embraced them as an opportunity to produce magnificent risqué images.

Clavering and Parkhurst both served in the Navy, and their experience and connection to their subject matter is evident in the way clothing and partial undress was depicted, reflecting an insider's comprehension and understanding.

Many of the models were also active military personnel, who Clavering met in public houses close to Hyde Park and the Chelsea barracks. Consequently, the images are not simply of men dressing up in uniforms, but rather men fully aware of both the purpose and symbolism of the uniform.

The original images and photo-sets from Royale and Hussar Studios were produced in black and white, due to cost and the technical limitations of home photographic printing. The current exhibition images are displayed in colour, produced from Clavering and Parkhurst's original colour transparencies captured over half a century ago.

Clavering bequeathed Parkhurst his photographic records and equipment in 1973, and following Parkhurst's death in 2000, the collection was bestowed to friend Paul Cambridge. The images were carefully stored before being entrusted to Michael Carnes and Robert Lavis in Tasmania. A careful and meticulous restoration process began and has culminated in this exhibition.

This exhibition introduces a revolutionary force in 20th century male photography - the art of Basil Clavering and John Parkhurst, Royale and Hussar Studios.

A unique collection of images thought lost, but now legitimately out of the dark.

*It can sometimes take  
a generation,  
for society to  
fully appreciate what  
a few always knew.*

**This is beauty  
This is genius  
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*(M Carnes)*



## HUSSAR

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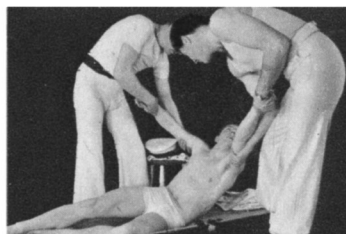
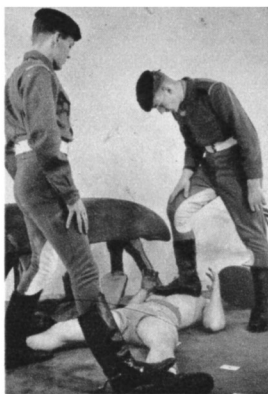
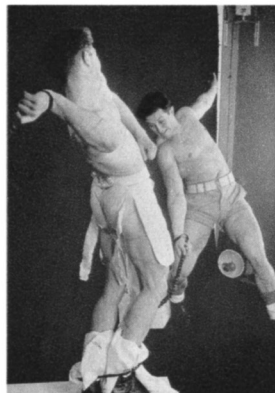
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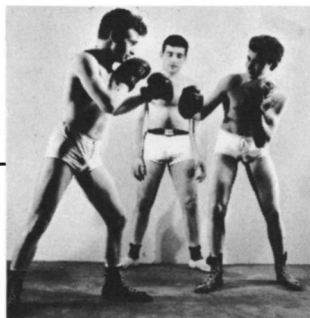








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# Production notes...

Art Collectors, Michael Carnes and Robert Lavis would like to sincerely thank; Paul Cambridge, Diane Hudson and Debbie Salter for text, gallery director Trudi Young, Luke Wagner for production of the archival art prints and graphic designer David Salter.



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Two muscular men are shown from behind, hanging from thick ropes. They are wearing light-colored trousers and dark belts. The man in the foreground is more prominent, with his back to the camera. The man behind him is slightly offset to the right. The background is dark, and the ropes are thick and textured.

this  
is  
the back of

*Royale* **HUSSAR**

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