

THE EYE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Intersection of Gazes : Jamil Hellu, Mona Kuhn, Haley Morris-Cafiero, Kristine Potter



L'ŒIL DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE - SEPTEMBER 4, 2018

EUQUINOM Gallery in San Francisco presents 'Intersection of Gazes' , a group exhibition that brings together contemporary photographers who are pushing portraiture forward and making space with and for their subjects by broadening the art historical concept of "the gaze." The artists, Jamil Hellu, Mona Kuhn,

Haley Morris-Cafiero, and Kristine Potter, all come from multicultural or marginalized perspectives and work to illuminate identity and the human experience in all its dynamic variety.

On view are images from Jamil Hellu's latest body of work, Hues, where the artist makes portraits of members of the LGBTQ community, pictured in costumes that signal their cultural and ethnic lineage.

Inserting himself into each picture dressed in related garb, Hellu's images, which all feature a saturated color background, reflect on just how multifaceted the community is. By discarding any homogenous notion of gay identity, Hellu presents a spectrum of experiences that are unique and singular in their own way.

Works from Kristine Potter's Manifest also evaluate masculinity. Images of men inhabiting the Western landscape in vulnerable positions of repose or traditionally feminine portrait poses offers a cultural counterpoint to our association of cowboy masculinity and the American West. Potter's work creates a parallel historical narrative where men are unbound by coded societal constraints and inhabit the landscape for pleasure and beauty instead of dominating the landscape for wealth and power.

Visceral images from Haley Morris-Cafiero document her response to the negative feedback and online bullying generated by her previous series, Wait Watchers, where Morris-Cafiero captured passerby gawking at her physical appearance. In The Bully Pulpit, she responds to the vitriolic language by researching images of the bully, dressing up like them and incorporating their insults into the picture. By turning a mirror back on the bully as well as creating a physical, real life response to the insult, she meets the gaze of her attackers by gazing right back. In contrast, Mona Kuhn's photographs from Native present intimate images of nude subjects that signal safety and security. Working in a naturalist community with less commodification and more acceptance of the human form, Kuhn develops long term and deep relationships with her subjects. Together they work as a team to create the images and in so doing, Kuhn deepens the relationship between subject and photographer extending power outside of its traditional scope.

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