

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Regen Projects**  
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**CATHERINE OPIE**

**February 23 – March 29, 2013**

**Gallery Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm**

**Opening Reception: Saturday, February 23, 6:00 – 8:00 pm**

Regen Projects is pleased to announce an exhibition of new portraits and landscapes by **Catherine Opie**. These photographs mark both a progression and a departure for the artist. **Opie's** work has always investigated the figure in relation to the landscape, disregarding the polarities typically found within these approaches. This new body of work draws upon **Opie's** beginnings in documentary photography, the traditions of painting, and the history of photography.

**Opie's** new portraits evoke the sublime and the inner psychological space of both the viewer and subject. Utilizing techniques of chiaroscuro, color, and formal composition found in classical 17<sup>th</sup> century portraiture, **Opie** arranges her subjects in allegorical poses that suggest an emotional state. Evoking formal classicism, these beautifully elegant and technically masterful compositions immerse and seduce the eye. **Opie's** subjects have always been part of her personal community, and the range of individuals in these new works illustrates how this community has shifted and expanded.

**Catherine Opie's** work is deeply rooted in the history of photography. The new landscapes draw upon this trajectory – both contemporary and historical. In addition to utilizing motifs that informed the California Pictorialists, these works reference the painterly tradition. Images of iconic landscapes float in abstraction and are reduced to elementary blurred light drawings. The viewer no longer relies on traditional markers of recognition of place, but instead on the visceral reaction to the sensate images **Opie** captures. These painterly, poetic, and lyrical visions resonate with oblivion, the sublime, and the unknown.

**Catherine Opie's** complex and diverse body of work is political, personal, and high aesthetic – the formal, conceptual, and documentary are always at play. Her work consistently engages in formal issues and maintains a formal rigor and technical mastery that underscores an aestheticized oeuvre. Visual pleasure can always be found in her arresting and seductive images.

**Opie** very knowingly engages art-historical conventions of representation like this in order to seduce her viewers: "I have to be interested in art history since so much of my work is related to painting and photography history. It gives me the ability to use a very familiar language that people understand when looking at my work and seduce the viewer into considering work that they might not normally want to look at. It is very classical and formal in so many ways.... In a way, it is elegant in the seduction I was talking about earlier, that this device really can draw the viewer in through the perfection of the image. It is like wearing armor for a battle in a way, the battle for people to look into themselves for the prejudices that keep them from having an open mind."

(Jennifer Blessing. "**Catherine Opie: American Photographer**" in **Catherine Opie: American Photographer**, published by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2008, p. 14)

**Catherine Opie's** work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. In 2008 she had a mid-career survey at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Additionally she has had solo exhibitions at the Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach; Institute for Contemporary Art, Boston; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; The Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis; Photographers' Gallery, London; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

An opening reception for **Catherine Opie** will take place on Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. For further information please contact Jennifer Loh, Heather Harmon, or Donna Chu at the gallery.