

“Introducing Kate O’Donovan Cook” Exhibition



Kate O’Donovan Cook *Waldorf 4* (2007) Archival inkjet print

Stephen Haller Gallery presents INTRODUCING KATE O’DONOVAN COOK. This is the first solo New York exhibition of the young photographer, whose technique often includes photographing herself as multiple people in a single image to frame a narrative. Her work is characterized by explorations of identity through role playing in ways both theatrical and fantastical, often creating a quality of strangeness.

O’Donovan Cook’s painterly photographs reflect her strong narrative and visual heritage.

Her father was the renowned West Coast painter Gordon Cook and her grandfather was Ireland’s mas-

ter storyteller Frank O’Connor.

This exhibition is intimately presented in Gallery III and is composed of selections from several of the artist’s recent series. *The Waldorf Series*, depicting an assignation in a hotel room, explores issues of gender and the ambiguity of relationships. O’Donovan Cook plays with the idealization of a romantic relationship, subverting it by portraying both characters: she is the male and the female engaged in this ambiguous scenerio.

In *The Trinity Series*, girls in orange dresses (the artist in multiple) revel in nature, suggesting an otherworldly quality. Again the viewer penetrates an intimate space, in this case the artist’s relationship to the realm of a mythological and primal nature.

The classic subject of the female nude in *The Model* subverts the sexual exchange expected of a young woman naked in a room of dressed men--there is no male gaze--the model is an island of solitude in a blur of activity. The work conflates art history and the digital age.

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