

A.I.R.

GALLERY

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tues. - sat., 11-6



JUDITH COOPER

New Orleans Sunday

May 1-May 26, 2007

Opening Reception

Thursday May 3, 2007 6pm to 8pm

NEW YORK, NY, May 2007 — NEW ORLEANS SUNDAY, Judith Cooper's exhibition of photographs, will be on view at A.I.R. Gallery from May 1 – May 26, 2007. The opening reception will be held Thursday, May 3rd, from 6–8 PM.

NEW ORLEANS SUNDAY combines Judy Cooper's series "Church Ladies," and "Second Liners," which depict two facets of the local African American community's observance of Sunday traditions, both secular and religious.

The photographs in this exhibition highlight the important historical and present day role church women and female members of the "Second Liners", also know as Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs, have played in the African American Community of New Orleans. Judith Cooper's photographs illuminate the ways which different community activities, some sacred, some profane, sprang from the same communities and are the very foundation of the strength of the African American community in New Orleans.

Cooper's use of bright, saturated color emphasizes the spirit and vitality of the events and people she captures. In *The Popular Ladies*, the participants brightly colored clothing and elaborately decorated umbrellas are symbols of the pride the women have in their community. Although Hurricane Katrina has ripped apart the fabric of the city, both churches and second lines are beginning to regroup. Cooper writes: "The churches where I previously photographed have reopened their doors but with smaller congregations. The Second Line clubs are trying valiantly to keep the tradition alive. Again this spring during Jazz Fest, the infield at the Fair Grounds will be filled with the music of the brass bands and the sight of feathers waving in the air as the Second Line groups dance through the crowds."

The subjects of Cooper's pigment prints are nearly life size. The scale as well as crisp quality of the artist's images creates a kind of super-realism, expressing the larger than life, almost mythic quality of these ordinary people.

Judith Cooper lives and works in New Orleans. After earning a Ph.D. in French Language and Literature, she taught at the college level before pursuing a career in photography. She was the staff photographer of the New Orleans Museum of Art from 1998 until October 2005. Her work has been shown in numerous regional and national exhibitions, and recently had her portfolio exhibited at the Kaunas Photo Days in Kaunas, Lithuania.

This exhibition is part of the year-long calendar of events coinciding with **TheFeministArtProject**, of which A.I.R. Gallery is a Founding Partner.

A.I.R. Gallery is located at 511 West 25th Street, NYC. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday 11am-6pm. For information please contact the director, Kat Griefen at 212.255.6651 or kgriefen@airgallery.org.

