

PEDER LUND

Catherine Opie: Only Miss The Sun when it Starts to Snow

Peder Lund is pleased to announce its second exhibition with the American photographer Catherine Opie. Since the early 1990s, Opie has produced a diverse body of work in genres such as studio portraiture, landscape photography and street photography, with which she has investigated notions of communal, sexual and cultural identity in contemporary America. In her exhibition at Peder Lund, Opie will be presenting 14 new portraits and landscapes that refer to both her longstanding interest in the relationship between figure and landscape, as well the tradition of portraiture and the history of photography. The exhibition opens June 21 and will be on view until September 13, 2014.

Catherine Opie (1961-) is considered one of the leading photographers of her generation and has over the past 20 years become one of the foremost documentarians of the American landscape. Central to Opie's production are the notions of the individual's relationship to community, and the place of the subcultural within the political and social norms and events of modern-day America. Opie's success in seating the individual and the personal within the social groups in which identity takes shape was first explored in her portraits of transgendered friends and acquaintances from the lesbian and transsexual communities in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Concurrently, Opie began to document architectural, and through architectural, conventional, America with black-and-white film and an extra-wide-angle panoramic camera. She has photographed villas in Bel Air and Beverly Hills (*Houses*, 1995-96), freeway overpasses (*Freeways*, 1994-1995), and mini-malls (*Mini-malls*, 1997-98), as well as an empty Wall Street, the latter as part of her photographic series *American Cities* (1999-2001; 2004). Seen as a whole, Opie's work confronts the apparent disparity between the subcultural and the traditional. In her series *In and Around Home* (2004-05), Opie displayed her own domestic sphere – a household made up of a lesbian couple with their young son and two dogs. Alongside Opie's pictures of the comfort of her own home, she documented the events that took place in her neighbourhood in the suburbs of South Central Los Angeles and in the national media on the occasion of the presidential elections in 2004. The series underlined the complexity of the American demographic and the presence of the highly individual within the borders of the ordinary. The series also questioned the extent to which the discrepancy between the seemingly abnormal and the seemingly conventional is as large as we assume. Her methodology to produce photographic series consisting of both portraiture and landscape emphasises that America's diverse social groups share the same environment.

Opie's work remains highly aesthetic and technically masterful, whilst tackling both societal and art-historical subject matters. The photographs on view at Peder Lund are part of Opie's most recent series of portraits and landscapes, in which she evokes the psychological and material spaces depicted in 17th- and 18th-century portrait painting. Opie has depicted transgendered acquaintances, fellow artists and high achievers heavily lit against dark backgrounds or in the classical silhouette shape customary in the 17th Century. She has replaced the objects that helped the viewer identify the social status and occupation of the sitter in classical portraiture with contemporary signs of identity; Opie's sitters reveal their tattoos, or, as in the case of the long-distance swimmer Diana Nyad, who swam from Havana to Key West in 2013, her distinct tan lines from the swimsuit and -cap she wore during her swim. Set against the portraits is a series of sublime landscapes in sharp, though simultaneously grainy, colours.

Catherine Opie's work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. In 2008, she was honoured with a mid-career survey at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and she has had solo exhibitions at institutions including the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA (2011); Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA (2010); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL (2006); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (2002); and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (1997). Her work is represented in the collections of a number of prestigious public institutions, including Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; Tate Gallery, London, UK; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY. Opie is a tenured professor of photography at the University of California, Los Angeles (2001-), and was a professor at Yale University from 2000 to 2001.

Exhibition period: June 21 - September 13, 2014. For more information: mail@pederlund.no / +47 22 01 55 55