

CATHERINE OPIE • HIGHSCHOOL FOOTBALL

15 January - 26 February, 2011



Peder Lund is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition held in Norway with the internationally acclaimed photographer Catherine Opie (1961-). The exhibition *Highschool Football* displays recent works by the LA-based artist, who over a period of three years has photographed high school football players in seven states in the United States: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Louisiana, New York, Ohio and Texas. The series was first displayed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). *Highschool Football* at Peder Lund is Opie's first show since the LACMA exhibition.

Opie typically works with photographic series. In the football landscapes, each location's specific atmosphere and regional aspect is presented, while the collective theme of the landscapes remains clear. The same can be seen in the portraits – the teens' gestures, gaze and expression reveal their personalities and behavior, while they continue to exist collectively through their role as football players in high school. With this exhibition, Opie explores issues related to masculinity, national identity and community, following her dedication to documenting "this country and this culture".

Catherine Opie can be considered amongst the most central contemporary photographers. She has exhibited at some of the largest museums in the US and important galleries in Europe and Japan. Opie emerged in 1991 with the portrait series *Being and Having*, where she portrayed lesbian friends wearing comical, unrealistic moustaches. Her continuous focus on gender roles, marginal social groups, sexuality, identity and the American cultural landscape is always the starting point for her photographic series.

Her ability to convey contemporary cultural tendencies in a manner that enables the beholder to reflect on these aspects marks Opie as an eminent photographer. The strong art historical awareness apparent in her compositions and motives is another basis for her prominence.

Catherine Opie works as Professor of Photography at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Mid-career retrospectives of her work has since the exhibition *Being and Having* in 1991 been shown at Guggenheim in New York in 2008. Opie's work has also been shown at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis; Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and the Photographers' Gallery in London.

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