

PRESS GAZE



**Juan Travnik**

De la serie Jovenes adolescentes | From the series Young teenagers  
Sisi y Gabi  
Año | Year 1980  
Fotografía | Photography  
Gelatina de plata sobre papel fibra | Gelatin silver print on fiber paper  
Dimensiones de la imagen 23.5x23.5 cm.



**Adriana Lestido**

Silvia en libertad con su hija Laura | Silvia in liberty with her daughter Laura  
Buenos Aires, 2006  
Año | Year 2006  
Fotografía | Photography  
Gelatina de plata sobre papel fibra | Gelatin silver print on fiber paper  
Dimensiones de la imagen 24,6 x 37,5 cm.

## Damned Spring | Adriana Lestido & Juan Travnik

Curatorship | Patricia Rizzo & Gabriel Díaz

**11.10.17 - 7pm. Opening**

**11.10.17 - 24.11.17**

ROLF ART is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition by Adriana Lestido and Juan Travnik titled, The Damned Spring, with the curatorship of Patricia Rizzo and Gabriel Díaz, on Wednesday, October 11 from 7pm, at Esmeralda 1353, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

*DAMNED SPRING*, proposes an unprecedented dialogue between these two renowned Argentine artists. Both Adriana Lestido and Juan Travnik photographed young teenagers during the 80's and 90's. In the case of Adriana, mainly in her series *Adolescent mothers*, those of the *Infanto Juvenil Hospital*, as well as in her work *Mothers and daughters* and in her well-known series *Mujeres Presas*. In turn, during this period, Juan Travnik made a series of studio portraits, *Adolescencia*, one of his first essays.

This exhibition brings together for the first time these two photographers who approached the same theme, at the same time, but from very different places proposes a cross between them. As individuality is recognizable, its works are found in a profound and subtle way at the same time. This photographic dialogue, of more than sixty images, immerses us in adolescence, a beautiful and difficult stage of transition and change, which was portrayed by both artists, where the characteristics of that age emerge with intensity in the meeting of these two looks.

## Damned Spring

The damn spring goes swiftly... says part of the chorus of a song that laments among other things, the years gone, the lost loves. Not so fast are those times perceived for those who go through the experience; the thing is that adolescence is usually accompanied by natural anguish and embarrassment to a period that marks the end of childhood, the onset of puberty and the conflictive beginning of adulthood, a time of growing uncertainties.

In these works of authorship, the theme has not been developed in a specific manner but has been produced through the realization of different series. As a neutral observer, no text is necessary to point out once again what happens to the productions of Adriana Lestido and Juan Travnik; both move away from artificially constructed situations recorded as a photographic reality and explore the camera as an extension of their ways of looking, based rather on an analytical orientation towards what they observe. They have shaped, in spite of their discursive differences, critical and visual baggage that share the modality of somehow reversing the spectator's point of view, making the observer become observed. These particular visions about adolescence are not excepted, in which the images interpellate, question, leave no room for the possibility of indifference, frontal proposals in which we feel induced to confront the subject and give rise to the reflection.

In Lestido it is not a novelty a persuasive and dramatic language with which she simultaneously exhibits a deeply seductive materialism. Dramatic but spectacular in their forcefulness, some of her images project a somber fascination, while others express themselves as defining the desire for reaffirmation, so common in that stage of estrangement from childhood. As characters they appear to stand, exuding the need to validate their identities, a beautiful record of self-flattery as a fiction of control and power, and another successful representation of something that could not possibly be apprehended or photographed. Perhaps Lestido will reach these instances by her discreet way of pursuing them, interacting in the scene in a silent way, becoming what looks at her desire, if possible imperceptible. A signaling work to find the tone, the voice, in the quest to merge with what happens in the scene or the characters she chooses, some of troubled beauty.

Travnik shows a set of varied and exquisite portraits in which many of the peculiarities of the damn spring are seen. In tune with his personal vision and recognized ability to capture subtleties and complexities, the characters are exhibited very personal, intense and particular. A pubescent who exhibits his torso with obvious shame, a sketchy smile, many freckles on someone facing the lens of the eye, or the leading role in a young girl's eye care trace of the eyeliner are just some of the details that make its minimal elements become of a sometimes disconcerting importance in careful shots that show their acute visual sensitivity. His interest in drawing and painting is no coincidence; minute and frontal, always limpid and effective, his forceful images have become identifiers of a poetics of truthfulness.

Lucidity is a gift and a punishment

quotes Lestido in one of her books to the poet Alejandra Pizarnik.

And it is timely in relation to both of them. Bonded through an old friendship, beyond the reasons and the experiences and with their differences, they have made a distinctive seal of the approach of fusing the aesthetic with a documentary orientation, even sometimes without a conscious intentionality. The owners of an unusual and powerful body of work that precedes them and points out as iconic references in their work, it is celebratory the opportunity to share in a joint exhibition the ever particular vision of these contemporary artists frequently referred to as masters from their extensive authorial works. In them they show that the personal and the social are necessarily intertwined, a signaling to our own time.

Patricia Rizzo  
September 2017

**Adriana Lestido b.1955, Buenos Aires**

For Lestido, photography is a tool that allows him to understand the mystery of human relationships. Based on her black and white images, the author documents the intimacy and delicacy of her characters from a social perspective. Separation and absence are key themes in his work. More than reality, what he portrays are emotions.

The photographic essays of the first years still conserve that look of graphic reporter, of social testimony, of documentary photography. Next, the images become increasingly subjective and incorporate landscapes that he portrays as reflections of internal states.

She was the first Argentine photographer to receive the prestigious Guggenheim scholarship. His work is recognized nationally and internationally, has won awards and subsidies, such as the Hasselblad Award of Sweden (1991), the Mother Jones of the United States (1997), the Konex (2002), and the Lifetime Achievement Award, for the Argentine Association of Art Critics (2009), among others. In 2010 she received the Bicentennial Medal and was named Outstanding Personality of Culture by the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires. Since 1995 he has developed an intense teaching activity coordinating workshops and clinics on the use of photography as a means of expression. She is the author of five books: *Mujeres presas*, Colección Fotógrafos Argentinos, Buenos Aires (2001, 2nd edition 2008); *Mothers and daughters*, La Azotea Editorial, Buenos Aires (2003), published with the support of John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; *Interior*, edited by Intellectual Capital, Madrid (2010); *La Obra*, edited by Intellectual Capital, Madrid (2011) and *Lo Que Se Ve* (anthology), edited by Intellectual Capital, Madrid (2012). His work has been exhibited in individual and group exhibitions in various countries such as Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, the United States, Spain, France, Germany, Sweden, Scotland, Denmark, Belgium, China and Japan. Today, his work is part of national and international collections, both public and private, such as the National Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires (Buenos Aires, Argentina), Castagnino Contemporary Art Museum + MACRO (Rosario, Argentina), Museum of Fine Arts (Caracas, Venezuela), Museum of Fine Arts (Houston, USA), Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain and Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris, France), Hasselblad Center (Göteborg, Sweden), among others.

Live and work between Buenos Aires and Mar de las Pampas.

**Juan Travnik b.1950, Buenos Aires**

Travnik's work is closely associated with the relationship between photography and reality. His images appear to the viewer as believable as they are difficult to anchor in a unique sense of reading. This allows him to articulate a world full of symbols and visual metaphors.

Conceptually, his work revolves around the use of direct photography, which enhances this idea of registration, of trace, as the essence of the photographic act. In this way, the registration of other brands, of other strokes, those left by the passage of time over faces and bodies, the interventions of the human being on the landscape, acquire in many cases a relevant role.

Juan Travnik was born in Buenos Aires in 1950. He started his photography studies in 1966. He has been developing his personal work since 1970. He worked as a photojournalist and since 1978 as an advertising photographer. Over the years, he has displayed extensive teaching work. He dictates a workshop of Aesthetics and photographic expression, of two years, by which many of the Argentine photographers have passed. He also dictated work shops and conferences in Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Spain, Peru, Mexico and the US. He is a founding member of the Argentine Council of Photography.

Since 2012 he directs the Area of Photography at the University of San Martín, in what is currently the Mauritius Kagel Arts Institute. He created a diploma that worked from 2012 to 2015 and since 2016 he directs the Institute's Degree in Photography. Degree course with specific orientation towards authorial photography.

From 1998 he directs La FotoGalería del Teatro San Martín and in 2001 he creates and directs the Photography Space of La Ribera Theater, both in Buenos Aires. Since 1999 he is a member of the Luz Austral Foundation, organizer of the Open Encounters - Festival de la Luz. He participated in numerous international meetings and festivals. He is also an essayist and independent curator.

In 2014 he was named a Member of the National Academy of Fine Arts.

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**ROLF**

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**Rolf Art, Buenos Aires**Esmeralda 1353 | C1007ABS  
Buenos Aires | Argentina