

Work by two noteworthy photographers in one show

One focuses on people; the other explores landscapes.

By Felicia Feaster
For the AJC

Emmet Gowin and Richard Benson are two photographers who cast a long shadow in contemporary photography. Both teach in prestigious photo programs, Benson at Yale and Gowin at Princeton. Both have been shooting long enough to have earned reputations as solid heavy-hitters. So to feature them together at Jackson Fine Art is a natural, like a bankable double bill of Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. No one's going to go away too disappointed.

If Jackson Fine Art tends to downplay some of Benson's more odd-ball images and offers just a glancing survey of a vast Gowin's metier with bookend bodies of his family portraits and landscape photography, such is the nature of small gallery shows that know their audience.

Benson is a recognized master when it comes to

ART REVIEW

"Richard Benson: North South East West" and "Emmet Gowin: Photographs"

Through July 27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays.
Jackson Fine Art, 3115 Shadowlawn Ave., Atlanta. 404-233-1205.
www.jacksonfineart.com

Bottom line: Two masters of the photographic genre offer some definitive work and a few surprises.

the nuts and bolts of photography: printing. His complex, layered ink-jet printing process described on wall text in this show has made the detail and color tone of his images formidable. Jackson features images that drive this idea home: lipstick red trucks, a sea foam Key West ocean, the hull of a dingy painted a chalky, taffy green. But it's not just color; Benson in his series of work titled "North South East West" also fixes in on texture: the grit and grain of rock outcroppings and worn brick walls.

If Benson has a thing for landscape and ob-



Richard Benson's "Florida Keys," from 2005, highlights the intense color tones resulting from Benson's innovative printing process. CONTRIBUTED BY RICHARD BENSON

jects framed dead center, then Gowin established his reputation on the most endearingly off-kilter glimpses of friends and family in a small Virginia town in the 1960s. You almost fall in love with these people and the rapture Gowin conveys through his lens. Few images better convey the sheer joy of childhood, of summer, of nature, of what it is to be alive, like Gowin's "Nancy and Dwayne, Danville, Virginia" (1970). Two children wrestle in thick, lush grass, caught in a reverie of puppy-like pleasure.

Gowin's studies of his wife Edith are cut from the same cloth: slightly odd in approach but deeply satisfying in effect. These are portraits in which you begin to feel you know something of this person, persuaded by the infectious imagination of Gowin's exuberant lensing.

I wouldn't have necessarily grouped them together, but the gallery has assembled a se-

ries of grid-studies Gowin has done of the shocking Mother-Nature-designed diversity of moths in the South American rainforest next to Benson's studies of the man-made architecture of vintage postage stamps.

Benson's stamp-studies do a good job in this show of rounding out his work, of showing a charm and depth behind those formally beautiful but slightly inert landscapes.