

A. I. R.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Julie Wosk:
Mannequins, Masks, and Urban Molls:
Photographs**

October 10-November 4, 2000
Reception Tuesday, October 10, 6-8 pm

Julie Wosk, author of the forthcoming book **Women and Machines: Representations From the Spinning Wheel to the Electronic Age** (The Johns Hopkins University Press), will be exhibiting her color photographs at the A.I.R. Gallery from October 10-November 4, 2000.

Wosk's photographs offer a startling glimpse of simulated selves— female and male mannequins and masks that blur the boundaries between the artificial and real. These simulacra have a startling presence, inanimate yet eerily alive.

From behind glass windows, the figures hold us with their gaze, like the beautiful woman in **Subway Siren** who eyes us from an advertising poster hanging on a subway wall. Outside the men's room and bathed in an orange light, this advertising temptress beckons men to paradise—or is it hell?

Wosk's images of synthetic women also tell another story: the paradoxes of being female. These mannequins smile at us behind masks of glamour and beauty, masks that camouflage their secret selves. The plastic, dark-eyed Tahitian woman with a lotus in her hair, the grey-haired grandma puppet, the facsimile Marlene Dietrich seducing us in her velvet hat, are alien yet alluring, artful yet provocatively real.

Julie Wosk is a Manhattan photographer and painter, and professor of art and English at State University of New York, Maritime College. She writes about art and technology, female automatons, and is the author of **Breaking Frame: Technology and the Visual Arts in the Nineteenth Century** (1992).

A.I.R. Gallery hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 11 am-6 pm www.airnyc.org