

YOSSI MILO GALLERY

For Immediate Release:

First Look

January 26 – February 25, 2012
Inaugural Reception in New Gallery Space
Thursday, February 16, 6:00 – 8:00PM

First Look is a curated show of photographs by artists whose first New York solo exhibitions were presented by Yossi Milo Gallery. These artists include Robert Bergman, Mohamed Bourouissa, Pieter Hugo, Simen Johan, Sze Tsung Leong, Loretta Lux, Muzi Quawson, Mark Ruwedel, Alessandra Sanguinetti, Lise Sarfati, Jacob Aue Sobol, Alec Soth, Kohei Yoshiyuki and Liu Zheng. *First Look* is the first time that a large selection of the gallery's artists will be shown together, providing visitors with the opportunity to discover overarching concepts in the gallery's program since it opened in 2000.

Pieter Hugo (South African, b. 1976)

Pieter Hugo's most recent series *Permanent Error* depicts a technological wasteland in Ghana. On the outskirts of a slum known as Agbogbloshie lie piles of discarded computers and electronic parts, many of which were donated by the UN in their effort to close the digital divide. Amid the toxic scene, Mr. Hugo takes portraits of young people who make their living by burning down the plastics of old wires, disks and monitors to extract the metals inside.

The artist's series *The Hyena and Other Men* was created while traveling in Nigeria with a troupe of animal charmers and their collection of tenuously domesticated hyenas, monkeys and snakes. The portraits feature groupings of men and animals surrounded by the barren urban centers of northern Nigeria. Taken during quiet moments between the spectacles of street performances, the photographs depict a stillness that subverts the tense physicality of the animals and their trainers.

Pieter Hugo's first New York City solo exhibition, *The Hyena and Other Men*, was presented at the gallery in 2007. Subsequent shows at the gallery were *Nollywood* (2010) and *Permanent Error* (2011).

Simen Johan (Norwegian, b. 1973)

Simen Johan's rarely seen series from 1994-1999, *And Nothing Was To Be Trusted*, combines photographs of various body parts, family snapshots, disparate interiors and landscapes to create abnormal-looking children in bizarre situations. The images were output onto photographic negative film and printed and toned as conventional black and white photographs, confounding one's expectations of both digital and traditional photography.

Simen Johan's first exhibition at the Gallery was in 2000. Since that first show of black-and-white photographs, Simen has had six other shows at the gallery, including color work and sculpture.

Robert Bergman (American, b. 1944)

Robert Bergman traveled America's Midwest and East Coast by car with a 35mm camera, creating portraits of people in the urban locations where he encountered them, using only available light. Art historian Meyer Schapiro wrote of Mr. Bergman's photographs, "His finest works bring to mind some of the greatest painted portraits... Here are masterful revelations of states of existence in the inner and outer person - truly profound works of art."

Robert Bergman's work premiered in solo exhibitions at Yossi Milo Gallery; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and MoMA's P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, in 2009.

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Mohamed Bourouissa (French, b. 1978)

Mohamed Bourouissa's photographs from the series *Périphéries* are theatrical depictions of the tensions and issues that are a part of daily life for those living on the periphery of society. Focusing on young people in the suburbs of Paris, the images combine documentary-style journalistic content with formal compositions influenced by traditional paintings, such as those by Delacroix. Though the scenes are carefully staged, the images retain a sense of spontaneity that contributes to the ambiguous drama of the photographs.

Mohamed Bourouissa's first solo exhibition in the U.S. was held at the Gallery in 2010.

Liu Zheng (Chinese, b. 1969)

In his 1994-2002 series, *The Chinese*, Liu Zheng portrays a society wrestling with the contradictions between traditional culture and modernization. Zheng's black-and-white photographs depict various archetypal Chinese figures in their contemporary incarnations. The series presents a broad cross-section of society including transsexuals, coal miners, opera performers, as well as waxwork figures in historical museums.

Liu Zheng's premiere U.S. solo exhibition was presented at the Gallery in 2005.

Loretta Lux (German, b. 1969)

Loretta Lux creates portraits that address the idea of childhood as a paradise lost, utilizing photography, painting and digital imaging to execute her compositions. Her scenarios of isolation and distance occur in ambiguous time and space, and reference paintings by Old Masters, such as Bronzino, Velasquez and Goya.

Loretta Lux's premiere solo exhibition was held at the Gallery in 2004. In 2005, she was awarded the International Center of Photography's Infinity Award for Art.

Muzi Quawson (British, b. 1978)

British artist Muzi Quawson explores the nature of identity of those who are perceived as society's outsiders. The series *Pull Back the Shade* follows a young musician in Woodstock, New York and her relationships with her partners, friends, and twin daughters over the course of several years. The artist draws on the cinematography of New American Cinema of the 1970s to develop a hybrid interpretation of everyday life and filmic reality.

Muzi Quawson's first U.S. solo exhibition was held at the Gallery in 2008.

Kohei Yoshiyuki (Japanese, b. 1946)

In the 1970s, Kohei Yoshiyuki used a 35mm camera, infrared film, and flash to document the people who gathered in Tokyo's parks at night for clandestine trysts, as well as the many spectators lurking in the bushes who watched—and sometimes participated in—these couplings.

Kohei Yoshiyuki's first U.S. exhibition, and his first exhibition since 1979, was presented at the Gallery in 2007. The book, *Kohei Yoshiyuki: The Park*, was published the same year by Yossi Milo Gallery and Hatje Cantz to accompany the exhibition.

Lise Sarfati (French, b. 1958)

For the series, *The New Life*, Lise Sarfati journeyed through the United States, photographing young adults in the context of their solitary lives in towns such as Austin, Texas; Berkeley, California; Portland, Oregon; and New Orleans, Louisiana. With minimal choreography, Sarfati activates connections with her subjects in their everyday spaces and situations – bedrooms, backyards, kitchens, grocery stores. The photographs dramatize the complex emotional states of mind that lie close beneath the surface of her subjects.

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Lise Sarfati's first U.S. solo exhibition, *The New Life*, was held at the Gallery in 2005. An exhibition of the artist's early body of work taken in Russia was exhibited in 2008.

Alessandra Sanguinetti (American, b. 1968)

Alessandra Sanguinetti's series *On the Sixth Day* (1996-2004) draws on myth and fable, focusing on the interaction and interdependence between humans and domesticated animals in the countryside outside Buenos Aires, Argentina. Frequently photographing from the vantage point of her subjects – including lambs, cows, horses, pigs, chickens, dogs, and rabbits – the artist acts as a witness to moments where life and death hang in the balance. Local roadsides, woods, and farm fields provide a backdrop for each scene.

The Gallery presented Ms. Sanguinetti's first New York City solo exhibition, *The Adventures of Guille and Belinda and the Enigmatic Meaning of Their Dreams*, in 2004, followed by exhibitions of the series, *On the Sixth Day* (2006) and *The Life that Came* (2008).

Sze Tsung Leong (American and British, b. 1970)

Sze Tsung Leong's series *History Images* (2002-2005) captures the dramatic urban changes that have transformed cities in China, revealing a process that ranges from the destruction of traditional neighborhoods to the mass construction of new urban environments. The large-scale photographs portray an urban reality caught between the end of one history and the beginning of another.

Mr. Leong's first gallery exhibition in New York, *History Images*, was featured at the Gallery in 2006. The artist's next two bodies of work were subsequently exhibited in 2008 (*Horizons*) and in 2011 (*Cities*).

Jacob Aue Sobol (Danish, b. 1976)

Photographs from the series *I, Tokyo* were taken between 2006 and 2008 while the artist lived in Tokyo. Overwhelmed by loneliness and isolation due to the unfamiliar culture and large city, the artist used the camera to find "individual human presence" in a swarming metropolis. The photographs offer a personal view of Tokyo, a result of the artist's need to connect to the people and the city.

Jacob Aue Sobol's series *I, Tokyo* and *Sabine* were featured in the artist's first U.S. solo exhibition in 2010.

Alec Soth (American, b. 1968)

A result of a road trip made down the Mississippi River in 1999, the series *Sleeping by the Mississippi* is about the spirit of the river and life along its banks. Rather than narrate a specific story, Mr. Soth used his 8" x 10" camera to photograph a distinct feeling which speaks to a particularly American understanding of freedom. The geographic journey begins in the frozen winters of Minnesota and wanders south into the heat of Louisiana. While not all of the photographs are of people, nearly all of the images suggest the lives of people. Whether photographing washed-up debris or an abandoned interior, Soth claimed to be making a kind of portrait.

Alec Soth's premiere solo exhibition opened at the Gallery in 2004. That same year, photographs from *Sleeping by the Mississippi* were included in the Whitney Biennial.

Mark Ruwedel (American, b. 1954)

For his series, *Westward the Course of Empire* (1994–2006), Mark Ruwedel photographed the sites of 19th and 20th century railway lines in the American and Canadian West using a large-format view camera. The detailed gelatin silver prints record the remains and ruins of railway networks, as well as evidence of industries that moved in after the decline of the railroad. In the tradition of the New Topographics, Mr. Ruwedel acts as an archivist, cataloging the effects of past usage on the current landscape.

Mark Ruwedel's first solo exhibition in New York was presented at the Gallery in 2009. His second exhibition, *Records*, will be the first solo exhibition presented in the Gallery's new location.