

Porter's celebration of the natural world has become deeply embedded in the public consciousness.

—Darius Himes

## Holly Lynton

Galerie Schuster

Miami

The photographs of Holly Lynton are at once frankly familiar and subtly mysterious. She has a way of infusing mundane moments with the wonder of childhood, so that the imagery evades easy explanation.

This show surveyed three series made separately over the last dozen years in New York, where the artist lived and worked until a recent move to Massachusetts. The earliest C-prints of the "In Between" series establish her penchant for skewed perspectives, restrained use of color, and tight, unusual framing that crops out context. The viewer becomes voyeur, invited to witness the intimate interactions of Lynton with male figures whose relationship to her is ambiguous. In a 1998 sequence of power plays, *Untitled #3 [lifting skirt]* shows her legs straddling a prone man's shoulders as her outstretched skirt shadows his face; in *Untitled #4 [lifted]*, his extended arms hold her horizontal body aloft in a game of airplane more commonly associated with a father and daughter than with adult lovers.

Roles are further confused by Lynton's compact stature and youthful visage, which she uses to her advantage in the close-ups of the "Mean Ceiling" series, featuring her partly obscured, enigmatic expressions. Snow covers her lips and dusts her skull in *February* (2004); ethereal white flower petals waft around her freckled features in *May* (2004); sand encrusts her closed eyelids in *June* (2004).

Nature is also an active force in the "Solid Ground" series, where soil, grass, and foliage set an untamed stage for domestic drama. The girl-woman protagonist of the earlier works has become a mother. A fair-haired child charms the audience with arms outstretched in a joy-



Holly Lynton, *Supernal*, 2004, C-print, 30" x 40". Galerie Schuster.

ous gesture in *I Love Monday* (2005), which takes its title from the message imprinted on the child's underpants. Whimsy gives way to more sinister phenomena in *Supernal* (2004), as little legs appear about to float skyward, grounded only by a disembodied hand emerging from fallen leaves.

—Margery Gordon

## Chi Peng

Kiang

Atlanta

The five stunning digitally constructed photographs in this exhibition, titled "Mood Is Never Better Than Memory," show a personal, introspective side of Chi Peng, an artist better known for his self-chosen role as mischievous critic of China's unreflective rush into economic and social transformation.

October (2010) presents Chi in his costume of the Monkey King, which he created for his previous "Journey to the West" series, where he appeared as a superhero adapted from the classic Chinese novel of

the same title. Seated on the shore near the town of his birth, he gazes out to sea past a retreating flock of seabirds and toward the two mist-shrouded suns on the horizon. This piece is obviously digitally manipulated and also allegorical, with the twin suns representing the equally attractive forces of historical memory and modernization. But even the realistic elements are a product of Photoshop: Chi positioned each bird individually.

February (2010) sym-

bolizes Chi's position as China's only openly ho-

mosexual artist. An older couple stand on the edge of a pier, looking out; they represent Chi's parents, who choose to deny their son's homosexuality. Chi and his partner approach them, holding hands with a small boy who represents their mutual inner discovery. The drama is dwarfed by the surrounding seascape.

A similar contrast between the artist's impulse to share his story and his sense of its triviality is seen in *June* (2010), in which two images of Chi face away from each other on an oval sandbar or island, above which the confused flock of birds hovers. The symmetry of the island would lead one to expect that the two Chis would be mirror images, but they are not. In a subtle touch, one of the artist's twin selves is slightly more slump-shouldered and downcast than the other.

—Jerry Cullum



Chi Peng, *December*, 2010, C-print, 47 1/2" x 69 1/2". Kiang.