



Relative: Photographing Domesticity

Curated and organized by Edwyna Arey
Co-curator, Michael Marshall

Friday, September 24th - November 7th, 2004

Participating artists:

Ellie Brown (Philadelphia, PA) • Bridget Conn (Athens, GA) • Ronnie Cramer (Denver, CO) • Gary Duehr (Sommerville, MA) • Paul Dunlap (Dahlonega, GA) • Frank Hamrick (Athens, GA) • Niki Hancock (Athens, GA) • Joyce Hethcox (Columbus, GA) • Kevin J. Hoth (Athens, GA) • Knut Hybinette (Chicago, IL) • Nicole Jacobs (Atlanta, GA) • Robert Rainey (Petersburg, VA) • Stephanie Robbins (Baltimore, MD) • Mark Steinmetz (Athens, GA) • Jason Thrasher (Athens, GA) • Michael Trigilio (Oakland, CA) • Greg Turco (Jefferson, GA)

ATHICA: Athens Institute for Contemporary Art is delighted to present, *Relative: Photographing Domesticity*, curated and organized by ATHICA Board Vice President, Edwyna Arey with co-curator Michael Marshall, Assistant Professor of Photography at the Lamar Dodd School of Art, The University of Georgia. The exhibit features a wide range of photography-based works broadly interpreting the concept of domestic relations—a fraught field of inquiry in this election season! With the camera as a tool, the seventeen artists in the *Relative* exhibition reflect upon experiences in and around home life—from the gaze of a parent to the quiriness of domestic dynamics, they bring their personal experiences to us with striking transparency. In keeping with the field of contemporary photography generally, some of the works are barely contained within the medium's boundaries, incorporating mixed media, installation, sound and video. And while some artists in *Relative* work in a documentary style, capturing the moment-by-moment details of home life, others capture a domestic sensibility in found remnants. They hail from as far as Oakland, CA and Chicago, IL, with many being regional and several local to Athens. Excitingly varied and rich, the exhibition includes several invited artists, with the majority chosen from the 42 responses to ATHICA's open call for submissions.

Four of the artists in the exhibition reveal family life through the language of documentary photography, using the reflective quality of the camera to capture life as it is revealed in the moment. **Ellie Brown**, of Ithaca, NY, has been exploring individuality, identity and group dynamics by photographing her sisters and cousins in a series entitled *Remembering Twelve*. Her images are as much self-portraits as they are documents of her relatives—her primary source is the memory of her transition from youthful adolescence into adulthood. **Mark Steinmetz**, a Guggenheim Fellow and prominent figure in Athens' photography scene, has been photographing his family members as well, with trademark attention to light and composition. The depth of intimacy in his images reveals the comfort level of his subjects. A native of Sweden, **Knut Hybinette** studied photography at UGA and recently completed his master's degree from The Art Institute of Chicago. In his own words he observes of his images of his parents “that after a certain age, our maturity process begins to reverse, from growing old to feeling and thinking young.” **Frank Hamrick**, a rural Georgia native, has been photographing his surroundings since he was twelve. For this exhibition, he turned his camera on his uncle's business and the many family members that work there. His work will be presented in book form as well as on the wall.

Other artists bring a conceptual approach to the well-trod history of the domestic photograph. At first glance **Robert Rainey**'s photographs appear to be straightforward formal portraits of family units. Formerly Vice President of Advertising at Miramax Films, Rainey uses a commercial style to create conceptually challenging, constructed family portraits in which he has cast himself as various leading men. From *The Same Sex Engagement* to *The Easter Family Portrait*, his hysterically pointed, detailed and politically charged images are sure to stir up debate for those on both sides of the upcoming Georgia vote on The Gay Marriage Amendment. **Gary Duehr** of Somerville, Massachusetts photographs domestic relationships as revealed by mainstream cinema. Gleaned in movie theaters from trailers of coming attractions, he uses a slow shutter speed to blur and mesh the narrative images, suspending his

subjects in moments of uncertainty, creating dramatically crystallized moments of domestic consciousness. Also using domestic relationships as a catalyst, **Stephanie Robbins** explores how the family snapshot functions as a trigger for personal memories. She created *Just The Way It Was*, an auditory installation, by recording strangers' reactions to found snapshots of homes, enlightening viewers about our propensity to fill in the gaps around a photograph.

A quartet of Georgia artists explores domesticity through its remnants. **Niki Hancock** and **Greg Turco** both of Athens, as well as Columbus artist **Joyce Heathcox**, point their cameras at domestic spaces and objects. Their similar approaches result in strikingly different visual experiences—from the luscious colors and quiet disposition of Turco's abandoned houses, to the sparseness of Hancock's apartment scenes and the vivid close-ups of Heathcox's remnants—each still life tells a different story. Similarly, Athens-based artist **Jason Thrasher**, discovered an abandoned home, which he explores in book form, taking us on a journey to meet this family, not in person, but through the detritus they left behind. Part anthropology, part voyeurism, we get a peek into an unknown life. Thrasher will also have a triptych in the exhibit, evoking a weekend visit with some suburban great uncle, complete with backyard trash burning.

Moving away from the straight photograph, **Bridget Conn** and **Paul Dunlap** both create sculptural contexts for their photographic work, in which the form of the container carries much of the content. In Conn's installation, *Psychic Inheritance*, she investigates domesticity as handed down to her by family and culture. Cultural context also impacts our experience of Dunlap's provocative altarpieces, in which he explores his domestic life as a gay man. The meticulous religious icons he crafts feature respectful images of his lover and himself, creating moving personal statements about institutional Christianity's interventions into his personal life. Atlanta based artist Trained as a painter, **Nicole Jacobs** creates abstract paintings on the walls and doors of abandoned spaces before shooting them in works that address her search for her birth parents. Her expressive instincts continue in the mixed-media nature of her presentation, in which she combines mural size photo paper with toning, painting with acrylic, latex paint and Indian ink. Musician/Artist **Ronnie Cramer** depicts comical, yet disturbing views of domestic life through manipulations of those enduring accompaniments to domestic life; the covers of lurid, vintage paperbacks and magazines. In his video, *Pillow Girl*, the illustrated cover figures morph from one story to the next, accompanied by a synthesized soundscape created by converting visual scans of the covers into digitized sound forms. Through nearly 200 covers the viewer is taken on a thought-provoking journey of history, sound and representation. (Mr. Cramer will visit ATHICA from Denver, Colorado to perform this piece live at a closing performance event on Saturday, November 6th.)

Michael Trigilio resigned from his role as a lay Buddhist priest in 2002, receiving his MFA from Mills College a year later working in video, music and multimedia. His video, *Book 12* (from the series *Untitled Book Series*), reveals his insight into domestic relations through an interview with a family about their son's obsession with an image by the infamous gay photographer Robert Mapplethorpe. The piece exposes the quirky nature of family dynamics, seeming both unbelievable and strangely familiar.

And lastly, we are all thrilled that **Kevin J. Hoth** recently returned to Athens from a year in Charleston, South Carolina so that his thought provoking and often wryly humorous performances can again grace the Athens art scene. For *Relative* he has created a multimedia computer-based interactive piece; *Tips on Running An Orderly Household: The Big Hole Under My House*. The piece sprung from his desire to keep a tidy home "free from human contaminants and refuse" showing that "underground thinking is not only appropriate, it is completely necessary." (Mr. Hoth will perform a live version of this piece for the opening reception.)

The *Relative: Photographing Domesticity* exhibition coincides with two major photography events happening in the month of October. Athens will be hosting the Southeast Regional Conference of the Society for Photographic Education on October 22nd - 24th (www.art.uga.edu/spe). This conference will bring photographic artists, students and educators from across the southeast for lectures, panel discussions and portfolio reviews. In addition, October is *Atlanta Celebrates Photography month*, with many exhibitions and lectures occurring around the Atlanta area.

We hope that many Northeast Georgians will enjoy this stimulating investigation into all things domestic.

Michael Marshall, with editorial assistance by Lizzie Zucker Saltz, ATHICA Director

Checklist for *Relative: Photographing Domesticity*

Ellie Brown

After School (2001)

Blue Glitter Eyeshadow (1999)

Emily and Zach (2001)

Shaving Legs (2001)

FROM THE SERIES *REMEMBERING TWELVE*

C-PRINTS

Bridget Conn

Psychic Inheritance (2003)

MIXED MEDIA INSTALLATION WITH LASERTRAN

Ronnie Cramer

Pillow Girl (2004)

FILM TRANSFERRED TO VHS

Gary Duehr

All Untitled (2003)

FOUR PRINTS FROM THE *LIMINALITIES* SERIES

PIGMENT PRINT ON WATERCOLOR PAPER

Paul Dunlap

And Your People Shall Be My People (2004)

MIXED MEDIA WITH LASERTRAN

Frank Hamrick

Madalyn Holding a Turtle Shell (2003)

Michael Diving (2003)

Star (2003)

SILVER GELATIN PRINTS

Adams-Massey Well Drilling Company (2003)

I Found It When I Stopped Looking (2001)

HANDMADE BOOKS

Niki Hancock

Untitled (2002)

Untitled (2002)

Untitled (2002)

Untitled (2002)

C-PRINTS

Joyce Hethcox

Cake (2001)

Grapefruit (2001)

Shoes (2001)

Suitcase (2001)

LAMINATED C-PRINT ON SINTRA BOARD

Kevin J. Hoth

Tips on Running an Orderly Household:

The Hole Under My House (2004)

COMPUTER FILE-POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Knut Hybinette

Dad Nude (2004)

Dad on Grass (2004)

C-PRINTS

Nicole Jacobs

Sheldon Church, Sheldon, S.C. (2002)

TONED SILVER GELATIN MONOPRINT

Robert Rainey

Self Portrait: Moral Family (2004)

Self Portrait: Same Sex Engagement (2004)

Self Portrait: Power Family (2004)

Self Portrait: Same Sex Family (2004)

PHOTOGRAPHY-GICLEE ON CANVAS

Stephanie Robbins

Kitchen (2004)

Living Room (2004)

Porch (2004)

Yard (2004)

FROM THE SERIES *JUST THE WAY IT WAS*

FOUND PHOTOGRAPHS, DIGITAL PRINTS, AUDIO

Mark Steinmetz

My Brother Jan, The Woodlands, TX (2004)

My Father Soon After His Heart Surgery,

My Mother in The Early Stages of Parkinson's Disease, Hartford, CT (2004)

My Niece Laura, Covington, LA (2004)

SILVER GELATIN PRINTS

Jason Thrasher

Joel Goolsby Has a Face (1995-2001)

ARCHIVAL INK JET PRINTS OF FOUND OBJECTS
IN NOTEBOOK

Gadsden, Alabama Series (2004)

Coco, Jewel Beck, Nannie's Chair, Teresa, by Olan Mills,

DIGITAL C-PRINTS

Michael Trigilio

Mapplethorpe Plate: Book 12 (2002)

FROM THE *UNTITLED BOOK SERIES*

FILM TRANSFERRED TO DVD

Greg Turco

Bedsprings (2001)

Carriage (2001)

Green Heater (2001)

Orange Room (2001)

C-PRINTS

Affiliated Events:

- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH, 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.
OPENING RECEPTION:
FOLLOWED BY PERFORMANCE ART AT CANOPY:
9:00 - 9:45:
KEVIN HOTH'S *TIPS ON RUNNING AN ORDERLY HOUSEHOLD: THE BIG HOLE UNDER MY HOUSE*
AND JULIE ROTHSCHILD'S *FAMILY HEIRLOOMS*
Suggested Donation: \$3.00 - \$6.00
 - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH, 8:00 - 9:30 P.M.
DOORS OPEN AT 7:30 P.M. FOR GALLERY VIEWING
SÁNDOR SZABÓ, 16-STRING HUNGARIAN
MASTER GUITARIST FROM VÁCS, HUNGARY &
THE GEORGIAN CONTEMPORARY UNIT: COLIN
BRAGG, KYLE DAWKINS, BLAKE HELTON, ERIK
HINDS & BRIAN SMITH.
Suggested Donation: \$9.00 - \$13.00
 - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7TH THROUGH SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 10TH, 8:00 P.M.:
FEFU & HER FRIENDS, BY MARIA IRENE FORNES,
A SITE-SPECIFIC THEATRICAL EVENT AND ORIGINAL
ADAPTION OF A 1977 FEMINIST CLASSIC.
Suggested Donation: \$9.00 - \$13.00
 - FRIDAY, OCT 22ND, 8:00 - 10:00 PM
SPE RECEPTION IN HONOR OF THE SOCIETY FOR
PHOTOGRAPHIC EDUCATION (SPE) SOUTHEAST
CONFERENCE AT UGA'S LAMAR DODD SCHOOL OF
ART (WWW.ART.UGA.EDU/SPE).
ALL WELCOME.
 - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH, 8:00 - 9:00 PM
CLOSING PERFORMANCE EVENT:
SPOKEN WORD BY *THE ATHENS BOY'S CHOIR* AND
VISITING MEDIA ARTIST AND MUSICIAN RONNIE
CRAMER FROM DENVER, COLORADO DOING A
LIVE EXTENDED VERSION OF *PILLOW GIRL*.
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- *ATHICA is an All-Volunteer run, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which opened in March 200,2.*
 - *Your contributions are needed and are federally tax-deductible.*

ATHICA:

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GALLERY HOURS:

Friday- 3:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday- 1:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday- 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

*Volunteer sitters staff gallery hours—
would you like to help out?*

Email us at volunteer@athica.org or call 706.208.1613.

*On our Listserv yet? We don't send attachments and
never share the list with anyone, promise!
Simply send your email address to mail@athica.org or
write it in our sign-in book.*

THANKS to the small and large donations of the
NE Georgia community, all of which make our
small non-profit artspace possible.

THANKS for the support of D.O.C., Trumps
Catering and The Georgian Press for their
support of this exhibit.

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their ongoing support of ATHICA.

A BIG HURRAH to ATHICA Volunteers, who keep
our doors open and help keep our doors open!

A BIG THANKS to Cedar Shoals High School Intern
Luani Kammerer for her invaluable assistance in
mounting this exhibit and reorganizing our files.

PROPS to the ATHICA Board, who make it all
happen and keep the Director going.

MUCH GRATITUDE to Andy Hollingsworth, who
maintains www.athica.org and Monica Pereira
who maintains our listserv.