

PACE/MACGILL GALLERY

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Gaze

February 11 - March 20, 2010

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9:30-5:30; Saturday, 10:00-6:00



Lee Friedlander



Katy Grannan



Diane Arbus

Pace/MacGill Gallery is pleased to present "Gaze," a selection of photographs by Diane Arbus, Lee Friedlander, Katy Grannan, Jocelyn Lee, Lisette Model and Susan Paulsen. The exhibition explores the medium's ability to capture both the literal and psychological space around a subject caught in a gaze.

The photographs on view reveal the complex relationship between photographer and subject, and subsequently subject and viewer. As concessions are made on both sides of the camera, the portraits range from perplexingly distant to intimate and relatable. Each, however, requires the mediation of the viewer to unlock the psychology of the individual behind the gaze or decipher the photographer's intended reading of the portrait.

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Recognized for her iconic images of society's marginal characters, DIANE ARBUS (1923-1971) sought to reveal the mysterious, private realities of her often eccentric subjects. The direct, unreserved manner with which they confront the camera demonstrates the degree of trust risked between Arbus and her sitters to create such penetrating and powerful psychological portraits.

Turning the camera on himself, LEE FRIEDLANDER (b. 1934) deliberately collapses the relationship between photographer and subject in his self-portraits. In the form of his shadow, reflection, as well as his own visage (at times looking very disturbed), Friedlander visually imposes his presence on his classic images of the American social landscape.

The large format color portraits from KATY GRANNAN's most recent series, "The Westerns" (2008), document northern Californians struggling for self-definition under the illumination of unyielding sunlight. Through the act of fixed portraiture, Grannan (b. 1969) freezes the ever-shifting identities of her subjects, along with their ambiguous and uncertain gazes.

Interested in physical and psychological transitions, JOCELYN LEE's (b. 1962) portraits are studies of the human condition. Caught in silent, solitary moments, Lee's sitters, and by extension the viewer, reflect upon matters of aging, illness, vulnerability, our desire for connection and struggle for personal identity.

LISETTE MODEL (1901-1983) documented the inhabitants of twentieth-century urban life through direct, close-up and, at times, threatening portraits. While her subjects span the social spectrum, Model imbued each with a strong sense of presence, often employing obtuse camera angles and low vantage points.

SUSAN PAULSEN (b. 1957) presents straightforward, intimate portraits of the people and animals which populate her everyday life. Depicting family and friends without contrivance and in the warmth of natural light, Paulsen's images convey a quiet, unpretentious, peaceful quality that is familiar and relatable. Her subjects meet the camera not as strangers, but as friends inviting the viewer into their world.