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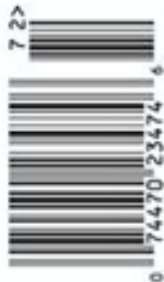
SHERIDAN ROAD

August/September 2011
SheridanRd.com

FALL
FASHION
ISSUE



JWC MEDIA





Demeter, "Simple Beauty" series. Platinum-Palladium Contact Print. 4 x 5 inches. Cotton paper.

Preuss shoots with 100-year-old wooden view cameras and even older, handmade lenses. "They have no apertures, no

shutters; it's basically lens cap on, lens cap off, hope for the best," he says. He then creates hand-coated platinum-palladium contact prints from the negatives, essentially embedding the image deep into the paper. It's an intricate, deliberate process, requiring impeccable measurements and unwavering discipline: between setup, focusing, and lighting, it can take nearly an hour to shoot a single image.

The processing methods for platinum-palladium contact prints are no less laborious. Preuss mixes precious metals and raw chemicals using old formulas and brushes the solution on paper, letting it dry before exposing both paper and negative plate to UV light. "It takes days to get a print right," he says.

"I really love the soft tones, the warmth of it," Preuss explains. "It's one of the longest gray tones in photography," giving his compositions extraordinary depth.

In a way, the processing method is the most deliberate element of Preuss' artwork. This is a common theme with many contemporary artists—one of chance and opportunity but in photography, one can only relinquish so much control. Preuss interviews his models before the process and refers to the modeling sessions as "a collaboration" more than anything else, classifying them as another of his influences.

"I don't just hire a model. It's kind of a working together; it's just as much their input as mine," he says. But the graceful postures exhibited in the "Simple Beauty" series owe a debt to Western visual art and dance; many of the models are classically trained dancers. "They know the gestures and their body and balance. I concentrate on shapes and lighting and lines, rather than the actual person." It's not uncommon, Preuss says, for the model to absently move from one pose to another, and for him to look up and say, "Stay there!" Preuss' focus is on the lighting and shape of his subject; that doesn't mean the body is inconsequential.

Depth of Field

Fine art photographer **Ted Preuss** is known for his figurative compositions shot with antique cameras and processed using 19th century methods. His work will be on display at ZIA Gallery in Winnetka this fall.

STORY BY **KATIE ROSE McENEELY**

Creativity is often subject to the (perennial) argument of what came first; this chicken-or-egg dichotomy applies to Ted Preuss' haunting figurative photography series, "Simple Beauty," which depicts women, clothed and unclothed, posed and poised, both aware of the photographer and ignorant of his presence. Preuss

originally worked as an architectural photographer, and that structural focus comes through in every line and shadow of his models. That's one influence, but Preuss claims few others, despite embracing a photographic method originating in the 1860s and known for its archival properties.



Flow, "Simple Beauty" series. Platinum-Palladium Contact Print. 4 x 5 inches. Cotton paper.

Because of this, and perhaps without realizing it, Preuss' nudes are highly academic, drawing on poses favored by classical sculpture and later revisited in Baroque paintings: The women are arranged in attitudes of lassitude,

spines twisting and hips rolling along after them. While these poses have an element of practicality to them—live models have human limits, and art is a tedious business—classical nudity is more about beauty of form than it is

about prurient interest. Preuss' models arrange themselves into shapes that evoke an organic geometry and celebrate their unedited bodies (a welcome relief from the contemporary tendency to apply Photoshop to any given situation). This makes sense: At heart, Preuss is committed to structure and to mechanical processes. This contributes to the sense of stillness and distance his models wear, even when they wear nothing else. In the words of photographer Diane Arbus, the image becomes "a secret about a secret. The more you know, the less it tells you."

This mysterious place serves as the foundation for all of Preuss' imagery. Coupled with the iconography of another era, it's what makes his work both timeless and immediate. ■

Ted Preuss and his wife live in Chicago, and his studio is located in Pilsen. Selections from the "Simple Beauty" series will be on exhibit at ZIA Gallery from October 19 to November 23 at a joint show with landscape photographer Clyde Butcher. There will be an opening reception October 19 from 5 to 7 p.m. Visit preussphotography.com and ziagallery.net for more information.

On Exhibit: August/September 2013

TIM LIDDY AND FUMIKO TODA: PAINTINGS

ZIA Gallery

548 Chestnut Street, Winnetka
September 7 through October 12
Opening Reception: September 7,
5 to 7 p.m.

Tim Liddy presents his hyper-realistic depictions of seemingly old board game covers; the result is an exploration of nostalgia by way of trompe l'oeil. Fumiko Toda's paintings, by contrast, veer into colorful, textured abstraction. ziagallery.net

EXPRESSIONS IN CONTEMPORARY GLASS

The Art Center – Highland Park

1957 Sheridan Road, Highland Park
September 7 through November 3
Opening Reception: September 7,
6:30 to 9 p.m.

Curated by the Echt Gallery, this show explores the processes and innovation inherent in contemporary glass art and sculpture. It will feature the work of noted

artists Dale Chihuly, Harue Shimomoto, and Janusz Walentynowicz (work pictured below), among others. theartcenterhp.org



VOY MADEYSKI: PAINTINGS

Re-invent Gallery

202 Wisconsin Avenue, Lake Forest
August 16 through September 28
Opening Reception: August 16,
6:30 p.m.

Originally from Poland, Voy Madeyski is a retired architect and painter living in Highland Park. His abstract enamel renderings depict tumultuous cityscapes overrun by their own perspectives. reinventif.com

THE ART OF CRAFT

Evanston Art Center

2603 Sheridan Road, Evanston
August 5 through August 25

On view for the first time, NorthShore University HealthSystem's collection displays numerous pieces from the 29-year history of the American Craft Expo. It will feature the work of 39 artists. evanstonartcenter.org

HERBERT MURRIE: GRANDI PITINI

Jennifer Norback Fine Art with Zhou B Art Center

1029 W. 35th Street, Chicago
September 16 through October 14
Opening Reception September 20,
7 p.m.

Featured in our June/July issue, Herbert Murrie's vast Abstract Impressionist works explore color, form, and feeling. It is essential to view them in person. herbertmurrie.com, jnfagrando.com