

Press Release - For Immediate Release
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VEE SPEERS

Immortal, The Birthday Party, Parisians, Bordello

March 8th through April 14th, 2012

Reception for the Artist: Thursday, March 8th

The Fahey/Klein Gallery is pleased to present the premiere Los Angeles exhibition of contemporary photographer, Vee Speers. The retrospective exhibition features a selection of photographs from each of her four series, "Bordello," "Parisians," "The Birthday Party," and "Immortal," her most recent body of work.

Speers' 2010 portrait series, "Immortal" continues her exploration of the themes of escapism and fantasy. The photographs are comprised of partially nude, ethereal young subjects posed in front of highly dramatic and nearly cataclysmic landscapes from Speers' native Australia. Although contemporary, this series of photographs evoke the feeling of classical Renaissance portraiture as well as reference the spectacular landscape paintings of the 19th Century Romanticists. The lithe and striking young subjects awkwardly pose alone in front of billowing clouds, darkened skies, and distant brush fires creating a foreboding sense of uneasiness and vulnerability, which ultimately challenges, or indulges, the myth of eternal youth. "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." (Vee Speers)

In 2007, Vee Speers earned international acclaim with her series "The Birthday Party" which explores uninhibited childhood imagination and challenges preconceived notions of the innocence of youth through portraits of children dressed up to attend an elaborate, imagined costume party. Shot on the rooftop of her Paris apartment, the children pose against a uniform gray wall and don an array of fancy party dresses, vintage bathing suits and swim caps, sailor suits and torn fishnet stocking, distorted masks, and camouflage. Speers was inspired for this series while watching her three young daughters playing dress up. "The imaginative role-playing made me realize that as we grow up, we lose some of that spontaneity and imagination, so I wanted to capture those lost days of childhood with this imaginary birthday party. I chose the idea of a social gathering, a party, to isolate the children in their own anarchistic world, where no rules apply and anything is possible." (Vee Speers)

Speers' first two series, "Bordello" and "Parisians" were inspired by her adopted city of Paris and its eclectic inhabitants.

"Bordello," created in 2001, is an edgy and sensual venture into the dark and seductive world of re-imagined Parisian brothels. Speers photographed the series in former brothels around Paris, the interiors of which had their original opulence in tact. The photographs in the "Bordello" series are luscious Fresson Carbon Process prints which accentuate the shadowy and ambiguous nature of the bordellos. The resulting images are "...a kind of in-between zone of life and sex with a touch of sad misery and darkness. There is no daylight, there is no air, there is no home. The models become strange mermaids swimming in the dark water at the shore of an obscure, gloomy, closed world." (Karl Lagerfeld, "Bordello" Foreword, Edel Classics / Ear Books, 2006)

Touching on the themes of costume and the theatricality of make believe “Parisians”, Speers’ 2004 series, is a concise group of portraits of the unusual and eccentric Parisians Speers came across while working and living in Paris.

Vee Speers was born in Australia and studied Fine Art and Photography at Queensland College of Art. Her work has been exhibited and collected internationally. Her publications include “Bordello” (Edel Classics / Ear Books, 2006) and “The Birthday Party” (Dewi Lewis Publishers, 2008) which is now in its second printing. Vee Speers lives and works in Paris.

Press Images Available Upon Request.