

Press Release- For Immediate Release
Contact: Haley Menchel
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Ellen von Unwerth
“Photographs”

October 20th through November 26, 2011
Reception for the Artist: Thursday, October 20th, 7-9 pm

The Fahey/Klein gallery is pleased to present a selection of photographs from contemporary German photographer, Ellen von Unwerth, in her first Los Angeles exhibition. Ellen Von Unwerth’s photographs are a pure celebration of provocative femininity; they revel in spontaneity and sincerity and fully reflect her tenet that “women are not just there to be admired, they are there to be enjoyed”. When shooting her favorite subject, women, Ellen von Unwerth states that she wants to portray, “Women with strong personalities who are not shy, but who embrace their sexuality and use it. Women who are independent and sassy and think for themselves. All characteristics that accentuate their beauty. In short, women you want to meet and who you’d like to dream about.” (Ellen von Unwerth, 2009, Taschen’s *Fraulein*)

Ellen Von Unwerth’s photographs capture an authentic and undeniable chemistry which she shares with her models. Before beginning her career as a fine art photographer, Ellen von Unwerth worked as a fashion model for ten years. Because of this experience, she states, “I think that, because I know what it feels like to be in front of the camera, I can be more sympathetic to my subjects. Being in front of the lens, you are very vulnerable. But it's very helpful to know exactly what it's like. When I was a model I hated when I wasn't allowed to move, so I love movement and I encourage my subjects to play around, to move and to be silly. I think that women open up more to a female photographer. It's like little girls playing around. You can be a bit naughty and do things you wouldn't do in front of boys. It's more relaxed somehow. I think it's an empowering experience.” (Interview with Ellen Von Unwerth By Alice Wyllie, November 10, 2009)

Ingrid Sischy, contributing editor of "Vanity Fair" magazine, writes, “even though von Unwerth seems to break from the tradition of serious photography because she has such fun doing it, it’s because she has such fun doing it that she actually fits squarely into it. She is her own chapter of the story of women photographers, a group who were for so long invisible, but went out into the world to record it, and found people, places, and feelings they wanted to capture.” (Ellen von Unwerth’s *Couples*)

Ellen has shot editorial work for magazines including *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue*, and *Interview*. Along with creating editorial and Fine Art work, she has produced several short films, directed music videos and is highly praised for her advertisement campaigns which include Chanel, Victoria’s Secret, and Guess— all of which combine classical femininity with a playfully erotic portrayal of womanhood.

Ellen von Unwerth’s works have been exhibited in museums and galleries worldwide. Her photo novella released in 2003, *Revenge*, had concurrent shows which were exhibited both nationally and internationally. An overview of her work can be seen in the Taschen publication *Fraulein*. The initial limited edition book of *Fraulein* with a print sold out. Taschen just released the trade edition of this publication which will be available at the gallery. Ellen von Unwerth lives and works in Paris.