



Norman Mauskopf, above: *Chimayo, New Mexico*, gelatin silver, 12 x 18"; right, *Near Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico*, gelatin silver, 7 x 18"



Norman Mauskopf

From racetracks and rodeos to lowriders and *abuelitas*, Norman Mauskopf's work creates an open narrative with the viewer, inviting us into moments, teasing us with freeze frames of insight while simultaneously urging us to create our own internal dialogue with his images. There is a pragmatic romanticism to his photographs, which are as real and gorgeous as those of W. Eugene Smith, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, or any of his other idols. "My work tends to be in focus, and you see what was in front of the camera," says Mauskopf, who favors a Leica 35mm rangefinder. "But I like to think I photograph with an element of mystery or ambiguity that somewhat defines a moment, but doesn't really explain it. My goal, my desire is to capture the moments that go beyond a moment, to what might have led up to it, and what might have happened after."

Born in Brooklyn, New York, and raised in Washington D.C., Mauskopf, 62, studied photography at Pasadena's Art Center College of Design before relocating to Santa Fe "on a whim," he says, "in 1991." Having published four books (all with Jack Woody's Twin Palms/Twelve Trees Press), Mauskopf boasts an extensive photo-book library that he constantly refers to and uses as a creative wellspring. His own most recent tome, *Descendants*, the gracious and glorious result of a 10-year project, takes readers into the world of Northern New Mexico, one that's often, as Jimmy Santiago Baca writes in his poem for the book, "lost in fiesta crowds or alone on a porch." And Mauskopf's quintessential, magical, Northern New Mexico moment while working on *Descendants*? The white horse and the barn, photographed in a valley near La Puente. "It was so still I could hear the gravel crunching under my shoes," said Mauskopf as he relived the moment recently. "The light was beautiful. The horse came up to me, snickered, threw its head, cantered away, and stopped in front of the barn. Yeah, that was pretty cool. The air, the light, the beauty. That moment, for me, embodied New Mexico." —Carrie McCarthy *Verve Gallery of Photography/vervegallery.com*

JULIEN MURROBERTS

relaunch

Although Cyndi Conn had carved her own space in the contemporary art world, she's chosen to reside in the margins. An independent curator and consultant, founder of LAUNCHPROJECTS (a private exhibition space dedicated to emerging artists), and former visual arts director and curator of The Center for Contemporary Arts, Conn is an ardent promoter of the unconventional. "There is a profound need to make art—especially unproven, unmarked forms—accessible and intelligible to a broader audience and market," says Conn, 36.

With an investigative eye, Conn mines "the nerve endings of contemporary art" in search of outliers working independently of mainstream taste. Her curatorial, arts administration, and marketing background uniquely enable her to navigate both sides of the art market's proverbial coin. As a liaison among artists, collectors, and the greater art community, she provides a receptive home to emerging contemporary work. She is, in this regard, the future of where art and its entrepreneurs are headed.

The physical manifestation of this goal was LAUNCHPROJECTS, whose physical presence on East Palace lasted three years (2008–2011), but the existence of which will probably live on in some other incarnation (another future manifestation of the art market). Considered a great success in the community as well as nationally, LAUNCHPROJECTS recently closed its doors. Conn, though, will sally forth with the same paradigm-shifting philosophy, the same trend-bucking practice—only minus the confines of a white-cube space.

Still based here and committed to Santa Fe's stature as a heavy hitter in the art world, Conn will continue to curate, lecture, and advise clients and artists internationally. Like the theme of her lecture series titled "Women Artists as Risk-Takers: Georgia O'Keeffe, Louise Bourgeois, and Yayoi Kusama," Conn embraces risk and innovation. A bit coy about what her next move will be, she aims to stay in the art world, only on her terms. "I like to take on new and challenging projects because once something works it's not as exciting," says Conn, perhaps hinting at her most recent project. "I feel lucky, I live my passion, and that's what I'll do for the rest of my life." —EL

