

# DAVID PATTON LOS ANGELES

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Giovanni Jance

*The timeless serenity of a statue standing adjacent...* Portraits of Wendy Moore

1 December - 5 January 2007/8

Reception for the artist on Saturday, 1 December, from 7 - 10 PM

## **Giovanni Jance**

David Patton Los Angeles is pleased to present "*The timeless serenity of a statue standing adjacent...* Portraits of Wendy Moore", an exhibition of new work by Giovanni Jance. A reception for the artist will be held on Saturday, 1 December, from 7-10 PM. The following text regarding the exhibition is by Annie K' O'Malley.

Whenever the Moon passes through some portion of the Earth's shadow a lunar eclipse occurs. On rare nights like these the eclipse offers darkness as a lens of perception, illuminating heavenly bodies that would otherwise go unnoticed when bleached by a dominant Sun. The Moon's coloration and form are distorted relative to how much light from the Sun is refracted by the Earth's atmosphere. Registering the illusion of a crimson Moon plays with our faculties and expands our understanding of night. We see in the dark. Walking through a black abyss navigated by our heightened senses arouses the sublime and expands visceral perception.

"The timeless serenity of a statue standing adjacent... Portraits of Wendy Moore," are photographs working as extensions of memory into a physical realm of representation for Giovanni Jance. Consider walking through a day with astute attention to the temporal relationship of you to the universe; your movements mapped, the places you inhabit documented, meanwhile the space is forever changing. For each step you take is a moment in time, stored into a vault of infinite memory; this is the landscape of experience: time. Visiting a memory is allowing the dead to live, yet that memory is not stagnant; it is pulsating with the constant flux of layered seconds and therefore memories. Jance challenges his audience to expand their initial perception of imagery by recognizing the impossible manifest as definite. He has photographed the un-photographable, a ghost in darkness.

The first articulation of Jance's title is taken from the artist's statement by Douglas Huebler for his Duration Piece #2, Paris, in January 1970. It utilizes the metaphor of a statue, timeless in its composure, as the realization of a phantasm. The physical space a statue occupies is analogous to memory. Weathering the passage of time, a statue endures beyond the confines of a human lifetime, as does memory. In Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem Ozymandias, written in 1817, he describes "trunkless legs of stone" standing in the desert. The epigraph on the pedestal reads: "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings, look on my works ye mighty and despair." Yet "nothing beside remains, round the decay of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare, the lone and level sands stretch far away." This literary intersection with Jance's notion of enduring memory resonates a profound connection with humanity and our quest to understand the tyranny of time as it functions in our lives.

Taking photography as a surrogate memory Jance employs the systems of structuralist artists of the 1970s, such as Huebler and Jan Dibbets, as a point of departure. He is addressing the medium and his tool of choice, a camera, by contesting the documentary expectation of photography. The immediate read of a photograph is as a portrayal of a place and moment in which a narrative is unfolding for the viewer. Jance renounces photography as the medium that captures the split-second exposure yet simultaneously embraces it as the astrolabe for navigating through the nexus of time and space. These photographs function as allegories of how time passes as well as a cathexis for Jance. He has removed himself from a traditional atelier and revisited the loci once inhabited by himself and Wendy Moore. The quotidian backdrops of these photographs appear as landscapes distinctive to nowhere, found seemingly anywhere. We can't decipher a season, a city, or even the hemisphere in which they take place. However mundane they may appear to the viewer they nonetheless are spaces referential to Jance's memory. The activity present within the frames is manifest in abstract shapes, which conceptually take the form of revenants. We naturally formulate a narrative to accompany what we see woven throughout the twelve images, but the figures we are drawn to are uncertain. This uncertainty, latent in the images, is what relays the collapse of a paradigmatic cluster of memories into a singular entity. Jance shot the photographs on long exposures of thirty seconds to one minute, using 35mm infrared film at night, without the aid of a flash. In addition to the spectrum of visible light, this film is sensitive to infrared as well as some ultraviolet radiation. It can be used in broad daylight to capture what is visible, but when used at night it distinguishes the wavelengths that are not overtly detectable by the human eye. Unmanipulated by outside means, these images represent a landscape that expands beyond the visual plane challenging the viewer's initial perceptions and exposing elements that are not normally seen, much like the experience of a lunar eclipse.

Words by, Anne K. O'Malley for the exhibition "The timeless serenity of a statue standing adjacent... Portraits of Wendy Moore," by Giovanni Jance

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