

Press Release
Jackson Fine Art

VEE SPEERS
Immortal
&
CAROLYN CARR

April 15th—June 18th 2011
Opening Reception Friday, 15 April 6-8 P.M.

There were times when it appeared to Dorian Gray that the whole of history was merely the record of his own life, not as he had lived it in act and circumstance, but as his imagination had created it for him, as it had been in his brain and in his passions.

-Oscar Wilde

Jackson Fine Art is pleased to announce our upcoming exhibition of new works by **Vee Speers** and **Carolyn Carr**. These artists present us with two distinctly fascinating and highly personal bodies of work intent on exploring the friction between temporality and timelessness.

Vee Speers earned international acclaim with her series *The Birthday Party*, a collection of portraits informed by the artist's observation of her daughter's eighth birthday. The children portrayed in these photographs were garbed in party dresses and animal masks, blowing face-sized bubbles; or dressed in nurse uniforms and gas masks, their expressions steadily transfixed viewers from within timeless compositions awash in anachronistic elements. *The Birthday Party* found **Speers** and her subjects gracefully straddling the delicate divides between childhood and old age, past and present, solemnity and play. It is a theme she picks up in her latest series, *Immortal*.

In *Immortal*, the guests of *The Birthday Party* have grown up, shedding the material escapism of the masquerade for a more interior, emotionally charged version of fantasy. As **Speers** tells us, "The escape of adolescents into fantasy is just as important as in childhood, only as young adults the escape is quite often into the virtual world of film, television and internet. So the imagery I have created is an isolated world unique to them, somewhere between fantasy and reality. I want them to be alone, standing like fallen angels, but still part of a common world."

The landscapes surrounding **Speers's** subjects—shot in her native Queensland, Australia—possess an ethereal, boundless quality that reminds us by contrast of the inevitable transience of time. **Speers** has self-consciously sought to evoke comparisons to the history of classical painting, at once reinvigorating both the vivid, spiritual Romanticism of Thomas Church's landscapes and the frank self-reflection of Renaissance portraiture. The apparent purity of her ruminative young subjects is underscored at times by brush fires and towers of smoke so dramatic they could be clouds. For **Speers**, this striking contrast of the cataclysmic and the pristine invites viewers to "indulge the myth of eternal youth," arguably an impetus for artistic production from Dorian Gray onward.

Vee Speers was born in Australia and has been living and working in Paris since 1990. Her work appears in a number of distinguished public and private collections, including CB Collection, Tokyo; the Elton John Collection, UK; and the Museum of Fine Art, Houston. Two monographs, of her internationally acclaimed exhibitions *The Birthday Party* and *Bordello*, have been published by Dewi Lewis Publishing, UK and EARbooks, GE, respectively. **Ms. Speers** has shown work in a number of solo and group exhibitions worldwide. She is represented by Jackson Fine Art, Atlanta; Galerie Beckers, Frankfurt; and Acte2galerie, Paris.

Carolyn Carr is a native Atlantan known for her compelling abstract paintings of interwoven curvilinear lines that are derived from captured graffiti signatures which act as signifiers for content. Graffiti as an unknown font is hard to follow but is recognizable as a mark of self-expression via a personal signature. **Carr's** interest in text and narrative has been an ongoing and vital component to her work that has been explored through her titles and literary references. In this exhibition she continues to reference culturally significant printed material but from a wide range of sources spanning historical periods, platforms, and means of distribution.

Carr's work derives from the particular brand of heritage-steeped innovation native in the South where identity has been erected in between the columns of constructed memory and urban evolution. This exhibition reintroduces the artist's interest in photography with complex mixed media compositions of photo-collage, found photographs, and over painted photographs. **Carr** manipulates pictures she has taken, found, and appropriated to create a ripe non-linear narrative that is evocative yet enigmatic.

Recognizable cultural and art historical references are rampant in this work, but the way in which **Carr** is intent on layering the South's troubled history with the vibrancy of contemporary Atlanta is very much her own.

Carolyn Carr received her BFA from the Atlanta College of Art (with a focus on Photography). Her work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions at museums and galleries including Gavlak (New York, Palm Beach), Artists Space (New York), 10 Chancery Lane (Hong Kong), National Museum of Women (Washington D.C.), the Contemporary, David Heath and Fay Gold (Atlanta). Recently she completed a site-specific Flux.org work entitled, Tomorrow is Another Day. In addition to her studio practice **Carr** is on a number of institutional boards as well as being an activist for local community and political organizations.

In celebration of the remarkable exhibition currently on view at the High Museum, *Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Modern Century*, Jackson Fine Art is pleased to present a small selection of iconic modern prints by the famed photographer in the viewing room. **Henri Cartier-Bresson** was a French photographer who is often called the father of photojournalism. His candid shots were captured in 35mm format in a style that has influenced so many generations. In 1947, **Cartier-Bresson** with fellow photographers founded the cooperative picture agency Magnum Photos. During his lifetime he was able to travel the world capturing what he coined as 'decisive moments' in our history.