

October 20–November 26, 2011

ABOUT FACE:

peculiar portraits curated by Lee Marks

GALLERY SPACE
Arts + Design District
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GALLERY HOURS*
Wednesday–Saturday 12–5
*Special appointments welcome
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On view in its Indiana gallery space, 27 East Main St., Carmel, IN, 46032, Garvey | Simon Art Access is proud to present **ABOUT FACE: Peculiar Portraits**, a photography exhibition dedicated to the portrait, curated by Lee Marks of Lee Marks Fine Art. Ms. Marks is a private photography dealer, consultant and founding member of the Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD). The show will feature works by eleven artists in a variety of photo-based media and will be centered on the use of portraiture in both traditional and non-traditional guises. The exhibition will run from October 20 – November 26, 2011. There will be a reception the evening of November 12 to celebrate this exhibition, which will coincide with the Second Saturday Gallery Walk in the Carmel Arts + Design District.

If eyes are “the windows to the soul,” the face might offer a road map to one’s personality, eccentric in all its twists and turns. With 15 photographs from the late 1940s to the present, this exhibition seeks to present faces of human beings and animals depicted realistically, abstractly, cut off, and even absent. Technical and formal peculiarities of the medium offer as much commentary as the represented faces.

There are self-portraits by **Jen Davis** (American, b. 1978), **Susan Derges** (British, b. 1955), **Nina Korhonen** (Finnish, b. 1961) and **Chuck Close** (American, b. 1940). Davis is a young obese woman who describes her work as a vehicle for dealing with insecurities about her body image while also acting as a link between self-perception and the judgmental view of others. From her series, *The Observer and the Observed* (1991), Susan Derges uses a strobe light technique to distill a water jet into distinct water droplets—a poetic metaphor for what the human eye can often not see. Finnish photographer Nina Korhonen depicts herself in an intimate moment, just out of the shower, layered in reflections and grids, as she gazes out a window over Yinchuan, China. Chuck Close’s haunting and iconic *Self-Portrait* is photography-based. His image stares out at the viewer directly.

Two portraits in this exhibition depict history and loss. **André Kertész** (American, b. Hungary, 1894-1985), an indisputable master of 20th century photography, re-photographed his 1933 portrait of wife Elizabeth, which originally had Kertész in the composition next to her (his hand remains). In 1979, two years after the death of his wife, the photographer was presented with an S-X 70 camera by the Polaroid Corporation. He used it to photograph many things, including a cropped version of that original photo along with a tiny crown of thorns placed on his hand at her shoulder. In an odd twist, but similar vein of photographing a loved one, Nina Korhonen, photographed an altered painting of her grandmother. The original portrait, painted by her grandfather of his beloved wife, is here seen with the face crudely cut out from the image. Found this way by the photographer after the death of her grandmother, she hung it back up on the wall to document it as a symbol of loss.



Nina Korhonen, *Painting without a Face*, New York, 2002.
26 x 26 inches.

The work of rogue-photojournalist Arthur Fellig (American, b. Austria, 1899-1968) known as **Weegee**, has recently been shown at the **Indianapolis Museum of Art** to celebrate the acquisition of an interesting collection of his photographs. Missing from this treasure trove was his signature image *The Critic*, *Metropolitan Opera*, 1943. Weegee pictured Mrs. George W. Kavanaugh, her friend Lady Decies, and a bystander brought by Weegee from a Bowery bar. Apparently, *Life* magazine cropped the picture to eliminate the “plain people” at left in its coverage of the fall Metropolitan Opera opening in New York City (*The Naked City* blog).

Mariana Cook (American, b. 1955) and **Neil Selkirk** (British, b. 1947) are well known for their portrait photography, both having published several books. Cook photographed Barack and Michelle Obama when Mr. Obama was a community activist and Mrs. Obama was a lawyer in Chicago, long before a presidential run was contemplated. Last summer, Cook traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa, to photograph the well-known video artist, William Kentridge. Neil Selkirk made a strikingly unusual portrait of Robert Altman on assignment for *The New York Times Magazine*. While given only seconds to capture the legendary director, Selkirk managed to frame a face in which the eyes dominate over a curiously obscured mouth.

Pets and animals offer an additional challenge to portraiture. Known for his beautiful but edgy depictions of the Appalachian landscape and its people, Tennessee photographer **Mike Smith** (American, b. 1951) occasionally captures people interacting with animals. Both Smith and **Andrew Borowiec** (American, b. 1956) produce compelling portraits of turf-protection in action as they photograph chance encounters with menacing dogs. The iguanas in the jewel-toned C-Print by **Jeffrey Becom** (American, b. 1953) were subsequently rescued, purchased, and set free by Becom to prevent them becoming burger meat in Honduras. Typical for Becom, his imagery obscures or crops out his subjects’ eyes, making it nearly impossible for us to make the connection to those “windows to the soul.”