

Jeff Louviere + Vanessa S. Brown

Photographies, as such...



UNTIL the SKY AROUND the COMET TORE THROUGH HIM (32" X 54" gold leaf, Kozo paper, paint & resin)

EXHIBITION HISTORY

SOLO SHOWS

- 2013 *Something Whispered, Something Sung*, Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland FL January
2012 *Something Whispered, Something Sung*, Art for Arts Sake, Ogden Museum, New Orleans LA October
2011 *We're Wolves*, A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans, LA–November
Exquisite Collaborations, Andrew Smith Gallery, Santa Fe NM July
Counterfeit, A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans LA May
As If..., Ballarat International Foto Biennale, Melbourne, Australia August
2010 *As If...*, Spiva Center for the Arts, Joplin MO July
Persistence of Vision, solo show + lecture, Washington & Lee University, VA January
2009 *Folie à Deux*, A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans, LA December
2008 *Instinct/Extinct*, A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans Prospect 1 October
2007 *As If...*, solo show, A Gallery for Fine Photography October
2006 *Chloroform*, Farrington Smith Gallery, New Orleans, LA, Dec January
Blood & Wonder, Mason Murer Gallery, Atlanta, GA

GROUP SHOWS

- 2011 AIPAD Photography show A Gallery for Fine Photography, NYC April
2010 Lightbox Gallery–Portland, OR in conjunction with Diffusion Magazine–July
AIPAD Photography show A Gallery for Fine Photography, NYC March
2009 AIPAD Photography show A Gallery for Fine Photography, NYC March
Carnival, Home Space Gallery, New Orleans
2008 *Heroes of Horticulture*, exhibit at U.S. Botanical Gardens, Washington DC
AlterNative, screening two recent films, Gallery 2514, New Orleans Prospect 1 October
AIPAD Photography Show A Gallery for Fine Photography, NYC April
2007 *Heroes of Horticulture*, George Eastman House, Alison Nordström–curator
Photography Now, 100 portfolios, group show, Wright State University, March April
Sun Pictures to Mega Pixels, group show, WAH Center, NY
TRACE gallery UK, collectors portfolio, OVERAWE series, England
Katrina Exposed, Fine Arts Center, Colorado Springs
2006 *Why Look at Animals*, George Eastman House, September 2006–2010, traveling
Holga group show, Photomedia Center, Erie PA, December
Vision/ReVision, Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA, Dec January
Silver Eye Center for Photography, group show, Pittsburgh, PA, Nov February
Katrina Exposed, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA May September
Trace (Visions of Katrina) Houston Center for Photography, group show, Houston TX, September
Hand in Hand, Minnesota Center for Photography

FILM SCREENINGS

- 2011 Ballarat International Foto Biennale, solo show, Ballarat Australia
2010 Festival International de Vidéo Danse de Bourgogne, screening *Dead Weight Night*
2008 AlterNative, screening two recent films, Gallery 2514, New Orleans — Prospect 1
Globian International Film Festival, *Dead Weight Night*, Potsdam and Berlin, Germany

FILM SCREENINGS CONTINUED

- 2007 Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, *Gravité* screening, Montreal
Passa Porta Festival, screening *Repetition Compulsion*, Brussels, Belgium
Independent Exposure, Screening of *From Here On It Got Rough*, traveling
Flicker Festival, Screening of *From Here On It Got Rough*, NYC
- 2006 FILMSTOCK, *Gravité* world premiere, Luton, England
Tribeca Film Festival, Rosanne Cash video premiere (holga animation)
- 2005 Halloweird, *Repetition Compulsion* screening, Porto, Portugal & San Francisco
Potsdam International Film Festival, Germany, *Repetition Compulsion*
Knitting Factory, NYC, screening of *Repetition Compulsion*

COLLECTIONS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| George Eastman House | Ford Foundation |
| Ogden Museum of Southern Art | Rosanne Cash |
| New Orleans Museum of Art | Kirk Kelley, Laika Studios |
| Photomedia Center | Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie |
| Micro Cinema International | Washington & Lee University |
| Globians International Film Archive | James & Cherye Pierce |
| Museum of Fine Arts Houston | Judy Norrell |

ARTISTS TALKS

- 2010 Spiva Center for the Arts, Joplin, MO
Springbox Gallery, Portland, OR
Savannah College of Art & Design, Atlanta, GA
Washington & Lee University, Lexington, VA

AWARDS

- 2006 Photography Now, 100 Portfolios, Wright State University
Atlanta Celebrates Photography, Signature Photo
fotoMAGAZINs best discovery at fotofest 06
- 2005 1st place, Soho Photo Gallery, NY
Honorable mention, PhotoSpiva, Joplin, MO
- 2004 Honorable mention, Art Institute & Gallery, Salisbury, MD
2nd Place Geneva Gallery, Morristown, NJ
Purchase Award Photomedia Center, PA
Best of Photography Center for the Arts, Steamboat Springs, CO
Patron Award Northern Arts Council, Rhinelander, WI
Best of Show Rome Art Coterie, Rome, GA

2nd place Bemis Art Show, Seattle, WA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2012 Oxford American Magazine, Super Stars of Southern Art, March
- 2011 ArtNews, December Counterfeit exhibitin review, John Kemp
Ballarat International Foto Biennial catalog, Essay by Dr. Ken Wach
Through a Tarnished Looking Glass, WHOA Magazine, Sid Cocain
Cool Hunting, Jacob Resneck
- 2010 Diffusion Magazine #2, Cover Artists portfolio and interview, Blue Mitchell
Inside Art/Gambit Weekly, Folie a Deux Exhibition ReviewD. Eric Bookhardt
Times Picayune, Folie a Deux Exhibition Review,Doug MacCash
Roanoke Times, Exhibtion Review, Mike Allen
- 2009 Black and White Photography magazine, London
artnet.com magazine - AIPAD Attraction, Walter Robinson
Super 8 Today, #14
LA Homes and Garden, January Issue
- 2008 Shots magazine, Issue # 99
New Orleans Review, Loyola University press
artnet.com magazine - AIPAD Attraction, Walter Robinson
ARTINFO, Breaking Out at the AIPAD Photo Show, Kris Wilton
- 2007 B&W Magazine, Special Issue, August
Magic & Mutants, Exhibition Review, Gambit Weekly, D. Eric Bookhardt
Blood Work, Exhibition Review, Times Picayune, Doug MacCash
Interview, Italian Photo Web Magazine, www.ilterzoocchio.it
- 2006 Shots magazine, Portfolio and interview, Russell Joslin, December
fotoMAGAZIN, Talent issue, July, Hamburg, Germany, Manfred Zollner
Why Look at Animals, Exhibition catalog, George Eastman House
Trace: Visions of Katrina Review, Spacetaker.org
Eyemazing, Amsterdam, Feature, Susan Zadeh
Shots magazine, Issues # 92 & 93, Russell Joslin
Oxford American magazine, Marc Smirnoff
Creativity magazine, OverAwe, Terry Kattleman
- 2005 July, Ag Magazine, London, Chris Dickie, Summer Issue
April / May Camera Arts, review of Soho Photo Krappy Kamera show
Fall, Creative Vision by Jeremy Webb, AVA publishing (upcoming)
Erie Times, PA, Exhibition review, Karen Rene Merklet, February
Design of Dissent by Milton Glaser and Mirko Ilic, Rockport publishing
- 2004 New Orleans Homes & Lifestyles magazine, Olivia Smith
How magazine, self promotional issue
Creativity magazine, slumberland article, Terry Kattleman
Times Picayune Exhibition Review, Doug MacCash, October 1st
Photomedia Center Artists Interview, Eric Grignol, October
- 2003 Gambit Weekly, Exhibition Review, D. Eric Bookhardt, September

Jeff Louviere + Vanessa S. Brown

BIOGRAPHY

Jeff Louviere is from New Orleans, Vanessa Brown is from New York and they met each other half-way, in Savannah. Jeff graduated from the Savannah College of Art and Design during which he and 3 other artists created the worlds largest painting, a 76,000 square foot image of Elvis which was included in the Guinness Book of World Records. Vanessa began photographing at age 12 and won a Kodak International Award of Excellence in Photography when she was 17. She photographed through Italy and Greece before graduating from Rochester Institute of Technology with a degree in Photography.

Louviere + Vanessas tableaux vivant series, Slumberland, began in 2003 and continues still. It is a collection of separate narratives existing as dialogue between the couple. In 2005, they started on their Creature series, a singular story told through many faces and as such the opposite of the Slumberland series. They have a long fascination with themes of duality, and paradox: beauty as horror, creation as destruction, the personal as a universal. Craft and concept are the devices they use to explore the gray zone within those themes.

Jeff returned to New Orleans with Vanessa in 1998. The impetus for their collaborations began as a series of tableaux created to resemble New Orleans crime scenes. They made their collaboration official by getting married in Switzerland during the winter of 2000. They own an 1800s home in the historic Bywater neighborhood of New Orleans (which survived the hurricane) doing what they love with their two resuced camera-brash german shepherds and lots of great friends.

BIOLOGY

Jeff Louviere (1971) New Orleans, LA

Vanessa S. Brown (1970) Ithaca, NY

1995 Master of Fine Arts Degree, Painting
Savannah College of Art and Design, GA

1992 Bachelor of Fine Art, Photography
Rochester Institute of Technology, NY

1993 BA, Graphic Design and Printmaking,
McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA

Jeff Louviere + Vanessa S. Brown

General Artist Statement

Tradition and adventure — a description both personal and cultural, not ascribed to us, but by us. The South gave the world flight, rock and roll in addition to an endless source of artistic raw materials.

Louviere + Vanessa combine the mediums and nuances of film, photography, painting and printmaking. They utilize Holgas, 8mm film, destroyed negatives, gold, resin, wax and blood. They have a long fascination with themes of duality and paradox: beauty as horror, creation as destruction, the personal as a universal. Craft, concept and history are the devices they use to explore the gray zone within those themes.

Louviere + Vanessa explore the idea that the medium of photography is more important than any one photo because the radical mechanics of photography has caused them to consider the making of images. They've taken the raw materials, changed variables and given them new possibilities within the realm of photography.

Counterfeit

This new series is an examination of the artistic impulse. Its excitement is in the challenge of a tactile and visceral discovery of art making that is inspired by the quotidian. It is painting's inherent detachment from the world to which photography is intrinsically bound that these works exist to relate only to themselves.

Counterfeit explores intersections between realism in photography with the expressionistic aspects of painting and the abstractionist possibilities inherent in both. We are inspired by Rauschenberg's idea of "working within the gap between life and art". We explore the tension between photography and painting, realism and abstraction.

We are seeking the essence of multiple mediums. We use the mechanics of photography to record directly and the nature of the paint, gold and paper to express the hand of the artist. We draw from the methods of realism to scrutinize, expressionism to exaggerate and abstraction to formalize and create a fundamentally visual experience.

The content of *Counterfeit* is of particular interest to us. These images are exaggerated photographs of world currency that distill the value that countries place on their histories and culture. We find the secular canonization of politicians, a reverence of animals and the celebration of artists and poets. It fascinates us to see the similarities shared by countries that are culturally and politically polar when they choose to filter their histories onto a few square inches of paper.

Counterfeit maintains a parallel to our past work in dealing with concepts of integration through disintegration, while it departs from our traditional subject matter and adds the element of color. We see it as nostalgic absurdity—a pataphysical solution—two degrees separated from reality. Like the current evolution of money through the advent of technology we re-contextualize the (arguably) most ubiquitous form of art, pushing currency further into oblivion.

Jeff Louviere + Vanessa S. Brown

Folie à Deux

In regards to the cinégraph, we have tried to embrace, expand and challenge the history of photography and filmmaking. We devised this new technique as a way to come full circle—so to speak—from our photographic beginnings which inspired our film making and back again to these experimental films/photos creating new ways of seeing through the destruction of the medium. We shoot the photographs with super 8mm film in 3,550 individual stills, the works become both a projected motion picture and a still image made up of the deconstructed strips of film.

Our goal was to create a new kind of diptych based on pairing opposites:

motion and stillness

abstract and representational

linear and repetitive

proverbial and mysterious

We raise questions about the experience art creates depending on spatial and temporal methods. The integration arises from the disintegration of the medium. The representational still image is the destruction of the film while the abstract motion is the construction.

It represents shifts in seeing, one with the mind and one with the brain.

INSTINCTEXTINCT

Nearly every living thing is affected by instincts—except humans.
Ours are gone. The closest thing we inherit are drives: eros and destruction.

We created this series using both. We let our drives take over with each image relating to the previous as a tangent creating a felt possible reality like an hallucination that involves all the senses and lets the viewer be a participant. The audience is the dénouement based on their desires based on their memories—individually and collectively.

We let brute sense and intellect intersect—sometimes canceling each other out, sometimes compounding—merging form and content to let the works turn in on themselves. The photos have been deconstructed, some in execution, some in concept, some temporally, and some spatially.

The mixing of process has always had a profound effect on us. This time we're adapting a nearly extinct form of photography to 21st century methods. Gold is malleable, conductive and universally important. We are exploring the idea that the medium of photography is more important than any one photo because the radical mechanics of photography has caused us to consider the making of images. We've taken the raw materials, changed variables and given them new possibilities within the realm of photography.

Bears hibernate, ants divide labor,
humans make art

and art serves itself.

Creature

We were born in the age of reason. But, we live in New Orleans. Time here has no context, the whole city is like a photograph, frozen in an old moment, but continually aging. It is this contradiction of time and place that surrounds us when we make photographs.

We re-invent reality. We create what we think we see.

The subjects for the series are what we think of as a universal “creature”. What we found suggested the symbols and goals of photography itself – stopping time, preserving, idolizing, explaining and mystifying.

The first stage of our creature photos began as outsiders looking in. We lived with them, set them up and like a crime scene began moving around them, studying their form and finding every angle. We were seeking personalities. We shot them inside, outside, lit with every available light source. We primarily use Holgas, but other, more expensive cameras were occasionally employed. In essence, we ran it like an experiment; the creatures being the only constant.

Our second stage takes the discoveries of each creature’s personality and, like insiders looking out, we create new realities – fictions of each creature and the characters they can portray. They are becoming more narrative but still maintain an associative nature.

The way these images are interpreted is dependent on individual history and experience. Some see contorted creatures, sad and lonely, trying to be accepted for what they are, yet too alien to ever have a chance. Classic Frankenstein. Other people may see beautiful but strange creatures that are totally at peace. It’s this ambiguity, which gives viewers ample room for interpretation, that has begun asking more questions of us than they answer.

Our style has evolved from working in print making, painting, photography and the conviction that the negative itself is sacred. We now try to avoid the preciousness usually associated with the production and presentation of photography. There’s no “white glove” approach. To that end, we begin with the destruction of the negative. We wax, stain with blood, crush and tear the final print. We also print the images at large sizes, again negating their preciousness. There are editions to each piece, but in order to maintain an organic feel, no two are exactly alike in size or color. The prints are made on Japanese handmade paper in order to mimic the color and texture of the creatures as well as give an extra sense of the artists’ hand. And like the old adage that every picture tells a story, our photos also have a tail.

Chloroform

Light as an energy source. Photosynthesis as the context of our symbiotic relationship with our environment—accidental light and its conversion into an integral benefit. “Chloroforms” is the synthesis of elusive ideas into art. Ancient imitative magic, historically used to embody the attributes of animals, behaving as they hoped nature would behave, is more specifically about manipulating the uncontrollable truth of life feeding on life.

“Philosophically speaking, the Chloroforms series is related to Creature but this particular world is populated by humanoid characters with appendages that make them look unsettlingly alien. As with Creature, we respond to these images with a flood of similar questions. We feel awkward around these beings because they are not like us. We may even feel an impulse to reject them altogether so we don’t have to deal with them. But after spending some time in their presence, we begin to realize that these are lost souls that want nothing more than friendship. Like Frankenstein, they are destined to be outsiders, and even with the best of intentions, there may be little we can do to reach out to them.” – Gerhard Bock, artist

1. An agent that causes loss of sensation with or without the loss of consciousness.

Slumberland

“If functions can be given any meaning in art, then our art’s function is the testing of personal observations, convictions, and moods through our ability to communicate them—to make the personal universal, and vice versa. By collaborating, we put ourselves in the midst of alternating currents of decision and production, action and responsibility, decay and clarity—capturing the moment between ‘has been’ and ‘what will be.’”

Their art begins, as many good stories do, with the word. It may be angel or leaf, fire or perhaps geometry. The project of collaboration—like the project of marriage—starts with a conversation, an enjoining of two visions, and a cleaving, in both meanings of the word. They marry two sensibilities, then invite in the necessary uncertainty and unpredictability of creation. In the forge of conversation, an idea is born; in the crucible of the creative act, the idea is alchemized into a new—and sometimes unforeseen—entity.

Louviere + Vanessa’s photographs strip away the parameters of time, removing the benefit of that way of contextualizing and defining what the viewer sees. Instead, the images emerge as archetypes or shards of myth: deeply personal tableaux that challenge the viewer to enter the conversation. For them, the more personal the image, the more universal are the potential responses to it. By distressing and abusing the final negatives, they re-impose time (through the process of disintegration and decay) onto the time-less picture; like myth, the final product is both ancient and breathtakingly new.

The work of Louviere + Vanessa is unabashedly narrative and borrows from stories, dreams, and the collective human unconscious. Like authors, they dress and pose their characters then set them loose to fill their particular created universe. Their subjects converse with the camera and with their settings; like the traditional tableaux vivants, they are at once more universal and more individual in their stylized setting than they could be in the fog of the everyday.

—Annie Wedekind, Editor—FSG books, NYC