

**Press Release**

**Jackson Fine Art**

**MONA KUHN | Native**

**ROBERT AND SHANA PARKEHARRISON | Counterpoint**

**September 11<sup>th</sup> – October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**Opening Reception with the Artists September 11<sup>th</sup> 6-8 P.M.**

**Book signing and Artist talk - September 12<sup>th</sup> 11:00 A.M.**

Jackson Fine Art is proud to announce our third exhibition with famed photographer Mona Kuhn and our first solo show with the acclaimed duo, Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison. Both Mona Kuhn and Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison have taken new directions in their recent bodies of work; Kuhn has returned to her native Brazil to capture portraits of human nature while the ParkeHarrison's have transformed their black and white choreographed and constructed images into the fantasy realm of color.

Though she has resided in both America and France for the past 20 years, Mona Kuhn, a descendant of German parents, has gone back to her native Brazil in a search for a connection to her roots. Mona is known for her signature images of figures shot in a nudist colony on the romantic coast of France, where she returns year after year. Mona carefully composes each frame and obscures figures so they become almost entirely abstract. Her work embodies a perfect balance between obscurity and clarity, weaving relationships together to create of overall sensibility rather than a specific narrative. In her recent series, appropriately titled *Native*, Kuhn departs from the western idealistic beauty and classical imagery to embrace the savage jungle and cultural identities of those whom inhabit the forest and live in the concrete interiors of São Palo, Brazil. Her previously soft pastel palette has transformed; now reflecting raw pigments of fleshy pinks, bold golds and lush greens; idyllic colors belonging to Brazil. Her figures take on a new persona conjuring up images of the untouched and redefining beauty in the likeness of Gauguin's sultry paintings created in Tahiti. Kuhn alternates her stance between the all-knowing photographer/director and one who enters into silent conversations with her subjects, a quest for self-knowledge and search for beauty, whether it be tamed or wild.

In their recent work titled, *Counterpoint*, rendered in pale washes of color punctuated with detailed jeweled accents, the ParkeHarrison team continues to direct their orchestrated imagination to the philosophical question of modern mankind's relationship to the ever-dwindling natural resources of our planet. In viewing the work, one feels a glimpse of nature unleashed by technology, a storytelling if you will, that connects man with nature's destiny. The consequences

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of man emptying our natural resources are dark and threatening, however, some of these images are light and bountiful in their range of hues and subjects. It is an effective contrast with their earlier work. The couple has embraced color in exchange for the monochromatic toned black and white that pervaded much of their earlier projects. ParkeHarrison's particular visual language of "dream reality" has been developed through an additive process of layering, varnish and painting. This allows them to build their constructed images into the most visually believable fantasies-we, the viewers, are completely convinced that, trees can grow from the veins of a man. *Counterpoint* adds a visual compass to man's involvement and subsequent abuse of nature yet with an underlying notion of hope.

Since 1998, Mona Kuhn has been an independent studies scholar at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. In 2004 and 2006 Kuhn was a finalist in the esteemed BMW- Paris Photo Photography Prize. Her work is held in collections of Sir Elton John, Allen Thomas Jr., Paul Allen, SFMoma, San Francisco and Schwarz Fine and Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany. Kuhn's first monograph, *Photographs*, was debuted by Steidl in 2004; *Evidence*, was also published by Steidl and released in Spring 2007. Her new book, *Native*, will be released by Steidl fall 2009 and will be premiered at Jackson Fine Art at a book signing on September 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 A.M.

The works of Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison have been displayed in numerous solo and group exhibitions worldwide. Their work can also be found in over 20 private and public collections, including the National Museum of American Art at the Smithsonian Institution, the George Eastman House and LA County Museum. Robert ParkeHarrison was a recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1999. The ParkeHarrison's book, *The Architect's Brother*, was named as one of 'the Ten Best Photography Books of the Year' in 2000 by the *New York Times*. *Counterpoint*, the couple's most recent publication, will be available during the book signing Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 A.M.