

Press Release of July 7th by Swiss Exhibition Makers:

Conflict Over Louis Agassiz and His Pictures: Harvard Pile Up Contradictions

The more Harvard authorities are trying to argue themselves out of the embarrassment caused by denying the reproduction of photographs commissioned by Louis Agassiz in South Carolina and Brazil to a team of Swiss exhibition makers, the more they are piling up contradictions.

=> In their e-mail of 25th January, 2012, the only reason Harvard gave for denying the reproduction rights for four of the South Carolina daguerreotypes was the fact that allegedly the photographs in question had been designated "sensitive" by Harvard.

=> In Mary Carmichael's Boston Globe article of 27th June, 2012, Harvard spoke of a "blanket policy against the display of exploitative images of naked people", although permission for reproduction of South Carolina daguerreotypes and Brazilian pictures had already been granted to the authors and editors of "Eternal Tour" (2009), "Rentyhorn Book" (2010), "(T)races of Louis Agassiz" and "Delia's Tears" (2010). This "blanket policy" has never been mentioned to us by Harvard.

=> In the Boston Globe's editorial of 5th July, 2012, Harvard argued that the Swiss exhibition makers had "wished to blow up the sensitive images and print them on a large banner". This is far from the truth. In our e-mail of 18th January, 2012, we had merely spoken of planning to "print on one roll-up banner four of the Louis Agassiz slave daguerreotypes". Exhibition makers all over the world know "roll-up banners" as convenient tools to display texts and images on a surface about the size of a human figure (see picture below). The question of "large" formats of reproduction has never been mentioned to us by Harvard.

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