

JACKSON FINE ART ATLANTA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jack Spencer: *Beyond the Surface*

Jeannette Montgomery Barron: *Scene*

OPENING RECEPTION WITH THE ARTISTS: Friday, September 6, 2013

EXHIBITION DATES: September 6 – November 2, 2013

With fall upon us, Jackson Fine Art is pleased to kick off the 2013 Atlanta Art season with two stellar solo exhibitions of contemporary photography by Southern natives: **Jeannette Montgomery Barron**, of Atlanta, and **Jack Spencer**, of Nashville. *Scene*, by **Barron** and *Mythologies* by **Spencer** both show striking works that demand attention of the viewer and document the elaborate personality of each subject with his or her direct 'look'. Either from a celebrity artist taken during the illustrious art scene in the 80's or exploring a secret held by a mythological spirit caught between the physical and the mystical worlds, both **Barron** and **Spencer** use opposite approaches to achieve an undeniable vitality and uniqueness that clearly radiates from their 'larger than life" subjects. Specifically, **Spencer** juxtaposes his subjects against fantastical backgrounds and creates intentional colored markings on the faces and bodies of his subjects similar to traditions of tribal body art and the popular culture of tattoo art to transform identity completely. While **Barron**, with a more traditional style, uses black and white film to document the brilliant melting pot of artists and creative muses such as Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Willem Dafoe, and Cindy Sherman to name a few that were in New York's underground scene in the 80's—an era that continues to inspire and influence contemporary photography today.

Their work will be on view at Jackson Fine Art from September 6 through November 2. The artists will be in attendance at our opening reception to be held on Friday, September 6 from 6–8pm.

Jack Spencer is renowned in the art world as well as the music and entertainment industry with his painterly photographs of people, places, and things that truly remark on the essence of the subject. **Spencer's** new series, *Mythologies*, reveals the artist's interest in the idiosyncrasy of perception, the vulnerability of life, and the unwavering importance of beauty. Starting simply with a request for a commissioned portrait, Jack, uninspired by what we know as typical portraiture, decided to experiment by painting and marking his subjects with vibrant patterns and colors as you may find reminiscent in famed fashion photographer Irvin Penn's portraits of the indigenous people in Peru and New Guinea. With his use of paint, Jack takes the viewer far deeper than the surface by transforming his subject. Not intentionally but instinctively, **Spencer** uses the style of Edward Steichen's Pictorialist photography with soft-focus and the gritty realism of Robert Frank to add to the ambiguity and mystery of his photography. While some may look to photography for its certainty, **Spencer** opts for the richness and reward of subjectivity. This mystery and ambiguity, combined with its tonal wealth, transports us into an undefined realm somewhere between fact and fiction.

Jack Spencer was born in Mississippi and currently resides in Nashville, Tennessee. **Spencer** is a self-taught photographer who attended Louisiana Tech University and has gained an impressive national reputation. Jack's work is included in many collections including: The Houston Museum of Fine Art, Berkley Museum of Art, and Sir Elton John's Photography Collection and he is represented by leading contemporary photography galleries throughout the United States. LSU Press published his book titled, *Native Soil*, in 1999. Other selected publications include Looking at L.A., 2005; Zoom Magazine, 2003; and Southern Accents, 2002. His most recent monograph has just been released – Published by Vanderbilt Press and titled *Beyond the Surface*. Jack's work is currently being exhibited as his first major museum show, comprised of 70 photographs, at The Frist Center for Visual Arts through October 13, 2013.

Jeannette Montgomery Barron's exhibition presents work from her recently published book, *Scene*, which captures a brilliant and creative era in American art—New York's Lower East Side in the 1980's. **Barron** showcases the luminaries of this poignant era before they were stripped of their innocence and catapulted into household names. Her body of work is a catalogue of portraits depicting the most creative array of musicians, painters, writers, filmmakers, fashion designers, actors, models, and photographers that influenced this era. Specifically, **Barron** reveals the radiant minds that defined the New York underground during this time: Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Willem Dafoe, Robert Mapplethorpe and Cindy Sherman to name a few. Barron, a poet in her own right, captures remarkably elegant photographs with spare backdrops, direct lighting, and visually interesting compositions. From the Factory to the studios, downtown Manhattan was the place to be for all the young creative minds during the 80's and Barron brilliantly transports us to that era with her work in *Scene*.

Jeannette Montgomery Barron (b. 1956) was born in Atlanta and studied at the International Center for Photography in New York. She became known for her portraits of the New York art world of the 1980's, which were later published in *Jeannette Montgomery Barron* (Edition Bischofberger, Zurich, 1989). She is also the author of *Photographs and Poems*, a collaboration with Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Jorie Graham (Scalo, 1998), *Mirrors* (Holzwarth Editions, 2004), *Session with Keith Haring* (2006), and *My Mothers Clothes* (Welcome Books, 2010). Montgomery Barron's photographs have been published in *Interview*, *Details*, *Vogue*, and *Vanity Fair*. Her work has been included in many museum collections including the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, The Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and The Andy Warhol Museum. **Montgomery Barron** lives and works in South Kent, CT and Rome, Italy.

Signed copies of Montgomery Barron's latest book, *Scene*, along with Spencer's new book *Beyond the Surface* will be available during the artist's opening reception and throughout the exhibition.

For press inquiries, please contact the gallery director, Courtney Lee Martin, by email at Courtney@jacksonfineart.com or by phone at 404.233.3739.