

*Jeff Louviere + Vanessa S. Brown*



EXHIBITION HISTORY

SOLO SHOWS

- 2015 *Resonantia*, Candela Gallery, Richmond, VA September–October  
2013 *Oblivion Atlas*, A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans, December  
2013 *Creatures*, D.M. Allison Gallery, Houston, October  
*Counterfeit*, Candela Gallery, Richmond VA, May  
*Coincidence*, solo show + lecture, 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...*, solo show + lecture, 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, December  
*Blood & Wonder*, Mason Murer Gallery, Atlanta, GA

GROUP SHOWS

- 2015 *A Show of Hands*, A1 LabArts, Knoxville, TN, March  
2014 *Black Forest*, Candela Gallery, Richmond, VA, November  
2013 *Decisive Moments*, Honolulu Museum of Art, December through June 2014  
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

- 2013 *Skeletons*, a dance for film, Premiere at the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans  
2012 Ogden Museum of Southern Art, Five Films

FILM SCREENINGS CONTINUED

- 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
- 2007 Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, *Gravité* screening, Montreal  
Passa Porta Festival, screening *Repetition Compulsion*, Bruxells, 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

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

ARTISTS TALKS

- 2013 Candela Gallery, Counterfeit  
Ogden Museum of Southern Art  
Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, FL
- 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

- 2015 Critical Mass top 50
- 2013 American Advertising Feberation, Gold Addy, Book Design and Best In Show, Print Category for *Coincidence*
- 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
- 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  
Best of Show, Rome Art Coterie, Rome, GA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2016 *New Republic*, Commissioned photos (Resonantia)  
*Diffusion*, Featured artists for Resonantia  
*Foto Relevance*, Geoffrey Koslov for Resonantia  
*Lens Scratch*, Aline Smithson for Resonantia  
*Creative Habit*, (pod cast) Paige Goodpasture for Resonantia  
*Gambit*, D. Eric Bookhardt reviews Resonantia  
*New Orleans Advocate*, John D'addario reviews Resonantia  
*GUP*, Issue #49 for Resonantia  
*Square Magazine*, Issue #604 for Resonantia
- 2015 *Photographer of the Day*, Blue Mitchell, PDN, July 6
- 2014 *Black Forest*, Russell Joslin, Candela Books  
*EYEMAZING*, Ten year survey, Susan Zadeh, Amsterdam  
*Inventing Reality*, Luna Press, New Orleans  
*My Time*, Simona Corsetti, Italy (magazine)
- 2013 Louisiana Cultural Vistas, Cover and feature, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities  
*New Orleans Art Review*, review of Something Whispered, Something Sung exhibition
- 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 Review D. Eric Bookhardt  
Times Picayune, Folie a Deux Exhibition Review, Doug MacCash  
Roanoke Times, Exhibition 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*, Feature 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

BIBLIOGRAPHY CONTINUED

- 2005 *Ag Magazine*, London, Chris Dickie, Summer Issue  
*Camera Arts*, review of Soho Photo Krappy Kamera show  
*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  
Times Picayune Exhibition Review, Doug MacCash, October 1st  
Photomedia Center Artists Interview, Eric Grignol, October
- 2003 *Gambit Weekly*, Exhibition Review, D. Eric Bookhardt, September

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 + Vanessa's tableaux vivant series, Slumberland, began in 2003. 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 live New Orleans doing what they love with their rescued 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

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## **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-n-roll, the birth of a nation of filmmakers and 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.

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## **Oblivion Atlas**

The Oblivion Atlas, a collaboration between Louviere+Vanessa and Michael Allen Zell, features photographs, short stories, vignette illustrations, and a book design by Jeff Louviere no less sublime than its contents.

The book first came about as a constraint determined by Zell from the initial lines of Jacques Prevert's *To Paint A Portrait Of A Bird* ("First paint a cage/with an open door"), secondly by the attempt at developing a corollary style of frozen-image writing as worthy counterpart to the hypnotic spells cast by photography and long takes in film, and ultimately by the specific influence and inspiration of L+V's fertile decade of photographic art. The second ballast was formed by Louviere + Vanessa's visual response to the context of lost souls in crisis and finding one's way rather than visually repeating actions already described.

The Oblivion Atlas explores and accumulates an aviary of themes, including dreams; time-sculpting; memory; madness; resistance; nihilism; the frequencies and trajectories of the mind; absorbing/dissolving; and infinity in a finite space. New Orleans remains a steady companion throughout, as an active guiding presence treated in a singular manner. This book is precise but not taut, assertive but not doctrinaire, ambitious but not exclusive, inviting the reader in by its very design and the affirmation that

"...the first act of freedom is when the mind says no and the second when it says yes."

## **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.

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## **Moonshine**

These images were taken over a period of a year and examine a reversal of theme for us. Specifically, an aim to make the universal personal. There are an infinite number of lunar connotations, but the fact that the moon is 2,158.6 miles in diameter gave us the incentive to work smaller. The scale illustrates how we tried to capture something so big and the process acts as an open source code to imagination.

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## **We're Wolves**

Anthropomorphism...

Its universal history has helped religions control, cultures survive, myths guide us and people understand their place in nature for centuries.

But, there exists a more personal narrative. The Louviere family has a bit of a history in 17th century France. One in which we discovered includes an entry in the Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology. There was a trial, a burning, and a family crest with a black wolf on a field of silver that reads *Lupus de Fabula*—which in modern parlance is speak of the devil..

We made these works as a combination of our love of art and animals. Vanessa and I have spent the last 16 years being raised by wolves. It grounds us in what is really important in this world.

It is amazing that in the history of mankind the wolf/man relationship is the only one of its kind to exist. And making these images—as absurd, romantic or scary as they may be — signifies a more human condition by contrast.

Most of the images are printed on mirrors and encased in resin—a logical symbol of reflection and projections of our time with animals. Some images are also printed on glass with a silver leaf or silver paint base—another symbol playing out between creation and destruction. They are intimate in scale and scope. And like a good fable, a dream or a photograph, we get to experience the things that don't exist.

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## **Stratum Lucidum**

In John Dryden's 17th century play called "All Your Love" Antony says:

"They look on us at a distance, and, like curs scraped from the lions paws, they bay far off and lick their wounds, and faintly threaten war".

Stratum Lucidum is latin for the "clear layer" of skin, this series represents what is hidden behind the clear layer.

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## **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.

## **Instinct/Extinct**

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.

## Overawe

“... but in sadness like mine nothing stirs – new buildings, old neighborhoods turn to allegory, and memories weigh more than stone.” — Baudelaire

We have lived in New Orleans for many years. And we’ve had a love/hate relationship all the while. This place has always been a bit of a fixer upper, the politicians are terrible and the streets usually smell funny.

But, there is plenty of beauty in the strangest places. We are constantly being surprised by some odd goings on or impromptu happening. New Orleans is a heaven for those who like ghosts and architecture. It’s a Mecca for the self driven. We live in a city where self expression goes unchecked. And some of the most loyal friends on earth are made here. We really don’t feel ourselves anywhere else.

Now, after the storm, the city is showing some beauty in the most astonishing ways. One way is the redefining of “community” into a fierce and constructive force of which the word has rarely been attributed.

Another way is the surreal and terrible mixing of the natural and the man-made. Chaos taken to an absurd degree and coming full circle into amazing fits of pairings and compositions.

In knowing how close we came to losing everything, – we live only a few blocks from one of the levee breaks; we were on the lucky side – these images are first and foremost for us so that we never forget.

## **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

## **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